



Friends of Trempealeau Refuge

Friends Focus...

Fun Facts About our Local Wildlife By Scott Lee

Join us for a Family-Friendly Owl Hike on Saturday, September 28th, at sunset (6:51) at the OWL Center. The hike is led by Scott Lee, a retired Trempealeau Elementary teacher. We will meet at the OWL Center for a short program on owls, complete with a number of mounted local owls, before heading outside after dark for a short hike into the woods to listen for - and maybe see?? - owls or other nocturnal critters. This should be a fun experience for kids of all ages and will be done by 8:30 or so.

On November 14, Dan Jackson will be doing a presentation "Winter Feeder Birds of Western Wisconsin". This will be a fun and informative introduction to birds that are found in our area during the winter season. Along with some discussion of bird behavior, biology, and ecology, Dan will have some photos of common and some uncommon birds we may see during our winter months here in Western Wisconsin. The event is planned for Thursday, November 14th at the OWL Center, 6:30. Hope you can join us. Watch for details on the [Friend's website](#).

Enjoy the beauty of the fall season at the Refuge.

Val Critzman, Friends President

Our whitetail deer, so common at the refuge, have other interesting adaptations besides the fur mentioned in the last newsletter. The fall is a great time to take notice of a couple of them.

You've likely noticed that the bucks are now growing back their antlers that they shed late last winter. There is a difference between "antlers" and "horns". Antlers are shed annually and grown back later in the year (such as deer, elk, and moose) while horns are permanent (such as bighorn sheep and goats). When they grow back, the texture is velvety. This "velvet" is actually blood vessels that will dry up when the antlers are fully grown.

The deer then rub their antlers against small trees to scrape off the velvet and "shine up their antlers to impress the ladies". They have a scent gland near the base of their antlers so while rubbing them against the tree they are leaving a distinctive smell to let other bucks know that this is their territory. They also leave a visible mark by scraping the bark off the tree. Watch for these "buck rubs" as you're hiking in the refuge.

You may also find small, round bare spots of dirt around the refuge. Deer also have scent glands just above their front feet so another way to mark their territories is by making "scrapes" with their front feet, leaving their scent as well as a visible mark to let others know they've been there and telling them to stay away! Get out and find a deer trail this fall. There are lots of fun things to discover.

Save The Date!

Owls: Saturday, September 28th, at sunset (6:51) til 8:30, at the OWL Center, led by Scott Lee.

Winter Birds: Thursday, November 14th, 6:30 at the OWL Center, presented by Dan Jackson





The Entrance Road is Open, then Closed, then Open...

Some things don't change. Refuge staff work hard on fixing the road and trails as conditions keep changing. For updates on conditions check out the refuge Facebook page and website.

A Note from the Friends President



Are you looking for a good Nature book to read or just browse? Well, I know where you can find one. Stop by the Outdoor Wonders Learning Center at the Refuge to visit the Little Library on the back patio. You can find books and a few nature magazines to read while you relax on one of the patio chairs. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the Little Library, this fall would be a great time to do that while we still have some warm days to come, I hope. It was built

and donated by Girl Scout Troop 4107 from Whitehall, WI. The books are for folks to browse while they are there and not to take home. There's books for all ages, and don't forget the playscape in the backyard where your children can explore while you peruse the library books. There's the new Eagle's Nest too that kids of all ages can sit in while they read. It was built for an Eagle Scout project by Andy Mehus from Buffalo City, WI.

Val Critzman, Friends President

A Note from the Wildlife Specialist

Autumn is upon us and we are starting to notice the crisp cool air of fall. Soon we will be surrounded by the warm and cozy colors of fall leaves and grasses. Migrating waterfowl, warblers, and monarchs are beginning their long journey to their overwintering grounds. The Refuge becomes a smorgasbord to wildlife as they rest and eat to prepare for their exhausting journey. Visitors will rest and relax at the refuge as well, leaving their busy lives to unplug and enjoy the rejuvenating effects of nature. Come and explore our breathtaking scenic trails and discover what wonders await you around every corner. We hope to see you soon!

-- Refuge Wildlife Specialist Stephanie Edeler



Friends of Trempealeau Refuge

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<http://www.friendsoftrempealeaurefuge.org>



Would you like to contact the refuge?

Here's how! Call 608-539-2311

For more information visit our website:

<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/trempealeau/>

Or the refuge Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/TrempealeauNWR>

And "Like" us!

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Barred Owls are large, stocky owls with rounded heads, no ear tufts, and medium length, rounded tails. The Barred Owl's hooting call, "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?" is familiar sound in our woods. This beautiful owl glides silently and can pass us by unnoticed. [Listen to its call.](#)

Photo by Larry Palmer

The [Friends of Trempealeau Refuge](#) is committed to providing an independent citizen voice for the protection, conservation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife and their habitats at Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.