



# Friends of Lake Wingra



Promoting a healthy Lake Wingra  
through an active watershed community

## Wingra Watershed News

Fall 2005/Winter 2006

volume 2, number 2

### Why is Sediment Filling Lake Wingra?

By Steve Glass

Lake Wingra is filling up with sediment.

Day by day, right before our very eyes, in ways great and small, Lake Wingra is filling up with sediment and its associated nutrients and pollutants. Hardly anyone seems to notice at all.

If in doubt, step into the ankle-deep water at the Wingra Park marina and try to launch a canoe or wade across the Ho-Nee-Um lily pond at Arbor Drive. You'll be walking on soil that used to nourish oak and trilliums along the Southwest Bike Path but now harbors reed canary grass and purple loosestrife.

Year-by-year, this naturally shallow lake has slowly been filling with soils washed down from the uplands with each rainstorm. An estimated 10,000 cubic yards of soil has been eroded by unmanaged storm water from the huge gully that parallels the north side of the bike path along Glenway Golf Course and Forest Hills Cemetery. This native soil is then carried to Lake Wingra in City of Madison storm sewers. A roughly equivalent amount of native wetland soil has been eroded from the West Wingra Marsh and into the lake by storm water that enters the Arboretum at Manitou Way and Nakoma Road.

Winter after winter, street sand—spread to make icy roadways safe—washes into detention ponds and the lake. In 2003, a huge dune of street sand measuring 6' high, 15' wide and 30' long was dredged from the storm water detention pond on Monroe Street across from Mallatt's Pharmacy. Wisconsin taxpayers picked up the \$500,000 tab for the dredging of street sand and eroded native topsoil carried—via storm sewers—from the Westmorland Neighborhood park. See *Wingra Watershed News* Volume 1, number 2 about salt use in winter.

Other sediment sources—sidewalk and driveway replacement and backyard remodeling projects—often go unrecognized as contributors to lake infill. These projects involve disturbance of the native topsoil which inevitably spills over into the street. Project by project the lake slowly fills up everywhere a storm sewer enters. Just this summer my own 100-foot stretch of sidewalk, curb and gutter was replaced. When the concrete work was done, contractor crews left behind as "spillage" a measured cubic yard of topsoil and a measured bale of straw that would have washed into storm drains had I not swept it up. If the mess is not cleaned up or actions to prevent erosion are not taken, the soil gets washed into the storm drains and into the lake.

We can do our part to prevent lake infill by observing the erosion prevention guidelines in the Dane County Erosion Control and Storm Water Management Manual. Also, see page 6 in this issue for a few simple tips on how to halt erosion.



Soil and debris litter this street after construction. If not swept up, all this will go straight into Lake Wingra via the closest storm drain.

## Friends of Lake Wingra

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www.lakewingra.org

### Mission

We promote a healthy Lake Wingra through an active watershed community.

### FOLW Board

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong, Chair  
Jim Lorman, Vice-chair  
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### Thanks

Thanks to Edgewood College for serving as our fiscal sponsor and Dane County and the City of Madison for partnership on DNR grants.

### Become a Friend

To become a Friend of Lake Wingra, send your tax-deductible contribution to Friends of Lake Wingra, c/o Office of Advancement, Edgewood College, 1000 Edgewood College Drive, Madison, WI 53711-1977. Please make checks to Edgewood College – FOLW.

### Wingra Watershed News

Fall 2005/Winter 2006, Vol. 2, No. 2  
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## From the Chair

### *It's All About Community Active in the Watershed*

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong

The friends who make up the Friends of Lake Wingra are growing! With each event, from our ongoing series of *WOW! Windows on Wingra* workshops to hands-on shoreline and Southwest bike path corridor restoration projects, new friends are flowing in like drops of water. As new Board Chair, still wet behind the ears, a watershed moment struck me during September's Ice Cream Social, where 56 friends and volunteers joined us to celebrate all the good work accomplished to date: it is all of you, the friends who care so deeply about the health of our lake and watershed, who are actively turning us into a watershed community! Thus, the Mission of the Friends of Lake Wingra – to promote a healthy lake Wingra through an active watershed community – is becoming a tangible reality.

