

Fall 2018 Edition

The HERON

News from the Bong Naturalist Association



BONG Naturalist Association



Photo credit: Adobe Stock

Fall Bird Feeding Tips

"Birds preparing to migrate need high-calorie foods."

Written By: Chad Hensiak

Have you been told you should not feed the birds in the fall because it will keep them from making their winter migrations? Nothing could be further from the truth. Read on to learn how feeding birds in the fall helps them migrate and learn some tips on keeping your bird feeders busy throughout the autumn season.

Feeding birds in the fall is a great way to help them build their fat reserves up before they migrate, offer a much-needed snack to migrating birds as they pass through your area, and supplement natural food sources as they begin to disappear. Migrating birds will remember the places they find food during the fall and return to these spots in

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Meet the Dombkowskis

"Camp hosting at Bong has been a fantastic experience."

Written By: Chad Hensiak

I had a chance to meet Joe and Karen Dombkowski at the Molinaro Visitor Center in Richard Bong State Recreation Area. They are a very happy couple with a lust for life, and they really seem to be enjoying their new lifestyle as camp hosts. Before volunteering at Bong, both Joe and Karen were registered nurses with over 35 years of nursing, hospice care, and operating room work between them. They are very happy to be grandparents. They both enjoy riding motorcycles, fishing, hiking, hunting, and living a minimalistic lifestyle in their cozy class A motorhome. Currently, the Dombkowskis spend their summers camp hosting at Richard Bong Recreation Area.

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Letter from the Editor

Heron readers,

It is with great excitement and anticipation that I write this letter. In June of this year, I was asked to take on the role of Editor in Chief for the Heron Newsletter. I hope to increase readership of the Heron by producing a great looking, inviting, and informative newsletter for both the public and our Bong Naturalists Association (BNA) members to enjoy.

I hold associate degrees in both writing and graphic design and am currently earning a bachelor's degree in professional communications and emerging media. I have been a photojournalist since 2009. In 2016, I started my own business called [CAH Promotions LLC](#) to provide digital and printed communications for area small business. Aside from running my business, I am currently a photojournalist for Southern Lakes Newspapers and Lake Geneva Regional News. I also have 15 years of sales and marketing experience.

The digital version of the Heron also offers features not possible in print, such as the ability to be taken directly to a featured article from the front page and pages from the table of contents simply by clicking on them. The blue underlined text in the electronic version are called hyperlinks. They will open websites, open your email so you can send messages to the recipient in the link, or take you to a page in the newsletter. I have also designed the layout of the Heron to be a two-page spread as a book or newspaper is displayed.

My apologies for getting this edition out a little late, but I assure you I have worked very diligently to produce the Fall 2018 edition of the Heron. I am open to any ideas for future articles and ask any photographers reading to participate in the Visitor Photo Gallery by submitting photos taken at Richard Bong State Recreation Area for a chance to get them published in future editions of the Heron.

I am honored to have the opportunity to be a member of the Bong Naturalist Association and to serve Richard Bong State Recreation Area. I look forward to working with the readers of the Heron and welcome any input you may have that may improve the Heron newsletter. Please feel free to email me directly at contact@cahpromotions.com with any questions, comments, or suggestions.



Chad Hensiak

-Heron Editor in Chief

Letter from the BNA President

Heron readers,

Autumn is just around the corner. This means members of the Bong Naturalist Association (BNA) are very busy organizing more of the great seasonal activities that make Richard Bong State Recreation Area such a unique place to visit all year round. We truly appreciate the volunteers who make sure our special programs, fun events, merchandise, and firewood are available for our visitors. Thank you! On that note, I would like to recognize the following folks for their outstanding efforts and the fresh, new beginnings they bring to the duties they have accepted:

- Theresa Leydens and her committee have organized another great Wolf Lake Trail Run scheduled for its regular weekend in late September. Have you been the recipient of one of the beautiful hand-made Wolf Lake Trail Run award mugs? If not, register to run and get your hands on one this year! Read John Meyer's article in this issue of the Heron to learn more on the history of the run.
- Renee Paukner has revamped the [BNA website](http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/). If you have not yet seen it, visit <http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/>. Great job Renee, the website looks amazing!
- The Heron issue you are reading has been designed, edited and assembled by Chad Hensiak, who brings his vast newspaper experience as he takes over as Editor in Chief of the Heron Newsletter. Read his introduction letter in this issue of the Heron. Feel free to contact him through [his company website](http://www.cahpromotions.com) www.cahpromotions.com, via email contact@cahpromotions.com or call him at his office phone at 262-342-6269.

Many other new beginnings are currently taking place in the BNA. Those changes, along with the addition of some new members, have our officers playing catch up with many activities and responsibilities. Here are some updates and changes that have recently taken place:

- In recognition of the increase of wood and merchandise sales over the summer months, it was determined at the August BNA meeting that our bookkeeper would assume the duties of counting the money from these sales.
- The funds and donations accumulated for the Nature Explore Classroom (NEC) are currently being used to develop the classroom. The NEC funds have also been segregated from the BNA funds for clarification in our bookkeeping. Update on the NEC progress is also in this issue of the Heron.
- Laurice Maki has been diligently preparing our financial reports. Monthly income and expense records are currently available for BNA members, and a budget for 2019 is being prepared. Again, thanks to Nancy Bose and Laurice for the tremendous number of hours they have spent insuring all BNA dollars are present and accounted for.

We want you! BNA volunteer efforts are needed! Your ideas and support are vital to the continuation of the great work our BNA members are doing for Richard Bong State Recreation Area. Please plan to attend the annual meeting, and participate in plotting a course for the coming year. If you are not currently receiving agendas and or meeting minutes by e-mail, please contact Secretary Jan Dickinson at jmdickinson6929@gmail.com.

Have a happy Fall!



