

KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE

UPDATE

A quarterly publication highlighting education, property management & events on the KVR.

Summer 2023



Culver's Root

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT KVR

June 26-30 – Four Elements Camp 9am-2:30pm **FULL**

July 4 – Old Hwy 131 Trail Vehicle Tour 12-4pm

July 8 – Plant ID Hike 9am

July 8 – Mindfulness in Nature Meditation 1-4pm

July 10-14 – Wild World of Plants Camp 9am-2:30pm

July 10-14 – Wilderness Adventure Camp 9am-3pm **FULL**

July 11 – Frog Walk Tuesday

July 15 – Friends KVR 4th Annual Garden Walk

July 17-21 – Art Sprouts Camp 9am-2:30pm **FULL**

July 18-23 – Leadership Trail Camp

July 18 – Frog Walk Tuesday (last one of the season)

July 20 – KRMB Meeting 7pm

July 24-28 – Black Ghost Fly Fishing Camp 9am-3pm

OAK TREE PLANTING

By Lynn Kronschnabel, KVR Executive Director

The KVR staff is moving forward on a plan to conduct an Oak planting on a former row crop field, a 6-acre parcel in an upper field near Hansen Rock. The field was planted last year with corn, but the lease was not renewed this year. This gives us the exciting opportunity to close the forest canopy at this site, which is surrounded with mixed hardwoods, predominantly Oak and Hickory. We will be planting approximately 90 trees, possibly in several phases. The recommended trees are White, Bur (75%), and Red Oak (25%). Red Oaks are quite beneficial for Winter acorns, and planting a variety of Oaks is done to reduce potential impacts of Oak wilt. Bur oaks are slower growing, so the recommendation is to plant fewer of them than White Oaks and to plant larger trees, 5-10-foot-tall and approximately 30 feet apart for a better outcome. Larger trees have a higher survival rate and will do better in drought conditions. We hope to begin planting this Fall.



Sponsor a tree!

For more information about sponsoring a tree for this project, please reach out!

608-625-2960

kickapoo.reserve@krm.state.wi.us

"The true meaning of life is to plant a tree under whose shade you do not expect to sit."

- Nelson Henderson

MINDFULNESS IN NATURE:

SHORT EXERCISES/PRACTICES WITH DISCUSSION

The second Saturday of each month (through October) from 1pm-4pm, the Kickapoo Valley Reserve will be offering a meditation series. Mindfulness is paying attention to one's Breath, Emotions, Thoughts, Senses and Surroundings (BETSS) without judgement.

Mindfulness is used for many reasons, including stress reduction, better physical health, better mental health, plus improved relationships with oneself and others.

Mindfulness In Nature is a "Down to Earth" approach to Mindfulness Meditation. We use nature as part of the mindfulness experiences. A bonus, we improve our relationship with nature, too.

Our meetings will include discussions and short mindfulness exercises/practices. We will explore sitting, standing, and moving mindfulness exercises. Everyone is welcome from beginners to the experienced. No judgements. Please bring a snack and drink for yourself.

Cost for this program is FREE!

REGISTER HERE

KVR.STATE.WI.US/EVENTS/REGISTRATION-PAGE/

Meet the Instructor

Roger Reynolds grew up on a dairy farm in Crawford County and has lived in Southwestern Wisconsin most of his life. As a child, he spent time in the woods, food and flower gardens, fields, and camping. As an adult, sustainable gardening, foraging, outdoor skills, birding, ecology, local food and fire are subjects Roger continues to enjoy and explore.



Psychology, interpersonal communications and building community have always intrigued Roger. For over 20 years, Roger has been a passionate and engaging educator, teaching about sustainable gardening and nature. In 2019, he became a Certified Master Naturalist. In 2013, Roger was introduced to mindfulness in a course led by a psychiatrist, titled "Mindfulness for Depression." Living with PTSD, depression and anxiety, Roger credits mindfulness as a foundation of his mental health healing. Leading "Mindfulness In Nature" is a perfect combination of Roger's experience, passions and creativity.



