



# Cat-Tails



Newsletter of the Friends of 1000 Islands

Fall/Winter 2014

## Naturalist Notes

by Deb Nowak

When you think of 1000 Islands, what bird comes to mind? For most of us, we think of the bald eagle. Not only is it our nation's symbol but it is a place of pride for 1000 Islands, as we were the home to the first productive eagle nest in the Fox Valley as they made their recovery. However, the bald eagle isn't the only comeback story of the area. They don't get the same pomp and circumstance as the eagles, but peregrine falcons have their own rise from the brink of extinction as well.

The peregrine falcon is a bird of similar size and weight as a crow. Its identifying features include blue-gray wings, a dark brown back, buff colored underside with brown streaking and a slate gray helmet which tends to resemble an aviators cap including a dark stripe down each cheek. The look of an aviator is quite fitting as the peregrine falcon is known for its speed and agility. Flying level through the air it can reach speeds around 55 mph, but it is its ability to dive down through the air, called stooping, that gives it its fast distinction. In a downward flight, a peregrine has been known to exceed speeds of 220 mph, faster than any other land or sea animal. As a comparison, that is similar to the speeds of some of the fastest trains in the world, as well as NASCAR and Indy race cars. The peregrine uses that diving speed and strong feet to catch medium sized birds, their primary food source, out of midair.



Historically, peregrines were cliff nesting birds. They prefer the security of a steep edge where few predators can reach them. Today, they have adapted to urban environments by frequently nesting on bridges, sky scrapers and smokestacks. No matter where they find a safe location for the nest, or scrape, peregrines will generally lay 3-4 eggs in late March through May. The chicks, called eyases, rely on the adults for food until they can fly at around 42 days. From there they must learn the art of catching food from their parents rather quickly.

Peregrine falcons have few predators. Great horned owls and eagles may occasionally take a young falcon, and the eggs may become a snack for another animal if not carefully guarded. The biggest threat to peregrines, however, has been humans. Peregrine populations began to decline due to unregulated shooting, collection of their eggs and taking chicks for falconry use in the early 1900's. Numbers didn't

begin to drastically decline until after the introduction of DDT. The chemical was used as an insecticide and used widely without concern of the effects it may have on the environment. This is the same chemical that caused the huge decline in eagle populations as well. In 1964, the Peregrine Falcon was considered extirpated in the Eastern United States. Through the ban of DDT in 1970, the gradual reintroduc-

tion of peregrines and the cooperation of industrial areas in the building of man-made nesting boxes, the number of peregrine falcons in the Eastern United States, including Wisconsin, is making a

comeback.

The paper mill in Kaukauna has had a huge impact in the Fox Valley populations. In 2006, mill workers observed a pair of peregrines hanging around some established nest boxes. It was a young female and mature male. With the advice of raptor researcher, Greg Septon, workers at the mill were able to keep an eye on the birds. Through a visual of the leg bands on the female, she was identified as “Nora” who hatched in Duluth, MN in 2005. Although no eggs were laid that first year, most likely due to the young age of Nora, they had their first successful nesting in 2007 with Ian, hatched in 2004 in Port Washington, as her original mate.



Each year, mill workers communicate the activity observed in the nesting box and when the chicks are around 4 weeks of age, Greg makes a site visit to band the young and take some blood samples to evaluate their overall health. Since Nora first arrived on site, she produced a total of 25 young.\*\* In 2011, I got the great opportunity to tag along with Greg and a few mill workers to band that year’s young. I was outfitted with a hard hat, safety glasses and welding shirt (to serve as a talon resistant covering) and lead through the mill to the nesting box. Inside the box were three fuzzy, down covered birds and outside of the box was one angry female. Peregrines are instinctively very protective of their nest and young. Nora, however, was known to be one of the most aggressive birds in the state when it came to protecting her babies. The mill workers serve as guards as Greg works with the young. They stand on the lookout for Nora or Ian. Nora has been known to swoop down and attack people near the nest box, so the mill workers stand with brooms held overhead in the hopes that she will attack at the broom instead of the people below it. The banding is a fairly straightforward

process. For each chick, Greg determines the sex, takes a blood sample and attaches a band to each leg. One is a Federal Fish and Wildlife Service band. The other is a project or color band which is used to more easily identify the bird from a distance using a spotting scope or binoculars. When done, the young are returned to the nest box. Throughout the process,

it is important to get a visual on the leg bands of the adult peregrine as verification of the parents. That year Nora produced three young which I was able to choose names for. On the suggestions of my family, they were named Emma, Jack and Duey.