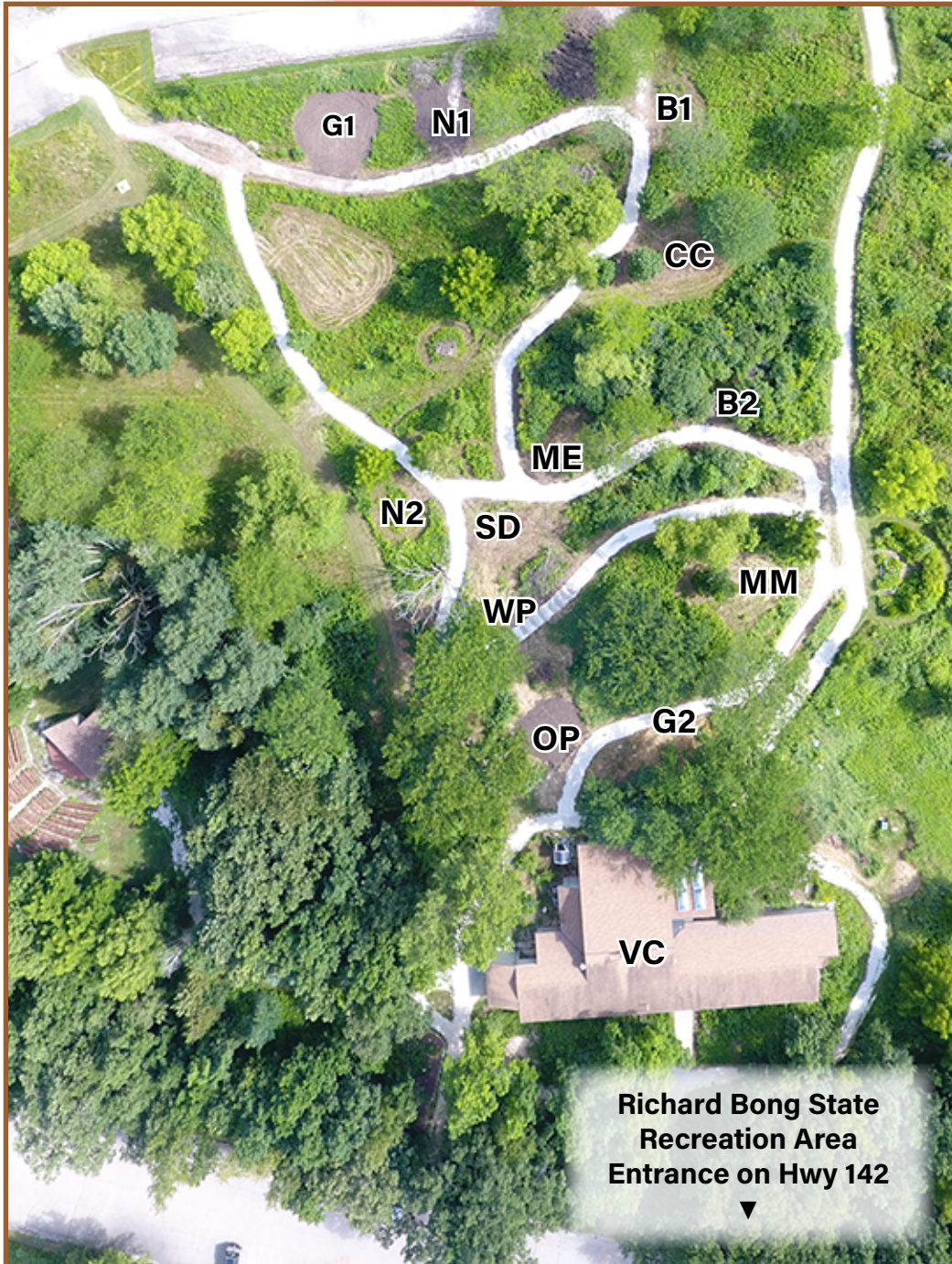
-BNA President

Nature Explore Classroom Update

As of the time this newsletter was written the path and classroom areas have been staked out, mowing has been completed, and [Reesman's Excavating](#) is scheduled to break ground on the Nature Explore Classroom (NEC) on August 23rd, 2018 to begin installing a six-foot wide crushed limestone path and grading the classroom areas. Once the path has been completed, the classrooms will be surfaced with artificial turf, mulch and wood cookies, pour-in-place tile, sod, and stamped concrete.

When the classroom areas are surfaced, other classroom elements will be installed, entrances will be finished, and the final landscaping will be completed. The project is currently on task, and we hope to have a few classrooms completed for the fall of 2018. See the overhead NEC map below.

Stay tuned for upcoming workdays, and check out the [Camp Classifieds](#) section of this edition of the Heron for a list of things still needed for the NEC project. Of course, cash donations are always needed and greatly appreciated!



Classroom Key

B1, B2 - Building Areas

CC - Climbing and Crawling Area

GA - Garden

G1, G2 - Gathering Areas

ME - Messy Material Area

MM - Movement and Music Areas

N1, N2 - Nature Art Areas

OP - Open Play Area

SD - Sand and Dirt Digging Area

VC - Molinaro Visitor Center

WP - Water Play Area



Monarch butterfly feeding on nectar

Photo credit: Adobe Stock

Help Save the Monarch!

"Losing the monarch butterfly, and other insects like them, means losing our ability to grow food!"

Written By: Chad Hensiak

Its official scientific name is *Danaus Plexippus*. Most of us know it as the monarch butterfly. However, it is known by various other names such as the wandering butterfly, milkweed butterfly, black veined brown butterfly, and the common tiger butterfly. No matter what you call it, the monarch's iconic orange, black, and white wing pattern makes it North America's most recognized butterfly. However, the latest study by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) shows Monarch numbers are dangerously low.

The larval stage of the monarch butterfly is the familiar white, black, and yellow striped caterpillar. The monarch caterpillar's diet consists exclusively of the milkweed plant. Milkweed gets

its name from the white milky toxin it produces. Monarch caterpillars store the milkweed's toxin in their bodies making them unappetizing to most predators who might try to eat them.

Once a monarch caterpillar has grown to be about two-inches long, it will usually wander thirty to forty feet from the milkweed plant they hatched on in search of a place to form a chrysalis and pupate (change into an adult butterfly). It is very important for the caterpillar to find a safe place to pupate as they are vulnerable to weather and some predators during the pupation period. Total time it takes for a monarch to go from egg to larva, larva to pupa, and pupa to adult is twenty to thirty days in warm weather.