The key is community; we are a community of neighbors who care for our homes within the watershed and of friends near and far who visit and value Lake Wingra. This active watershed community is enthusiastic and full of energy! Our workshops draw at least 20 to 30 participants. The shoreline restoration drew 150 volunteers including school children and their teachers. About 20 new volunteers are helping right now with the 2005 leaf cleanup campaign. And, we now have 7 advisors to the board; that's 6 more than we had in 2004. This is an exciting time for the Friends of Lake Wingra. Not many years ago, a few farsighted founders worked with diverse interests to craft a vision for a lake that was suffering from its urban condition; they developed goals, plans and timelines. Today, the elements of this vision are being fulfilled through the commitment of people like you. We can make positive change, and it has begun in earnest! However, there is still so much to be done, and many hands are needed for tasks ranging from leadership on the board to weeding restored habitats. For those who haven't had a chance to become a friend, please help our network of lake-friendly friends continue to grow.

Thank you, good friends.



Ice cream, friends and congratulations were plentiful at our Ice Cream Social honoring volunteers and this year's accomplishments at Zuzu's Cafe. Photo by Jim Lorman.



**The Friends of Lake Wingra THANK all of the following best friends for caring so much and giving their time to the stewardship of our lake and watershed.**

We've done our best to list all names from sign-up sheets at events and workdays; please let us know if we've missed your name!



At our **Ice Cream Social and Volunteer Celebration** on September 12, we recognized five key volunteers for their exceptional volunteer contributions to Friends of Lake Wingra. Left to right: Tanya Meyer, Bob Liska, Joan Laurion, Karen Andro and Jim Trumpy (not pictured).

**Organization & Legal Assistance:** Joe Boucher • Art Harris • Barbara Hummel • Diana Toledo • John Uselman

**Advisors to the Board:** Karen Andro • Roger Bannerman • Denny Caneff • David Liebl • Kevin Little • John Magnuson • John Nicol

**First Fall Leaf Cleanup Campaign (2004)**

Dorothy Bollant • Denny Caneff • Bob Liska • Kay Gabriel • Chuck Heikkinen • Mary Jo Hussey • Joan Laurion • Tanya Meyer • Ruth Pauly • Sandra Savage • Martha Sample • Sandra Savage • Aimee Schmidt • Delia Unson • Green Club at West High School

**Spring Cleaning for Clean Springs:** Tim Andrews • Steve Arnold • Stephanie Arvidson • Lloyd Bostian • Carol Doeppers • Suzanne Kercher • Kelly Kuran • Julie McMullin • Gay Neu • Marie Louise Seckar • Sister Mary Schmitz • Karen Thomas • Jim Trumpy

**Vilas Lagoon Shoreline Restoration:** Liz Albertson • Steve Arnold • Lloyd Bostian • Karen Brey • Katie Byrne • Margaret Burlingham • Aimee Callies • Judy Campbell • Jess Chmell • Kevin Coleman • Andy Derocher • Bill Duddleston • Priska Duddleston • Dee Dushack • Sue Ellingson • Michael Enis • Chuck Erickson • Mark Fitzgerald • Robin Forbes-Lorman • Marty Hoyord • Kristy Jackson • Karen Jamison • Susan Graham • Jose Donate Hernandez • Brett Hulse • Sandra Keesey-Berg • Paul Lane • Kevin Little • Bob Liska • Mike Madritch • Ed Mason Jr. • Tanya Meyer • Juan Moreno •

Marc Mouchon • Gary Neu • Hope Oosdik • Susan Priebe • Rachel Rickertsen • Logan Robertson • Ellen Rulseh • Martin Scanlan • Betty Smith • Jon Standridge • Jim Trumpy • Sandy Van Calcar • Woody Wallace • Dena Wessel • Liz Woodcock • Zaza Revishvili • Wingra School teachers Anne Hauge & Quinne Hayes with 70 students & parents • Shabazz High School teachers Robert Banks & Tina Murray with 14 students • Kerry Pederson with Girl Scouts • Olivia Weiss • Tess Burant • Sara Pederson

**Rain Garden Street:** Lloyd & Gennie Bostian • Hiam Garner & Nancy Deaton • Sue Ellingson • Melissa Huggins & John Opel • Miles & Sarah Morgan • Craig Nauman & Donell Rogness • Jon & Nancy Standridge • Jule Stroick & Jeff Ford • Tom & Mary Jo Tierney • Lee Wandel