Golden Oyster Mushrooms

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE KVR

continued

July 24-28 - Wild World of Plants Camp 9am - 3pm

July 31-Aug 2 - Camp KickaPedal 9am-4pm

July 31-Aug 4 - Incredible Insects Camp 9am-3pm

July 31-Aug 4 - Nature Nuts Camp 9am-2:30pm

Aug 7-11 - Nature Nuts Camp 9am-2:30pm

Aug 12 - Plant ID Hike 9am

Aug 12 - Mindfulness in Nature Meditation 1-4pm

Aug 17 - KRMB Meeting 7pm

Sep 1-Oct 13 - Friends of KVR Photo Contest

Sep 9 - Plant ID Hike 9am

Sep 9 - Mindfulness in Nature Meditation 1-4pm

Sep 21 - KRMB Meeting 7pm



Common Milkweed

EDUCATION CORNER

BUSY, BUSY MAY!

Over 20 different school groups visited the KVR this Spring – bringing over 1,000 students! It was very hectic, and very fulfilling to see so many young faces come through our doors and across our trails. Many of the students have been here before, but there were also many first timers! The students participated in activities such as hiking, plant ID, archery, and invasives removal.

SUMMER CAMPS ARE IN FULL SWING!

The first few weeks of summer camp are already over, but there are many more to come! We are offering a larger number of camps than ever before, with more opportunities for kids of all ages to come see what the KVR has to offer, and to learn about the world around them. We are very excited to be offering a new fly fishing camp, thanks to a generous donation of over \$1,000 worth of equipment from Cabela's. We will be able to use this equipment for many years to come, from camps, to programs, and more!



Thank you to Cabela's for the donation!

MILK SNAKE SIGHTING



This snake was spotted along Wintergreen Bluff Trail near the KVR Visitor Center. Milk Snakes are common throughout much of Wisconsin. This is a non-venomous snake. Milk snakes thrive in a variety of habitats mostly found near forest edges.

MONARCHS

By Maggie Schultz, KVR Education Coordinator

If you have stopped in the Visitor Center in the last month, you might have noticed our new Monarch nursery. The KVR staff has collaborated to build, fill, and maintain the enclosure with live milkweed plants. The caterpillars that are currently in the enclosure were found in a cow pasture, and rescued from the mower.

We will continue to feed and care for the caterpillars, until they enter their chrysalis (pupa) stage, and turn into butterflies.

Once they become butterflies, they will harmlessly be tested for parasites before being released to continue on their migration journey.

The life stages of a Monarch include an egg (3-5 days), a larva (caterpillar - 9-14 days), a pupa (chrysalis - 8 to 15 days), and adult (butterfly - up to 30 days). They are migratory, meaning they head south in the winter, and north in the summer. Each individual adult will not complete the entire journey, it takes several generations to complete their epic migration.

Although Monarch Butterflies are not currently listed as endangered, recent data suggest that their population is decreasing at a concerning rate. Through this nursery, we hope to educate the public on not only the beauty of these amazing creatures, but also the troubles they are facing, and what we as citizens can do to help. Stop by to find out what you can do!



The process of a monarch emerging from a chrysalis is called eclosion.



Save the date!

10.7.2023

3

DAM CHALLENGE TRIATHLON

Calling all Racers & Volunteers!

The Kickapoo Valley Reserve **Dam Challenge Triathlon** – canoe, bike, run – is set for **October 7, 2023**. This event challenges participants to compete among the rugged hills of scenic southwestern Wisconsin's rural countryside and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Proceeds benefit the Reserve. **Registration opens July 1, 2023!**



TRAIL TALK

By Jackie Yocum, KVR Parks and Recreation Specialist

Old Highway 131 Trail on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve has been designated a National Recreation Trail by the National Park Service – US Dept. of Interior. There are approximately 1,300 trails across the country that hold this designation. After a lengthy application process, Old Highway 131 Trail was one of only 9 trails across the country designated in 2023. To learn more, visit the [National Park Service – National Recreation Trail website](#).