When the pupation period is over the familiar monarch butterfly emerges from its chrysalis. The adult form of the monarch is the familiar orange, black and white winged butterfly we all know so well. Adult monarchs live on the nectar of flowers and only return to milkweed plants to lay their eggs.

Monarch butterflies migrate south in the winter. Butterflies living east of the Rocky Mountains will migrate south to Mexico during colder months. Butterflies living west of the Rocky Mountains will migrate to southern California during winter. This migration typically begins in October every year and takes them 2,500 to 3,000 miles away from home. The monarch butterfly has one of the longest migrations

Monarch egg attached to a milkweed leaf



Photo credit: Adobe Stock

Monarch caterpillar



Monarch chrysalis

Photo credit: Adobe Stock

in the animal kingdom.

Even though the monarch butterfly has survived for millennia, they are currently in danger. Climate change, habitat loss, insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, illegal logging in Mexico, and the decline in milkweed growth are contributing to the North American monarch's demise.

The Center for Biological Diversity reports an 80 percent decline of the North American monarch population between 1994 and 2017. The World Wildlife Fund-Telcel Alliance did a study in 2018 showing a loss of another 14.8 percent over the 2017-2018 winter months. In 2014, The Center for Biological Diversity, The Center for Food Safety, The Xerces Society, and Dr. Lincoln Brower petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the monarch butterfly under the endangered species act; their decision is set to be released in June of 2019.

The population decline of the monarch butterfly is a warning. Like many other indicator species, the monarch butterfly is telling us that our way of life needs to change. The monarch butterfly is a pollinating insect. Losing the monarch butterfly and other insects like them,

means losing our ability to grow food.

However, it is not too late. The monarch butterfly is not gone yet. If we all work together we can increase the monarch population and help save them from possible extinction. You can make a difference by planting milkweed, avoiding the use herbicides, pesticides, and insecticides, creating a butterfly

garden to raise monarchs in your backyard, and supporting your local wildlife conservationists like the Richard Bong State Recreation Area. ♦

[See the sources for this article on page 23.](#)



Monarch butterflies emerging from a chrysalis

Photo credit: Adobe Stock

“Birds” Continued from front page

the spring. Leaving food out in the fall will also help birds that stay all year round to survive the winter.

The nutritional needs of migratory birds will change with the seasons. Birds preparing to migrate need high-calorie foods. Here is a list of some of the best foods to offer our feathered migratory friends as they prepare to head south for the winter:

- Black Oil Sunflower Seeds
- White Proso Millet Seeds
- Nyjer Seed
- Suet
- Assorted roasted, unsalted nuts
- Cracked Corn
- Nectar
- Assorted Fruit

Making birds feel safe at feeders is just as important as providing the correct foods. Birds who like feeding on the ground will look for a predator free area close to a place to hide to forage. So, keep your cat inside and prevent hawk attacks by placing your ground feeders within ten feet of a place to hide. Dense trees, shrubberies, or brush piles are perfect places ground feeding birds can escape to if they feel threatened. Placing hanging feeders under awnings, umbrellas, and in gazebos, is a great way to make feeding birds feel safe while they eat and block their view from passing hawks.

Just like us, birds need to drink water every day. They also use it for bathing and removing parasites. So, don't forget to put out a bird bath. The best bird baths mimic natural sources of water and are close to ground level. Birds will regularly fly for miles to visit a clean, dependable, source of water.

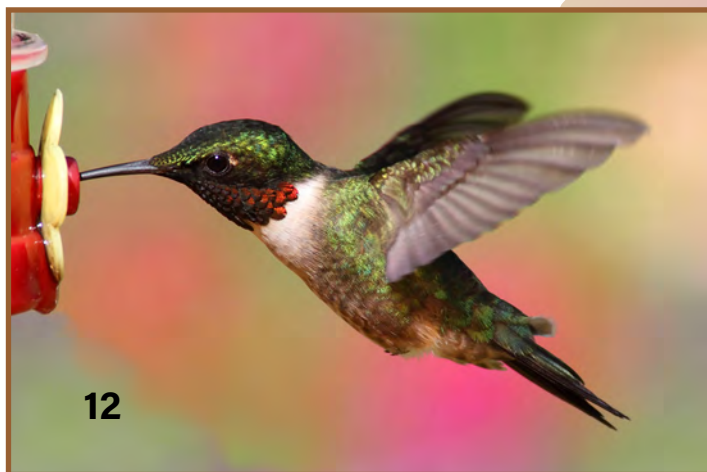
Richard Bong Recreation Area is a great place to observe, photograph, and learn more about the birds listed in this article. For information on any upcoming bird-related events, please visit our events calendar at <http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/>.♦

[See the sources for this article on page 23.](#)





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Here is a list of Wisconsin's migratory birds (*some pictured on the left*) known to visit feeders, the kinds of feeders they prefer, and the foods they eat:

1. Baltimore Orioles – Eat insects, fruit, and nectar; will visit feeders with orange halves and nectar

2. Brown-headed Cowbirds – Eat insects, seeds; will visit seed feeders

3. Chipping Sparrows – Eat insects and seeds; will visit ground feeders

4. Common Grackles – Eat insects, seeds, and fruit; will visit seed feeders

5. Eastern Towhees – Eat insects, seeds, and fruit; will visit ground feeders

6. Fox Sparrows – Eat insects and seeds; will visit seed feeders

7. Harris's Sparrows – Eat insects, seeds, and berries; will visit ground feeders

8. Indigo Buntings – Eat insects, seeds, and fruit; will visit seed feeders

9. Red-headed Woodpeckers – Eat insects, nuts, and fruit; will visit seed and suet feeders

10. Red-winged Blackbirds – Eat insects, seeds; will visit seed feeders

11. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks – Eat insects, seeds, and fruit; will visit seed feeders

12. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds – Eat insects and nectar; will visit nectar feeders

13. White-crowned Sparrows– Eat insect, seeds, and berries; will visit ground feeders

14. White-throated Sparrows – Eat insect, seeds, and fruit; will visit ground feeders

15. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers – Eat insects and tree sap; will visit suet feeders

16. Yellow-headed Blackbirds – Eat insects, seeds; will visit ground feeders

Supporting photos credited to : Adobe Stock

“Dombkowskis” Continued from front page

The interview:

Photo credit: Chad Hensiak

Chad: *What made you decide to become camp hosts?*

Dombkowskis:

After spending most of our lives working as registered nurses, we began looking for something less stressful to do during retirement. We both wanted to travel, we both enjoy being outdoors, and we are both passionate about conserving nature; therefore, it felt right to pursue the RV life. When it came time to retire, we did not want to sit around collecting dust. Camp hosting gives us something to do while still allowing us to slow down a bit and enjoy the simpler things in life.