Later that year, the remains of Ian were found on site. In 2012, Nora mated with

“Daryl” who was hatched in Manitowoc but spent a number of years nesting at the Kimberly Mill site until the mill was dismantled. No matter how wonderful nature can be, it can be brutal at times as well. 2014 has been a reminder of that hard truth. “Jack” whom I named back in 2011, was found injured near its assumed nest at a church in Appleton. Due to the severities of his injuries, he was euthanized. Another bird, “Beyer” hatched out of the nest in May, was found with an injured wing. He was taken to the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary where he is being treated for a humerus fracture (the bone that leads from the shoulder out along the wing is broken). He is currently exercising and making improvements, but it is a slow process and he very well may be wintered at the Sanctuary in the hopes of being released in the spring. The darkest day for the Thilmany Mill site was when a peregrine that was found dead in the road was brought in to me at 1000 Islands. By the color band on it’s leg, it was identified as Nora. Our fierce female who started it all for us. She will be remembered fondly for her contributions to the peregrine falcon comeback story and for her aggressive protection of the nesting site. Nature is nature,

however. Daryl will hopefully find a new mate and we will continue to see success at the nesting site.

Despite the ups and downs of life as a peregrine falcon, they are still doing well today. There will always be threats, but with some protection, perseverance and a little help from people, it is the hope to see peregrines returning to their historic nesting sites in the cliffs along the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers. The peregrines in the area truly are the quiet comeback story, often overlooked with the bald eagles receiving most of the attention. So the next time you stop out at 1000 Islands, look to the skies not only for the white head and tail feathers of the adult bald eagle, but for the aviator cap of the peregrine falcon stooping with amazing speed and agility.

\*\* Peregrine data and details come from Wisconsin Falconwatch Nesting Season Reports 2006-2014

Septon, Greg. 2014. Wisconsin Falconwatch - 2014 Nesting Season Reports.

An account of peregrine falcon nesting activity in Wisconsin in 2014.

Milwaukee, WI. 48 pp

## With a Little Help From Our Friends

by Debbie Nowak


It seems that there is always a lot going on at 1000 Islands. Over the past two years we have accomplished many great projects. With a small staff and budget, at times it is hard to get new ideas to become reality. That is one of the reasons why we are so proud of our connection to the community. It is through community partnerships that we are able to accomplish so much.

One of our biggest partners is the City of Kaukauna itself. 1000 Islands is a city park, so we are able to rely on a helping hand from the city for tasks that we are unable to do ourselves, like removing large trees from the trail. We also benefit from larger city projects. When Beaulieu Court and our parking lots were repaved in 2013, the city had to install new features to reduce the amount of storm water runoff (the rainfall that directly flowed into the river,

**Mark Your Calendar!**  
**1000 Islands'**

# Eagle Days

**January 17th, 2015**




bringing dirt, grass and other sediment with it) in the area. The feature that was installed is called a bioretention pond. Although this may sound new to you, it really is just a large scale rain garden, which is a copy of how nature cleans water the old fashioned way, through wetlands.

Wetlands are an extremely important habitat type for keeping our water clean. They naturally filter dirt and sediments from the water through a sponge-like action.

To understand better, try an experiment at home. Take a glass of water and mix in some dirt, sand and anything else you can find. This will be our rainwater that has collected dirt and other sediments as it runs across the ground. Next find a kitchen sponge and wet it.

This is your wetland. Hold your wetland over a bowl or bucket and slowly pour the dirty water over the sponge. Notice how the sponge collects some of the dirt and sand from the water leaving the water in the bowl cleaner than the water you started with.

The bioretention pond treats water that flows during rain by slowing the flow of water as it flows over grass and then holds water in the ponding area until it can evaporate or slowly seep into the ground. This gives time for sediments and contaminants to settle out of the water before it reaches the river, helping to keep our water clean.

Another great friend and partner to 1000 Islands is Kaukauna Utilities. KU has been part of a number of our projects in the past including our water efficient bathrooms and tree seedling sale. For the past three years, we have been working on the installation of a new lighting system in the North American and African rooms. That project is now complete with the installation of light tubes in both rooms.