SPOTLIGHT ON CAMPING



There are 29 primitive campsites on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Securing a campsite can be done online or inside the Visitor Center during regular business hours. Campsites have a 10-person maximum capacity. Campers/visitors are strongly encouraged to use WAG Bags, the nearest porta pot or flush toilet. Campsites D1, D2, D3 and D4 are limited to self-contained units only + 1 tent per site. Potable water is available at the KVR Visitor Center on the bottom side of the garage building. **GO CAMPING!**



CAUTION - WILD PARSNIP

Identify & understand the invader

Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) is an aggressive member of the carrot family. It thrives in most soil conditions and prefers sunny areas. It is commonly found along roadsides, field and trail edges. The plant is spread by seed, so poorly timed mowing and maintenance operations can contribute to the spread. The best control and management of this invasive species is prevention. Eradicating existing plants is time consuming, yet possible with well timed efforts. Early detection and control of plants on a small scale can be done by digging up the roots or slicing the stalk at ground level with a shovel. Plants make flowers during the months of June and early July. During this time the best management practice is mowing. Mowing the plant at this stage stops seed production and will eventually kill the individual biennial plant.

Herbicides containing the active ingredient glyphosate are also effective against wild parsnip. In all cases, protective gear and clothing is a must when working around this plant.

Wild Parsnip is best identified by its fern shaped leaves that resemble large celery leaves. They are yellow-green, coarsely toothed and compound, with 3-5 leaflets. Wild Parsnip has a hollow, hairless stem and yellow flowerhead when mature.



The "sap" or juice of wild parsnip can cause phytophotodermatitis, a light sensitive reaction on the skin. Sap combined with sunlight will result in a blistered, painful rash within 24-48 hours after exposure or contact. Scarring from the burns is common, which can last for months to years. Consult your doctor if you have come in contact with Wild Parsnip.



Senator Brad Pfaff (left), Dick Wallin (center), State Rep. Loren Oldenburg (right).

WALLIN RETIRES AFTER 18 YEARS

People gathered on Thursday, April 20th, at 6:30 p.m. at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center, to recognize Richard "Dick" Wallin's dedication to the Reserve, as he closed his 18 years of service as an exemplary member of the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board. Richard attended his last meeting as a board member at our regularly scheduled 7 p.m. meeting afterward. Richard served as the Board Chair for 2.5 years, and many years as the Chair for the Land Management Committee, where he has provided outstanding leadership for land management issues around trail policy and reroutes, flood mitigation, campsite location, prescribed burns, as well as helping in the establishment of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Police. Richard was also active as an Archery Instructor, and a regular participant in the KVR's pheasant release program. Richard has been a lifelong steward of the Reserve and our region, protecting and preserving in service to the KRMB, and as his 28 years as a Conservation Warden.

KRMB LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

The Kickapoo Reserve Management Board acknowledges that the state and federal lands that comprise the Reserve fall within the ancestral homelands of First Nations people including the Hooçak Nation. We recognize the sovereignty of the Hooçak and other First Nations and will work towards a shared future by continuing to create collaborative opportunities to protect and preserve these lands.

WILD BERGAMOT

Monarda fistulosa

By Shelby Wolfe, KVR Office Assistant & Community Herbalist

Wild bergamot, also commonly known as bee balm, horsemint or Oswego tea, blooms in the height of summer, offering us replenishment from the heat and physical burn out. Native to this region, you can often find wild bergamot growing among prairie hillsides, pastures, and stream banks, usually in rocky soil. This plant belongs to the *Lamiaceae* botanical family, otherwise known as the Mint family.

This perennial herb, often reaching up to 4 ft. tall, is a pollinator and nectar feeder to many insects including bees, butterflies, wasps, moths, as well as hummingbirds. Blooming usually beginning in July through August, this plant is worth the pause to smell the flowers.

Its sweet, minty, and citrusy aroma, reminiscent of fresh thyme & oregano, makes for a delicious tea, by itself or blended with other herbs such as oat straw, tulsi or rose, as well as a culinary additive to a variety of dishes.