Chad: *How do you guys cope with being away from friends and family?*

Dombkowskis:

We connect with friends and family online when Wi-Fi is available, call when we have cellular phone coverage, write letters, and we often take our grandkids on camp host trips with us.

Chad: *How hard was it to adjust to this lifestyle and what are some of the changes you made to make things work?*

Dombkowskis:

Although we enjoy living a minimalist lifestyle now, it took a bit of effort to get here. Thankfully, downsizing our life was something we were slowly working towards before retiring and living in our RV full time. The biggest challenge of living this way is staying within our budget.

Chad: *What do you like most about volunteering at Richard Bong State Recreation Area?*

Dombkowskis:

Our favorite part of volunteering at Bong is the people we meet. We like talking with the visitors and campers and hearing their stories. We also enjoy teaching visitors about nature and helping out at park events. Camp hosting at Bong has been a fantastic experience; it is everything we had hoped it would be and more.

Camp hosts, like Joe and Karen Dombkowski, are people that spend part or all of the year volunteering to work at camp grounds and national forests in exchange for a free or a reduced-price campsite. Camp hosting is not for everyone. It best suited for retirees with

their own RV or camper and income.

Camp hosts perform a variety of duties during their stay. However, the most common tasks include greeting visitors, assisting campers, performing light maintenance work, educational activities, stocking and cleaning restrooms, grounds keeping, and picking up litter.

For more information on camp hosting anywhere in the Wisconsin State Park System visit <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/volunteer.html>. If you would like to become a camp host at Richard Bong State Recreation Area, please call (262) 878-5601 or email annette.swanek@wisconsin.gov. For information on becoming a member of the Bong Naturalist Association (BNA) Friends of the Park group, visit <http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/friends-of-the-park/>. ♦

Pictured from left to right– Handmade Wolf Lake Run cups from 2012, 2013, and 2005.



Photo credit: Chad Hensiak

19th Annual Wolf Lake Run

**"This year, we welcome our new race director,
Theresa Leydens"**

Written By: John Meyer

The Wolf Lake Trail Run (WLTR) will be enjoyed for its nineteenth consecutive year on September 30th, 2018.

The Wolf Lake Trail Run is a smaller size race but packs in unique features as well as amenities common to large-scale runs. Our run is unique having hand thrown painted pottery for awards, a race shirt with a very cool design created by a local artist/volunteer, donated and homemade bakery items, and loads of sponsor-donated items being raffled off. The race course itself is special due to mowed trails being very well marked (well one guy took a wrong turn – his fault) and three race distances to choose from. Our race course distances and routes have probably changed more than any other run due to trail design and trail closures over the years. We finally have standard race distances of 5k, 10k, and 1 mile. These standard distances

may increase participants since people commonly set goals to run these specific distances.

Our run, like others, has timed finishes, age group awards, water stops, EMT services, as well as wonderfully generous sponsors and dedicated volunteers. However, our volunteers are the best!

Historically, we have enjoyed very good weather, but a few runs have had warm temperatures which required runners to be more cautious and drink more fluids. A nice bonus is a beach 40 yards from the finish line which allows an adventurous runner to cool down quickly. Many of our runners come every year. I would guess that half of the runners are the same each year, which makes me think we have a good thing going here.

I have never had the opportunity to officially run the Wolf Lake Trail Run due to race-day volunteer work; however,

I have run numerous trail runs and with the help of volunteers, we have created a race that is vastly safer, less frustrating, and more fun than any race I have ever participated in. We have a great run due to all of your dedication and energy that you invest in this run each year.

We have a new race director in Theresa Leydens. We all owe her our gratitude in leading us in one of the BNA's most profitable events. The WLTR is not a simple event to put on, and we must do our best to help Theresa in this event. We do a great job every year and this year shouldn't be any different. Thank you. ♦

Visitor Photo Gallery

Show us your favorite photo of Bong!

For a chance to get your photo(s) published in the Visitor Photo Gallery of the next edition of the Heron, send it to the editor at contact@cahpromotions.com. All photos submitted must have been taken somewhere on the Richard Bong State Recreation Area grounds, be the property of the person submitting them, and be appropriate for all ages. Be sure to put "Heron Visitor Photo Gallery" in the subject line and be sure to include, your name, the location of the photos, a brief description and the date it was taken.



"Wrestling Wasps" taken on August 10, 2018
Submitted by: Drake Hensiak



"Field of Flowers" taken on August 10, 2018
Submitted by: T



"Wolf Lake at Night" taken on August 12, 2018
Submitted by: Chad Hensiak

Visitor Photos Gallery



**"Sunset in the Mist" taken on July 28, 2018
Submitted by: Tracy Carpenter**



**aken on July 28, 2018
Tracy Carpenter**



**"Sandhill Crane" taken on August 10, 2018
Submitted by: Drake Hensiak**

Harvesting the Wild Nuts of Autumn

"These wild and tasty treats only come once a year, so it is best to be prepared!"

Written By: Chad Hensiak

Few foods are as packed full of nutrition and life-sustaining calories as the simple nut. In Wisconsin, we are blessed to have wild nuts falling from trees everywhere. However, these wild and tasty treats only come once a year, so it is best to be prepared. Here are some tips on gathering, prepping, and enjoying two of the favorite nuts of Wisconsin's autumn season.