**“Light tubes have become a popular option for homeowners who want to bring some natural light into their homes.”**

Light tubes are a more efficient version of a skylight. They consist of a reflective tube that is installed between the roof and the ceiling with a dome on the roof to collect sunlight and a round fixture on the ceiling that resembles a recessed light. Between the two rooms, 33 of these light tubes have been

installed. Light tubes have become a popular option for homeowners who want to bring some natural light into their homes. What sets our system apart from others is that our lighting system works with the natural light, called daylighting, to bring the optimum light levels in the room by dimming the light fixtures as more

daylight is available and brightening them back up when the daylight diminishes. This is a very exciting project for 1000 Islands as we

are always looking for ways to lessen our impact on the environment and use more renewable resources. It has been a long time in the making but we are proud to show off our lighting system. Feel free to ask for a demonstration next time you stop down!

Throughout the year, we often have Boy Scouts inquiring on projects that they can complete in order to achieve their Eagle ranking. This is the highest ranking that a Boy Scout can achieve and to the benefit of many community, school or religious organizations, the Eagle Project is a requirement. We have had two Eagle Projects completed recently at 1000 Islands, and both have been great additions.

One of our recent projects was the addition of some sign posts along the boardwalk trail. Tanner VandenHeuvel designed, built and installed 12 sign posts along the boardwalk. The sign posts will hold signs that can be changed seasonally. We currently have a storybook out on the trail so that visitors, starting by the wigwam, can walk the trail and read

a great story of a young girl discovering what can all be seen down by the water. Watch for the signs to change for new stories or even just signs highlighting what can be seen in the woods.

The other project that has been recently completed was a new creek net storage area. Nicholas Lehrer designed and built this storage area outside between the nature center and garage area. It gives us outside access to the nets, eliminating the need to haul them in an out on an almost daily basis in the spring and summer. The new storage area also gives the nets a chance to dry out in between uses and frees up some needed storage space in our back work room.

These Eagle Scout projects help us get some great projects accomplished and we are very grateful for them. Thank you to Tanner and Nicholas for all of your hard work! If you know someone working to achieve their Eagle ranking, please keep 1000 Islands in mind as a possible benefiting organization.

### Upcycled Holiday Gifts

Join us at 1000 Islands on Tuesday, December 16th, at 6:30 pm. Use old materials to make wonderful new creations just in time for the gift giving season!



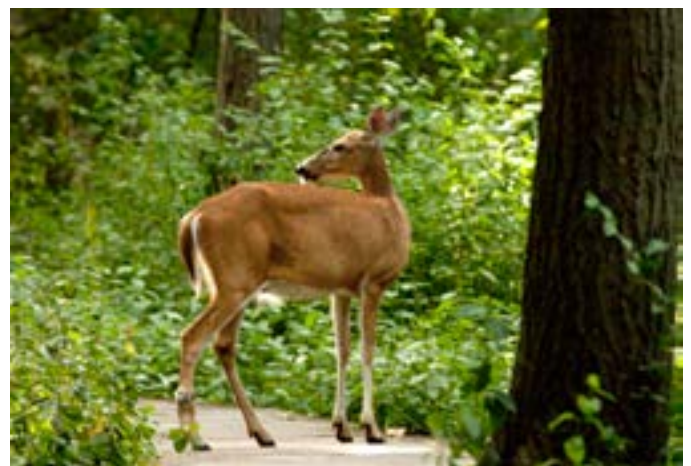
**“Nicholas Lehrer designed and built this storage area outside between the nature center and garage area.”**



Our Facebook page has become a very popular site for Kaukauna residents.



Visit us at <http://www.1000islandsenvironmentalcenter.org> then click the “Facebook” button!



## Timber Harvest - Upper Woods

by Tom McGinnis,  
1000 Islands Building & Grounds Chairman

Conserving the natural environment and maintaining its beauty for future generations has always been a priority for the 1000 Islands Environmental Center committee. Part of that includes managing the woodlots to improve the overall health and quality of the habitat. Over the years 1000 Islands has sought advice and received guidance from professional foresters associated with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, private forestry consultants and local paper industry foresters in order to develop a forest management plan that will help sustain our woodlot for years to come.

According to our forest management plan, which was created by professionals in the forest industry, our woodland should have selective harvesting done every 10 to 15 years. Selective harvesting removes the inferior trees to allow the healthiest trees that have good form sufficient space to grow and produce seed for a future continuous, uneven-aged northern hardwood forest.