**Southwest Bike Path:** Jane Bannerman • Marie Berman • Sharon Brolin • Marie Eichinger • Daniel Einstein • Carol Gosenheimer • Beth Goulette • Audrey Highton • Steve Kihm • Jeff Lea • Ben Otto • Joy Otto • David McMurray • Sue Reindollar • Daryl Sherman • Robin Ryan • Sandy Stark • Dana Vantrease

**Wingra Creek Monitoring:** Kay Gabriel

**Education & Awareness**

Roger Bannerman • Katie and Rich Beilfuss • Sue Ellingson • Janice Havlena • Paula Hirschboeck • Joan Laurion • Jim Lorman • Charlotte Meyer • Tim Mullholland • Jeri Mundon • Amanda Okopski • Ken Potter • Ellen Rulseh • Judith Strasser • Chuck & Delia Unson • John Zeratsky

# Shoreline Habitat Restoration Project Updates

By Jim Lorman, Edgewood College

Control of loosestrife and buckthorn in the wetlands along Lake Wingra was given a big boost this summer by a large and voracious population of purple loosestrife beetles (*Galerucella*). Purple loosestrife plants suffered such damage from the beetles that they were unable to produce flowers. This is great news for the health of Wingra's wetlands!

About 150 people volunteered nearly 1,000 hours of time this summer creating a native vegetation buffer along the Vilas Park lagoon. They removed turf, laid erosion blankets, planted 5,000 prairie and wetland plants, watered during the extended dry spells, and weeded out invasive species. The Dane County Land and Water Resources Department, in partnership with Friends of Lake Wingra, is administering a Department of Natural Resources Lake Management Protection Grant aimed at encouraging native species and controlling invasive ones (see [www.lakewingra.org](http://www.lakewingra.org) for more information).

Madison City Engineering recently replaced a collapsed storm sewer outlet that enters Vilas lagoon within the shoreline buffer area, so our attention is now turning to planting that area. Planning for restoration of this and other sections of the shoreline will take place this winter, and additional work parties will be scheduled for the spring. Once the shoreline buffer is complete, it should reduce the use of the Vilas playing fields by the urban Canada geese. If you'd like to help with this project, please contact us at 663-2838 or [info@lakewingra.org](mailto:info@lakewingra.org).



Volunteers at shoreline project. Photo by Jim Lorman.

# Carp a Common Problem in Turbid Wisconsin Lakes

By Jessica R. Lischka (guest columnist)

An invasive, exotic species, carp have a long history in Wisconsin lakes and rivers, starting with their purposeful introduction in 1881. As explained by DNR Fisheries Biologist



Male and female carp netted on Lake Wingra during an early June population estimate. Photo by Kurt Welke.

Kurt Welke, carp set off a chain of events that tip the normal balance of a clear water lake toward that of a turbid one. Carp graze off an aquatic plant called chara. Without chara, sediments containing phosphorus become re-suspended in the water, allowing algae to thrive. Algae clouds the water, and the rooted plant community shifts toward shade-tolerant plants like Eurasian Water Milfoil. This change in the plant community leads to an increase in fish population, but stunts growth due to the increase in competition for food and other resources. Fish that eat bluegill then suffer from the decrease in the growth and size of their prey. All of this affects the health of predator species, such as muskie and bass that anglers prefer to catch.

"Carp are the catalysts that drive Lake Wingra toward a perpetually turbid state," Welke said. The DNR is experimenting with an enclosure on Lake Wingra to study this problem. An area of the lake will be "fenced" off and all the carp within it removed. With the carp gone, there will be potential for native plants to rebound, and for the enclosure section to return to a clear-water state. The results of the enclosure experiment will guide the DNR in its management choices in the near future. If, when carp are removed, native plants re-establish themselves, then efforts to remove carp in the rest of the lake by netting would be considered. Other issues influencing turbidity would also be addressed, such as storm water and goose waste management and water level and fisheries manipulation.

[The full text of this article appeared in: Summer 2005 *Rock River Reflections*, a joint newsletter of the Rock River Coalition and UW-Extension.]



# WATERSHED WATCH: A Compendium of Nature Observations By and Around Our Little Lake

By Kathy Miner

Snow in September? No, not even in Wisconsin!  
Then what was that white fluffy stuff?