How to find shagbark hickory nuts:

The shagbark tree is the most common hickory nut producing tree in Wisconsin. Shagbark trees prefer to grow in areas with moderate to well-balanced moisture. Mature shagbark trees can be identified by the long shaggy strips of bark peeling off their trunks and the 8-14-inch leaves growing from its branches -usually in clusters of five.

Shagbark hickory nuts begin ripening in late summer and early fall. When the green husks of these nuts begin turning brown and splitting open, they are ready to be harvested. You may either pick the ripe nuts from the tree or retrieve fallen nuts from the ground.

How to prepare hickory nuts:

1. Remove the outer hull
2. Pour the dehulled nuts into a bucket of water and remove any that float, as they are most likely rotten or have been eaten by burrowing insects.
3. Visually inspect the remaining nuts rejecting any with holes, deep cracks, or rotten spots in the shells.
4. Dry the in-shell nuts by laying them out on a rack and leaving them cure for about two weeks to make the nut meat easier to remove from the shell before eating.

Once cured, hickory nuts can be cracked open and enjoyed raw or roasted. To roast hickory nuts, remove the nut meat from the shell, place them on a baking pan and bake in a 200-250-degree oven for 5-10 minutes gently stirring them half-way through. You may also season with salt or other flavors to taste.

Hickory Nuts

Photo credit: Adobe Stock





Black walnut on tree

Photo credit: Adobe Stock

How to find black walnuts:

Black walnut trees do not like shade and will grow in wet and dry habitats so long as there is plenty of sunlight. Mature walnut trees can be identified by their dark bark and groups of 25 serrated leaves connected to a central stem by smaller twigs. The fruit of the walnut tree is round with a hard shell.

Black walnuts begin ripening in September and October. They are ripe when they fall to the ground. Harvest fallen walnuts from the ground as soon as possible to prevent rotting, molding, and damage from animals. The hulls of ripe walnuts will soften slightly and become easier to remove.

How to prepare black walnuts:

1. Remove the outer hull. The use of rubber gloves is recommended while removing the hulls as the black liquid inside will stain clothes, hands, and almost else anything it comes into contact with. Also, encountering worms or other insects in the hull does not necessarily mean the nut is bad. Just remove the insects with the hull and continue.
2. Place the now dehulled walnuts in a bucket of water and discard any floaters as they are most likely inedible.
3. Rinse the remaining black walnuts shells with a powerful garden hose to remove the black liquid and any other debris.
4. Dry the shelled walnuts by laying them out on a rack for about a week.

Once dry, black walnuts can be cracked open and eaten raw, or roasted. To roast black walnuts, remove the nut meats from the shells and roast them in a 300-degree oven for 5-10 minutes. You may also season with salt or other flavors to taste.

Both shagbark hickory trees and black walnut trees can be found on the grounds of Richard Bong State Recreation Area. Visitors and campers are allowed to harvest hickory nuts and black walnuts for personal use only. For more information on nut-related events, please visit the calendar of events at <http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/>. Now that you know the best places and times to harvest, ways to prep, and recipes to enjoy these wild autumn treats, it is time to get out there and, well, go nuts! ♦

[See the sources for this article on page 23.](#)

September Events

Thursday, September 6

Adopt a Highway

Join us for the last highway clean-up of 2018. You must be at least twelve years old to participate.

This is a great way to earn community service hours, get fresh air, and exercise –all while helping the park!

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, September 13

Knee-high Naturalist

Bring your 3-5-year-old to this fun, hands-on program. This month let's make STONE SOUP!

Please call (262) 878-5601 to register or to cancel.

Meet at shelter number one. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, September 15

Candlelight Hike

Bring the family for fall fun by candlelight. Hike the two-mile trail on your own or join us for a shorter guided hike.

We will have a bonfire and marshmallows.

Meet at the Visitor Center. 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 22

Autumn Edibles Hike

Ever wonder which edible plants live in Wisconsin? Learn to safely and legally forage for fall flavors.

You must be at least twelve years old to participate.

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center and be prepared to drive. 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Backpacking Basics.

Learn the ins and outs of modern backpacking. Discover what equipment will get you started and how to save money.

Learn about loading, properly fitting a pack, and some delicious food ideas to pack for the trail.

Meet at the Visitor Center. 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 29

Intro to Tai Chi

Join trainer Ron Pfeiffer as he discusses and demonstrates various Tai chi styles.

This ancient Chinese tradition is a graceful form of exercise combining slow, focused movements with deep breathing.

Please call (262) 878-5601 to preregister. Come prepared to participate! Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 9:30-11am.

Paint and Sip

José Palomo of [Picasso Vino Studio](#) provides step by step instructions to create your own "Heron at Sunset" masterpiece.

Open to painters of all skill levels who are at least 15 years old. Please call (262) 878-5601 to preregister.

The \$30 entrance fee includes all painting supplies and one free glass of wine to participants 21 years old and up.

You are welcome to bring your own beverages. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 30

19th Annual Wolf Lake Trail Run / Walk

Enter a 5K or 10K run; or a 1-mile or 5K walk to raise funds for the park.

Enjoy raffles, homemade baked goods, and hand made pottery mug awards.

\$30 per adult / \$18 per youth aged 14 and under due before September 10 -no park entrance fees for event participants

Contact Jan Dickinson at (337) 532-7509 or jmdickinson6929@icloud.com for more information.

Download a registration form at bongnaturalistassociation.org.

Meet at the Beach for packet pick up between 8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. — run / walks will start at 9:30 a.m.

Please note there are no dogs aloud on the beach

October Events

Saturday, October 6

Art Outdoors

Calling all artists!

Join us to create and donate an 8" x 10" piece at the park

Enjoy a reception and refreshments where your piece will be sold. Shelter will be provided in case of rain.

Download a registration form at: bongnaturalistassociation.org

Calling all art and nature lovers!

Meet the artists as they work outdoors, make a masterpiece of your own, then view and purchase art at the reception.

All proceeds benefit the park.

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. Artists Creating 1-4pm. Reception & Auction 4:30-6pm

Thursday, October 11

Knee-high Naturalist

Bring your 3-5 year old to this fun, hands-on program. This month, let's go on a SQUIRREL SAFARI!