The conservancy zone is not new to timber harvests. Historic verbal reports say that the 1000 Islands upper woodland was clear-cut during the mid 1880's. It was cut again in the 1920s. A selective harvest was completed on portions of the upper woodland in the mid-1980s. Our written records show that after several back-to-back very dry years in the 1980's, oak trees that were drought stressed were also attacked by an ever-present soil fungus called armillaria as well as a beetle known as the Two-lined Chestnut Borer. Those three situations were causing serious decline of many oaks. A logger was hired at that time to remove and sell the timber while it was still marketable. Growth rings of the trees that were cut revealed that they were 60 years old, which confirmed the 1920's clear-cut report.

Today, we are once again preparing for another selective harvest. Professional foresters and loggers, at the request of 1000 Islands, will be thinning the upper woodland south of county highway ZZ. Trees that will be harvested have been marked with paint and a contract describing the logger's responsibilities has been drawn up and signed. Cutting the trees

and log removal will take place during November 2014. Although there will be noticeable change when the harvest takes place, please note that long-term outcome will mean better tree health, wildlife habitat, timber, aesthetics and watershed protection. We thank you for your continued support in making 1000 Islands a rewarding natural destination.

## MEMORIALS

MARGARET BREWSTER  
By: Mrs. Robert Roloff

LENORE BALL  
By: Myrna Corpeny

RICHARD BALL  
By: Myrna Corpeny

CARLON "BUD" DREIER  
By: Jeffrey Dreier

THOMAS OETTINGER  
By: Marilyn Coonen

EVIE JANSEN  
By: Norb & Dorothy Dietzen  
Friends of 1000 Islands  
The Schroeder Group S.C.  
Attorneys At Law  
James & Roberta Drewiske

RUSS DELAHUNT  
By: Michael & Tricia McGinnis  
Florence Brewster  
Kathi Seifert

CELINE ROMENSKO  
By: Carole Vanden Heuvel

KATHY BAMBERY  
By: Glenn Smith  
Henry & Mary Drechsler

MARY CASTONIA  
By: Donald Castonia

MARIAN MOONEY  
By: Walley Mooney

NORBERT DIETZEN  
By: Dorothy Dietzen

JAMES R. TOONAN  
By: Tyler Vanden Heuvel  
Sheila Vetrone  
Carole Vanden Heuvel

EILEEN NAGAN  
By: Kate & Tito Titus  
Michael & Patricia Valentyn  
Peter Nagan

CHARLIE FISCHER  
By: Val Fischer  
Courtney & Craig Peterson  
Kara & Mike Brochtrup &  
Kendall,  
Caiden, & Bentley  
Jordan & Olivia Fischer

EVELYN NIRSCHL  
By: Mark Zimmerman  
Barbara Hooyman

DR. MARION C. (MARTY)  
MORRIS  
By: Elaine Ven Rooy

KATHY COLLINS  
By: Michael & Patricia Valentyn  
Glenn Hansen  
Mernie Roloff

GERMAINE ST.ARNOLD  
By: Elaine Ven Rooy

LEO DRIESSEN  
By: Jane Driessen

DALLAS WERNER  
By: Jane Kleinschmidt  
Orlando & Janice Jansen  
Bonnie Sommers  
John & Darla Hackel  
Jane Hayes

NORMAN LENZ  
By: Carla Zacharias

JUDY KENNEY  
By: Helen Lenz

## Birds of Wisconsin

Join us at 6:30pm on Thursday, November 20th for a live bird program by AVES Wildlife Alliance. Become an ornithologist and discover what makes a bird a bird and what makes each species unique. Learn about some of Wisconsin's most common and rare birds and their special habitat needs. Pick up some fun tips for identifying birds in your own backyard.