By the time you read this, white snakeroot will be a brown, dried-up memory of its late-summer self. You know white snakeroot: it's a common "weed" of our back yards, and it grows around Lake Wingra in drifts. It has broad, almost heart-shaped leaves, and prominent clusters of white fuzzy flowers.

You might not know that it's a native plant, a close relative of Joe-Pye-weed and boneset. Butterflies like it. And its claim to fame is ... it's the plant that killed Abraham Lincoln's mother!



*Eupatorium rugosum*, White Snakeroot. Photo by Kathy Miner.



Close-up of flower heads. Photo by Kathy Miner.

Really. *Eupatorium rugosum*, as botanists would say, contains a toxin that is retained in the fatty tissues of animals that graze on it. The milk from those animals is poisonous to humans. Modern farming has eliminated any risk nowadays, but not so long ago "milk fever" was a serious problem. It killed Nancy Hanks Lincoln when Abraham was only nine.

How's that for botanical trivia? Next summer, you can amaze your friends as you stroll Lake Wingra's trails!

## Learn More

Interested in learning more about Lake Wingra and the Friends' work in the watershed? See our growing online library of management planning documents, scientific reports and proposals at [www.lakewingra.org](http://www.lakewingra.org).





# Southwest Bike Path Project

By Steve Glass

Volunteer citizen stewardship along the Southwest (SW) Bike Path wound up a successful first season on October 15th. The bike path corridor is host to many of the invasive plant species found in the watershed. Since April, over two dozen volunteers from the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association under the leadership of Robin Ryan and Friends of Lake Wingra have been hard at work. They've pulled and dug invasive weeds such as garlic mustard, dame's rocket, burdock, sweet clover, ragweed and reed canary grass; cut out the invasive woody shrubs honeysuckle and buckthorn; and the weedy native tree box elder.

The bike path is also a corridor for storm water runoff, which has created huge erosion gullies on the north side of the path from the Glenway Golf Course, past the woods and on toward the cemetery. Besides transporting sediment to the lake, this storm water also carries seeds of invasive plants such as garlic mustard and reed canary grass. This enormous erosion gully is largely out of view of the public, hidden by buckthorn, honeysuckle, and other un-managed vegetation, but the resulting sediment deltas in Lake Wingra at Pickford Street and in the Arboretum at Ho-Nee-Um Pond are quite visible.

## *Tips for Protecting Lake Wingra*

If you want to reduce runoff from carrying sediment into our lake and reduce soil loss from your yard, just follow these simple steps. First, survey your yard and look for signs of erosion. Erosion is occurring if you see exposed tree roots and rocks, sediment collecting in low areas or on driveways and sidewalks, small rills or gullies forming on steep slopes, and anywhere you see patches of bare ground. Eroded patches are often near driveways and sidewalks due to soil disturbance from vehicles, snowplows and foot traffic.

Next, cover these eroded areas with plant material. If the ground is planted and you cannot see the soil, chances are erosion is not happening. Native herbaceous plants and shrubs are good choices for stopping erosion because their deep, fibrous roots control erosion and at the same time improve your soil. Prairie dropseed, coreopsis and blue vervain are a few among many plants that grow well in sunny spots. Plants for shady areas include wild geranium, tall bellflower and Solomon's plume.

If you are remodeling, minimize soil disturbance to keep soil in its place. Place tubular erosion mats or landscape fabric reinforced with bales of straw around your construction site to keep soil from washing away.







## WOW! We've Turned Over Another New Leaf

By Anne Forbes

It was the second year for the Fall Leaf Cleanup Campaign in the Wingra Watershed, and as growing youngsters often do, the campaign took some strong new steps. The number of commuter streets covered by *Love Your Lakes, Don't Leaf Them* yard signs went up, reinforcing the message for citizens to keep leaves and their algae- and weed-feeding nutrients out of Lake Wingra. Cadres of volunteers dropped leaflets on most of the doorsteps that we didn't reach last year.