Please call (262) 878-5601 to register or to cancel.

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. and come prepared to go outside.

Saturday, October 13

Intro to SCUBA

Join diver Dan Dickinson to learn the basics of SCUBA diving in freshwater lakes.

View equipment and artifacts, and learn how you can become a certified diver.

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Deer Hunt for Food Workshop

Learn to hunt ethically for your own locally-sourced meat.

Open to adults with limited or no hunting experience.

Note: You must participate in the four training sessions starting Oct. 4 before you are eligible to hunt with a mentor.

For registration, contact Marty Moses at mmoses@pheasantsforever.org.

Saturday, October 20

Eco-Halloween Hike

Meet some cold-blooded creatures at this non-scary, family-friendly event.

Enjoy jack-o-lanterns, Halloween nature skits, fires, games, and crafts.

Each hike takes about a half-hour. Entire event is held outdoors, please dress accordingly.

\$2 fee per person (ages 4+) payable at registration. Refreshments will also be available for purchase.

Register for hikes between 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. at shelter number one.

Saturday, October 27

Glazed Ceramic Bowls or Plates

José Palomo from [Picasso Vino Studio](http://PicassoVinoStudio.com) guides you as you glaze your own bowl or plate.

Open to painters of all skill levels who are at least 15 years old.

Select either a small cereal bowl for \$30, a medium side-dish plate for \$35, or a large main-dish plate for \$40.

Call (262) 878-5601 to preregister and prepay and be sure to indicate size & selection when registering.

Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please note that all projects will need to be picked up at a later date.

For more information on upcoming events visit the [Calendar of Events](#) on the BNA website.

November Events

Saturday, November 3

Swans of Wisconsin

Join DNR Biologist Marty Johnson as he discusses the successful reintroduction of the Trumpeter Swan. Learn where to view them and how to identify these majestic birds in the wild. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, November 8

Knee-high Naturalist.

Bring your 3-5 year old to this fun hands-on program. This month, hear some TURKEY TALES. Please call (262) 878-5601 to register or to cancel. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center and come prepared to go outside. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, November 10

Search for Short-eared Owls

We're lucky to have this rare grassland predator visit in the winter. Discover how the unique adaptations of the short-eared owls help them survive. We will also take a drive to search for them. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 17

Corn Husk Art

Create corn husk dolls, flowers, and other art using the same techniques as pioneers and Native Americans. This event is best for ages 10 and up. There is no fee required. However, space is limited so please call (262) 878-5601 to preregister. Meet at the Visitor Center. 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Paint and Sip

José Palomo of [Picasso Vino Studio](#) provides step by step instructions to create your own "Moonlit Tree" masterpiece. Open to painters of all skill levels who are at least 15 years old. Please call (262) 878-5601 to preregister. The \$30 entrance fee includes all painting supplies and one free glass of wine to participants 21 years old and up. You are welcome to bring your own beverages. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center. 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

December Events

Saturday, December 1

Holiday Greenery

Create beautiful, fragrant, evergreen sprays and swags for the holidays. Fee is \$20 and all materials needed. Please call (262) 878-5601 to preregister. Meet at the Molinaro Visitor Center and be prepared to drive. 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. OR 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Friday, December 21

Celebrate the Solstice

Celebrate the Winter Solstice with us as we take a hike and learn how others have celebrated the return of the sun. Meet at shelter number one and dress accordingly as the entire event is held outdoors. 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

For more information on upcoming events visit the [Calendar of Events](#) on the BNA website.



Why Leaves Change Color in the Fall

"The vivid splashes of yellows, reds, oranges, and browns never cease to amaze us!"

Written By: Chad Hensiak

Many of us wait eagerly to see the beautiful colors mother nature paints our tree leaves each year. The vivid splashes of yellows, reds, oranges, and browns never cease to amaze us. However, have you ever wondered why tree leaves turn color each year? Or why they are green until fall?

Leaves are green during the summer months because they contain a green-colored chemical called chlorophyll. Chlorophyll allows tree leaves to combine water and carbon dioxide to create sugars for food. Scientists call this process photosynthesis, and it means to combine with light. A bi-product of photosynthesis

is the oxygen we breathe.

In the fall, lower temperatures and a decrease in daylight hours cause leaves to stop making food. This causes chlorophyll to break down. Once the chlorophyll is gone, its green color also fades.

Factors such as the varying amounts of chlorophyll in the leaves of different trees, the different way each tree breaks down chlorophyll, the different pigments contained in specific tree leaves, and variances in fall weather have much to do with the variety of leaf colors we see in our fall landscapes. These factors contribute to oak leaves turning shades of brown, aspen leaves turning shades of yellow and maple

leaves turning bright red in the fall.

Richard Bong State Recreation Area is the perfect place to enjoy the beautiful colors of fall while hiking, riding a mountain bike, camping, fishing, canoeing, boating, kayaking, horseback riding, picnicking, and more. Photographers from all over the country favor our trails, managed parries, and beaches for capturing stunning images of our local wildlife and beautiful fall scenery. For more information on what you can do at Richard Bong State Recreation Area, please visit <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/richardbong/>. ♦

[See the sources for this article on page 23.](#)

The Secrets of Wildflowers

"Wild flowers do more than merely enhance the scenery!"

Written By: BNA Member -Dee Jucius

Supporting photos credited to: Adobe Stock

Many of us love flowers –especially wildflowers. Their beauty never disappoints, and they appear year after year. However, wild flowers do more than merely enhance the scenery. Read on to learn some of the secrets wildflowers hold.

Queen Anne's lace (shown at right) tells the story of Queen Anne pricking her finger while making lace. A tiny purple spot in the middle of the white lacy flowers is said to represent this event. Queen Anne's Lace is also a wild carrot and the first year's tap root is edible. Queen Anne's Lace blooms from May to October then ends its season by rolling up into a brown ball.



The Meadow Buttercup (shown at left) is also known as the tall buttercup, common buttercup, and giant buttercup. This flower adds a yellow sheen to fields and meadows. The one-inch petals are shiny as if they had been varnished. As pretty as they are, they contain a milk that is considered to be poisonous. The Meadow Buttercup blooms from May to September.