### NEW MEMBERS

Bruce Werschem  
 Storm Walsvik & family  
 Jean Effa  
 Marcia Weber  
 Ronald Wendling  
 Patrick Hughes & family  
 Andrea & Bill Schaller & family  
 Eric Hietpas  
 Pat Wilz  
 Mike & Marcia Ostwald  
 Pater Helander  
 Valley Green Carpet Core LLC  
 Debra & Jim Schoenfelt

Randy & Kim Tisler  
 Stephen Harmon

### LIFETIME MEMBERS

Colleen Granger  
 Kelly & Paul Wenzel  
 Brian & Maureen Granger  
 Bill & Kay Winger  
 Glen Meyerhofer  
 Robert DeBruin



### DONATIONS:

AED Equipment  
 Deer Antlers, Turtle Shells  
 Snowy Owl Mount  
 LED Christmas Lights  
 Money Donation  
 Superior Agets  
 Money Donation  
 Money Donation  
 Money for  
 Eagle Days Brochure

Sap Jugs  
 Bird Houses  
 Money Donation

Stove  
 Bird Nest & Eggs  
 Money Donation  
 Baby Fox Mount  
 Bird Feeder  
 Activity Backpacks  
 Deer Hide  
 Binoculars  
 Garlon Herbicide  
 Indian Artifacts  
 Explorer Backpacks  
 Wood Duck Mount  
 Indian Artifacts  
 Duck Mounts  
 Fishing Poles & Nets  
 Binoculars  
 Framed Picture and  
 Fish Fossils  
 Canning Jars  
 Bird Feeders  
 Mounted Pheasant  
 Wood Duck Houses  
 Snake Skin  
 Money Donation  
 Money Donation  
 Money Donation

### GIVEN BY:

Kaukauna Community Health Associates  
 Matt Green  
 Richard Marx  
 Gail Wagnitz  
 Norb & Dorothy Dietzen  
 Loran Faust  
 Jim & Kristine Serwe  
 Bryan & Rosemary Derricks  
 Stadtmueller & Associates  
 Fox River Navigational Systems Authority  
 Appleton Downtown Inc.  
 Zaug's  
 Gary Chadwick  
 U.S. Venture/Schmidt Family Foundation Inc.  
 Lou St. Arnold  
 Hayden Carroll  
 Kaukauna Lions' Club  
 Mike Bauman  
 Ron Diedrick  
 Betsy Grogan  
 Ken Reynolds  
 Matt Welter  
 Gail Miller  
 Jack & Gwen Farrell  
 Annette Rubiano  
 Paul Gradl  
 Marv Heindl  
 Mark Polomis  
 Dan Nagan  
 Maynard Krueger  
 Bob & Jeanne Pfister

Chris Behrens  
 Dan Tuyls  
 Peyton Hilbert  
 Wilford Chase  
 Brad Wittman  
 Steven Belling  
 Darlene Toonen  
 Green Bay Aquarium Society

### Weekend Volunteers!

The success of 1000 Islands itself depends on the generous support of volunteers. We are very much in need of additional weekend volunteers, the people who run the Center on Saturdays and Sundays.

It's easy to be a weekend volunteer. Sally or Debbie will give you the essential training, and that's it! Open the building up, feed Jabber, and greet visitors to our Nature Center and answer the phone. The day that you donate will make a big difference to each and every person who visits the Environmental Center.

Become a weekend volunteer. Contact Sally at 920-766-4733.



1000 Islands Environmental Center  
 1000 Beaulieu Court  
 Kaukauna, WI 54130

Cat-Tails • Sally Kenney & Randy McSorley, Editors  
 Phone 920.766.4733  
 email thousandisland@new.rr.com

The "Friends of 1000 Islands Environmental Center" is a non-profit organization whose main objective is to provide assistance to the 1000 Islands Environmental Center. This assistance comes through fund raising projects, membership dues and volunteers who donate time and skills to the Center. The purpose of the Environmental Center is to promote the appreciation of and involvement in nature by people of all ages.

Some of the benefits offered to members of the "Friends" are:

- This newsletter, which features articles of interest to the whole family
- Special programs for members with visits to interesting nature spots
- Free use of snowshoes
- As a member, you are welcome to attend the "Friends" meetings which are held the third Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Center
- Members names are listed on the "Friends" plaque located in the Center.

Membership fees are:

Adult	\$20 per year
Family	\$30 per year
Student	\$10 per year
Senior Citizen	\$10 per year
Benefactor	\$100
Lifetime	\$100 per person

**Friends Application**

Enroll me as a "Friend of 1000 Islands."

Here is my \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_\_\_ membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ This is a new membership

\_\_\_\_\_ This is a renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

The Friends of the 1000 Islands Environmental Center  
 1000 Islands Environmental Center  
 1000 Beaulieu Court  
 Kaukauna, WI 54130