This growth spurt included more than the just Friends of Lake Wingra and our kickoff event, **WOW! Windows on Wingra: Volunteer for the Fall Leaf Cleanup Campaign**, held on Sunday October 2nd. While we continued last year's partnership with the Friends of Monona Bay and Friends of Starkweather Creek, with help from the Madison Advertising Federation and City of Madison, this year we have a new sibling-the Madison Area Municipal Storm Water Partnership, home of [www.myfairlakes.com](http://www.myfairlakes.com), which invited other municipalities in Dane County to participate. Billboards and radio announcements helped spread the images beyond what the yard signs and leaflets could cover alone.

We're proud that the 2004 grassroots initiative of the city watershed groups grew up to help influence all the lakes and streams in Dane County in 2005.

## Adams Street Rain Gardens

City Engineering has nearly completed construction on Madison's first rain garden street. The gardens in the terrace are now ready for a spring planting.



Homeowner, Gennie Bostian, surveys the construction of her new rain garden on the terrace of Adams Street. Photo by Margaret Burlingham.



Genesis Bichanich of City Engineering and landscape designer, Hope Oostdik show rain garden planting plans to Jule Stroik, an Adams Street neighbor. Photo by Margaret Burlingham.

## WOW! Cycle of Seasons, Sense of Place in the Wingra Watershed

Join us for the Winter 2006 Windows on Wingra event on January 21st, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. at Washburn Heritage on Edgewood Campus. We'll use the qualities of the winter season to help you begin a visual journal called the "watershed wheel of the year." We'll help you create a map for the center of your wheel and show you how to add your observations and reflections throughout the coming seasons. This way of tuning in to the everyday aspects of nature is great for families to do together and for individual journal-keepers, whether experienced or aspiring. Presenters Anne Forbes and Jim Lorman have led groups of all ages through this activity. Their workshop is fun and enjoyable for all. No fee; please register by contacting 663-2838 or [info@lakewingra.org](mailto:info@lakewingra.org).



Example of a Watershed Wheel.

# Fall/Winter Calendar

See our online calendar at [www.lakewingra.org](http://www.lakewingra.org) for more details on these and other upcoming events.

## FOLW Board Meetings.

November 17, December 15, January 26, February 23, March 23 and April 27, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Mazzuchelli Center, Edgewood Campus. All are welcome. Contact [info@lakewingra.org](mailto:info@lakewingra.org) or 663-2838 to confirm the location and agenda.

## Friday, November 11

### North American Lake Management Society Session on Madison Lakes.

A special session entitled "Madison Lakes and Nearby Waters" will be held on Friday Nov. 11, as part of the 25th annual North American Lake Management Society international symposium held Nov. 9-11, at Monona Terrace in Madison. The session will start out with introductory remarks from Mayor Cieslewicz and County Executive Falk followed by sessions focusing on the Yahara Lakes. A panel discussion with audience participation, followed by a

reception, will end the day. Registration for this special session is \$40. For more information go to [www.nalms.org/symposia/madison/](http://www.nalms.org/symposia/madison/).

## Friday, December 9

### Our 4th Annual Holiday Social.

Please join the Friends of Lake Wingra to celebrate good friends, a great cause, and all the work we've done. New friends and old—everybody's welcome! Please bring an hors d'oeuvre or beverage to share. At 7:30 p.m. 1922 Vilas Avenue.

## Saturday, January 21

### WOW! Window on Wingra: Cycle of Seasons, Sense of Place in the Wingra Watershed.

For details, see write-up on p. 7. 9:00 – 11:30 a.m., Washburn Heritage, Edgewood College. Families welcome. No fee. Please register by contacting [info@lakewingra.org](mailto:info@lakewingra.org) or 663-2838.

## Thursday - Saturday, February 2 - 4

### Field Tour: Invasive Species and

**Wingra's Wetlands.** Friday, February 4, 1:30-4:30 p.m. To be led by Friends of Lake Wingra board members, this tour will highlight our invasive species management plans and site-specific control efforts. The tour is planned as part of two connected conferences, *Wisconsin's Wetlands: Biodiversity and Threats* (Wisconsin Wetlands Association's 11th Annual Wetland Science Forum, Feb. 2-3) and *Invasive Plants of Wisconsin's Wetlands: Identification and Management* (Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin's conference, Feb. 4). For more information, go to [www.wiscwetlands.org](http://www.wiscwetlands.org) or [www.ipaw.org](http://www.ipaw.org).

## Friends of Lake Wingra

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