Common St. John's Wort (shown at right) is named after St. John the Baptist. Christians of the Middle Ages believed its yellow color represented the sun / light giving it the power to ward off evil spirits. It was also believed the devil lost his powers when confronted by St. John's Wort. Therefore, St. John's Wort was gathered and hung over the doorways and windows of homes to protect those inside from evil each year on St. John's Day (June 24th). St. John's Wort blooms from June to September.



Disclaimer: Neither the Heron newsletter staff nor the staff of Richard Bong State Recreation Area suggest consuming any wildflowers as listed in this article or otherwise without consulting an expert on the subject. For more information on these and other area wildflowers, feel free pick up the brochure called *Wildflower Blooming Times* from the Molinaro Visitor Center at Richard Bong State Recreation Area.



Common Milkweed (shown at left) is the only plant the monarch butterfly will lay its eggs, as it is the preferred food of the monarch caterpillar. Milkweed has large rubbery leaves and milky looking sap that is sticky to the touch. The flower heads can be plucked from the plant when they are in tight buds and boiled but require several changes of water before becoming edible. Once boiled, the taste is similar to broccoli when buttered. In summer, the pods open and reveal seeds with long silky hairs. These silky hairs were used to stuff pillows and life preservers in World War I. Milkweed blooms from June to August.

Joe-Pye Weed (shown at right) is a rosy-purple flower with leaves featuring small spiral patterns. This plant gets its name from an Indian medicine man named Joe Pye who used this herb to cure fevers in the 1700s. One species of Joe-Pye Weed is known for its vanilla fragrance. Joe-Pye Weed blooms from July to September.



White Snakeroot's head of dainty white flowers (shown at left) looks similar to the flowers of the Common Boneset. White Snakeroot is poisonous. Humans can fall ill to milk sickness (also known as tremetol vomiting) from the dairy products of cows who have consumed it. Milk sickness is believed to have killed Abraham Lincoln's mother, Nancy. White Snakeroot blooms from July to September.

A group of the delicate blue flowers of the Common Flax (shown at right) is a beautiful sight. Flax, also known as linseed, is used to make linen and linseed oil. Flax seeds were historically mixed with cornmeal to make a poultice for mumps. The Common Flax blooms from June to September.



Chicory's abundant sky-blue colored flowers (shown at left) are about two-inches across and grow up from a rosette of large leaves at the base of the plant. The young leaves of this plant are used in salads and cooking greens. The deep tap root of the Chicory flower tastes a bit like coffee when dried, ground, and boiled. The Chicory flower blooms from June to October.

Camp Classifieds

HELP WANTED

There are a few events coming up this fall that we need help with. These are big events for the park and our visitors. Please join us as a visitor and/or volunteer!

Saturday, September 15th between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. We need volunteer help with our Candlelight Hike. We need help with leading guided hikes, hosting the nature center desk, setting out luminaries, patrolling trails, keeping luminaries lit, picking up luminaries, and keeping the bonfires going. If you know anyone who plays guitar or would like to sing or otherwise entertain people, let us know! Volunteer times are 5:30pm-10:00pm. Also, we will be making luminaries (about 500!) on Wednesday, September 12 at 9:30am, many hands make light work. Call Beth at (262) 878-5607. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Saturday, October 20th between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. We need volunteer help with our Eco-Halloween event. This is a big event, and we often get 300-500 people. We need help with set-up, making simple crafts, and playing games with the kids. We also need a lot of trail guides and help with food. If you want to be one of the characters, let me know! Volunteer times are 4:00pm-10:00pm or so. Call Beth at (262) 878-5607. This year's theme is "Cold-blooded Creatures."

WISH LIST

If anyone has any of the following items laying around your house, consider donating them. You could also buy them new and donate. We will put them to good use and all donations are tax deductible.

The following items are needed for upkeep of the park:

- Fiskar's Ratcheting Long-handled Loppers
- Trail Cams
- Bypass Hand Pruners
- 8 ½ x 11 White Copy Paper
- Large (not huge) Rubbermaid Bins
- Portable Backyard Fire Pit

The following items are needed for the NEC Project:

- Native Plants
- Concrete Sand (500 sq. feet)
- Polymeric Sand (500 sq. feet)
- Play Sand for 8' x 8' sandbox
- Seeding Mix (8 yards)
- Kid-size Wheelbarrows (2)
- Lincoln logs/Alphabet Blocks
- Bench Materials & Construction (20)
- Limestone Rocks (big)
- Field stone/Boulders
- Plumbing Installation
- Gravel (800 cu feet)
- Stamped/Colored Concrete
- Concrete (~3 cubic yards)
- Bike Rack (2 small or 1 large)
- Nature Art Installations
- Cattle Paneling (2)

AUCTION ITEMS

The Coleman Company has donated the following items to support the BNA. Bidding will start at \$50.00 per item. All bids should be mailed to the address below by October 30th 2018:

**BNA Coleman Raffle Care of:
Richard Bong State Recreation Area
26313 Burlington Road
Kansasville, WI 53139**

The winning bids will be announced at the BNA annual meeting on October 31, 2018. The meeting will start at 11:00am in the auditorium at Richard Bong State Recreation Area. The items to be auctioned off are as follows:

1. Two-person Canoe
2. Two-person Raft
3. Two person Kayak

For more information on this auction or the items in it, please contact Beth Goepponger at 262-878-5607.

Bong Merchandise



**Looking for the perfect gift for the outdoor lover in your life?
Visit the gift shop in the Molinaro Visitor Center!**

Are you looking for that one-of-a-kind gift for an outdoor lover in your life? Why not purchase a gift that helps support the Richard Bong Recreation Area to give your gift a special meaning? The gift shop in the Molinaro Visitor Center has some of the most unique wildlife, outdoors, and camping-related gift ideas that are sure to please any nature lover including:

Educational Wildlife Books

Nature Journals

Shirts

Hats

Bird Call Compact Discs

Wildlife Playing Cards

Nature Tote Bags

Earrings

Patches

Sticker Books

And More!