Wild bergamot's aromatic qualities indicate having a subtle effect on the nervous system, both stimulating and relaxing simultaneously. It also has diaphoretic actions and helps to draw excess heat from the internal organs by opening the pores to remove it.

This herb has been said to be viewed as an important folk remedy by early settlers. It was used mostly to treat colds and fevers and was frequently made into a tea. It is also a revered medicine for igniting passion, beauty, and dreams.

If you'd like to try connecting with this plant, consider drying it for tea.

To dry this plant, harvest the aerial parts (stem, flowers, leaves), or about the top 1/3 of the plant. Bundle the herb by tying the base of the stems together with twine or string, then hang the bundle upside down in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight. Allow the plant to air dry for about a week, or until it is friable. Once dry, remove the flowers and leaves from the stem and breaking down the plant matter by gently crushing with your hands. Store in a clean, dry mason jar and place in your tea cabinet.

Wild Bergamot Tea

- 1 cup of hot water
- 1 tbsp. dried wild bergamot

Add the hot water to the dried wild bergamot leaves & flowers in a pourable vessel. Let it steep for about 5 minutes. Strain into your favorite mug & enjoy. Feel free to combine with other herbs such as oatstraw, tulsi, rose or other mints.





WELCOME BLAKE



Hi! My name is Blake Cwynar, and I am a Natural Resources Specialist here at the KVR. I moved to the area in May with my cat, and I am very excited to explore this beautiful landscape.

BATS, BATS, BATS

By Blake Cwynar, *KVR Natural Resources Specialist*

As the sun falls below the horizon, tiny agents of pest control take to the skies. Nimbly, they navigate through even the darkest of nights, relying on their built-in sonar to locate prey and avoid hidden obstacles. This echolocation is precise enough that these predators can capture up to 1,000 insects in just one hour.

Bats can easily go unappreciated; they are awake when we sleep, their voices are too high-pitched for us to hear, and they carry the stigma of being rabies vectors. However, it's estimated that bats save North American farmers over \$22 billion each year in pest control. They also reduce our risk of insect-borne diseases by controlling mosquito populations. Wisconsin is home to eight different bat species, and all eight are insectivores. However, you can find bat species elsewhere that have specialized diets of fruit, nectar, blood, and even fish. Of the species found in the Badger state, four roost in caves – the other four roost in trees. Those that roost in trees migrate, but the cave bats hang around and hibernate during winter. Some of you may remember seeing many, many more bats flying around each summer night. Indeed, hibernating bats have suffered the most rapid decline of any North American wildlife in recorded history. The culprit? A fuzzy white fungus known as *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*: the cause of White-nose Syndrome (WNS). It often wakes hibernating bats during the winter, and the infection typically leads to dehydration, starvation, and death. Bats tend to hibernate in large colonies, and WNS can kill up to 99% within an infected hibernaculum.

Even if White-nose Syndrome were to somehow disappear entirely, the bat population would still struggle to recover. Bats are long-lived, sometimes over 25 years, and produce only one or two offspring each year. If you want to help, there are plenty of monitoring projects that need volunteers. You can also set up bat boxes: a great way to attract your own team of exterminators. By now this should go without saying, but please avoid killing any bats. If you have one in your house, or if your attic has been claimed as a roost, contact Wildlife Services or your local DNR office to discuss safe eviction methods.

Prior to this position, I was a Parks and Recreation Specialist at Yellowstone Lake State Park and an Aquatic Technician and Crew Lead for the Illinois Natural History Survey before that. I have a degree in Wildlife Ecology and a certificate in Environmental Studies from UW-Madison, but my education continues anytime I head outside.

My hobbies include birding, hiking, fly fishing, Dungeons and Dragons (I occasionally spend some time indoors), and identifying new or unfamiliar species whenever I get the chance. While at work, you're most likely to find me chasing invasive plants (often wearing a brightly colored shirt). I have also helped out with our education programs, and soon I will be conducting bat and bird surveys throughout the KVR! If you see me around, feel free to say hello – I love talking about all things nature. The Kickapoo Valley Reserve is a beautiful property, and I am eager to contribute to the ecological health and stability of this incredible natural area.