Park stickers and BNA memberships also make fantastic gift ideas!

*Do not forget to mention you are a BNA member to receive your 10% discount.

Sources

Fall Bird Feeding Tips

Bird Feeding Tips for beginners and veterans: <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/G3176.pdf>

Fall Bird Feeding: <https://www.birdwatching.com/tips/birdfeedingfall.html>

Should you Feed Birds in the Winter: <https://www.thespruce.com/autumn-bird-feeding-tips-386530>

Top ten Foods for Winter Bird Feeding: <https://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/bwdsite/learn/top10/winter-bird-feeding.php>

Birds of Wisconsin Field Guide (2nd edition) by Stan Tekiela -Printed book; no link

Bird Baths: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/notes/BirdNote09_ProvideWater.pdf

Harvesting the Wild Nuts of Autumn

How To Harvest and Process Wisconsin's Edible Tree Nuts -Wiscontext: <https://www.wiscontext.org/how-harvest-and-process-wisconsins-edible-tree-nuts>

A Guide to Nuts -Midwest Living: <http://www.midwestliving.com/food/comfort/tree-nuts-guide/>

Foraging for Nuts -Mother Earth News: <https://www.motherearthnews.com/nature-and-environment/foraging-for-nuts-zmaz88sozgoe>

Wild Edibles DNR: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/naturalareas/wildedibles.html>

Food Skills For Self Sufficiency: <http://www.food-skills-for-self-sufficiency.com/hickory-nuts.html>

The Shagbark Hickory Nut -The Art of Eating: <https://artofeating.com/shagbark-hickory-nuts/>

Nuts for Hickory -Wisconsin Academy: <https://www.wisconsinacademy.org/magazine/spring-2018/wisconsin-table/nuts-hickory>

Shagbark Trees information -Wisconsin DNR: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestBusinesses/documents/HickoryReport.pdf>

How to process black walnuts -Farm and Dairy: <https://www.farmanddairy.com/top-stories/harvest-process-store-black-walnuts/215439.html>

How to roast black walnut: <https://black-walnuts.com/2016/03/how-to-toast-black-walnuts/>

Help Save the Monarch!

Learn About Nature: <https://www.monarch-butterfly.com/>

National Wildlife Federation on the Monarch Butterfly: <https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Invertebrates/Monarch-Butterfly>

Defenders of Wildlife on the Monarch Butterfly: <https://defenders.org/monarch-butterfly/basic-facts>

Butterflies and Moths of North America: <https://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/species/Danaus-plexippus>

Save The Monarch Butterfly: <https://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/>

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) article Monarch Butterfly Numbers Remain Dangerously Low: <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/sylvia-fallon/monarch-butterfly-numbers-are-year-remain-low>

Center for Biological Diversity 2018 Monarch count: https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2018/monarch-butterfly-03-05-2018.php

Save the Monarch Butterfly -Center for Biological Diversity: <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/invertebrates/monarch-butterfly/index.html>

Monarch Population Down by 14.8 Percent -National Wildlife Federation: <http://blog.nwf.org/2018/03/monarch-butterfly-2018-population-down-by-14-8-percent/>

WWF shows a 27-percent decrease in Monarch occupied areas: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/new-study-shows-27-decrease-in-area-occupied-by-monarch-butterflies>

Life of a monarch -University of Minnesota: <https://monarchlab.org/biology-and-research/biology-and-natural-history/breeding-life-cycle/life-cycle/>

Monarch butterfly garden -predators: <https://monarchbutterflygarden.net/stop-monarch-predators/>

National Geographic -monarch migration: <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/10/monarch-butterfly-migration/>

National Fish and Wildlife Service -endangered species list: <https://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/SSA.html>

Why Leaves Change Color in the Fall

Why Leaves Change Color -College of Environmental Science: <http://www.esf.edu/pubprog/brochure/leaves/leaves.htm>

Why Do Leaves Change Color? -Science Made Simple: <https://www.sciencemadesimple.com/leaves.html>

Why Oak Leaves Turn Brown -Curiosity: <http://explorecuriosity.org/Explore/ArticleId/4210/why-do-oak-leaves-only-turn-brown-in-the-fall-while-other-tree-leaves-become-more-colourful-4210.aspx>

The process of Leaf Color Change -Harvard Forest: <http://harvardforest.fas.harvard.edu/leaves/process>

Trees of the United States -Arbor Day: <https://www.arborday.org/shopping/trees/topfalltrees.cfm>

Thank You!

The operations at Richard Bong State Recreation Area would not be possible without the help of those who volunteer their time. Therefore, we would like to acknowledge the following people.

A huge thank you to the volunteers listed below (*and anyone we may have forgotten*) who gave up their Friday evenings or Saturday afternoons to sell firewood:

Richard Heinlein
Tom & Evelyn Lajiness
Kan Pai
Donna Deuster
Amber Settersten
Tom Eide
Leif Dickinson
James Iwen
Bob Yoerin
Rhonda Abbey

We would like to send out a very special thanks to Al Orban who took care of the firewood concession and the upkeep on the firewood shed. We still need volunteer help to sell firewood in September & October. Please call 262-878-5600 if you are interested.

Both the birds and the staff of the Richard Bong State Recreation area would like to thank Paul Nolte for donating peanuts for the birds.

A big thank you goes out to our 2018;

Protectors: Nancy Bose, Craig & Rita Fenters, Tracy & Don Fliess, Pam & Paul Folbrecht, Adam Miller, Dean & Mary Rockstad, Paula Nolte, Diane Price, Peter & Paula Touhey, Wendi Schneider, Ruth & Larry Stevens, John Kiel, Tom Knitter, Jill Miorana.

The Editor would like to thank Laurice Maki for proofing this edition of the Heron.

Patrons: Potter Family, Tim Hansen, Diane Lembck, Kay & Tom Rowntree, Ray Palenik, Susan & Gale Cassens.

Stewards: Tom Eide

To learn more about becoming a BNA member, visit the [About Us page](http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/who-we-are/) on the BNA website at <http://www.bongnaturalistassociation.org/who-we-are/>.

Thank You!