

# The White Pine Gazette

Volume 52

Autumn 2018

Dear Friends,

I am sure we all agree that this fall season has been one of the most vibrant and colorful in years. The red and sugar maples have been glorious with their bright crimson, orange and yellow colors along the roadsides. At Toft Point and around the county I've seen many "leaf peepers" stopping to capture this amazing fall foliage with their cameras.

I can also report that in order to compliment the vibrant colors along Ridges Road our old faded boundary signs have been replaced with bright new ones. Vicki Medland of UW Green Bay's Cofrin Biodiversity Center designed the original signs about fifteen years ago. Vicki had the new signs made with a process that resists fading. With the expert help of Joe Wallner and Steve Hitch, we replaced all fifteen signs along Ridges Road and the gravel road out to the cul-de-sac. The five signs at UW Green Bay's Peninsula Center Sanctuary on County Road E were also replaced.



Black cherry tree in fall

*Roy Lukes*

As Friends of Toft Point we all share a mutual dedication to preserving the flora and fauna of this remarkable property. A vital part of this work has been the Student Research Grant program, a joint venture of the Friends and the UW Green Bay Cofrin Center for Biodiversity. Those of us in attendance at our annual meeting in August were very impressed by Vanessa Brotske and her report of the research she did on the dwarf lake iris. Please see Bobbie Webster's UWGB report to get more details of additional research projects.

In order to perpetuate our Student Research Grant program I hope you will consider a year-end donation to this fund. All contributions are tax deductible. Any amount you wish to give is appreciated.

Please send your donations to our treasurer, Ruth Stewart at 9000 Lime Kiln Trail, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235. Make your check to Friends of Toft Point, Inc. and on the memo line indicate that it is for the Student Research Fund.

Enjoy the rest of autumn and thank you for your continued support!

Nick Anderson, President



A young American beech tree in autumn

*Roy Lukes*

### Officers and Board of Directors

Nick Anderson, President	2019
Joe Wallner, Vice-president	2020
Liz Wallner, Secretary	2020
Ruth Stewart, Treasurer	2021
Beth Bartoli	2021
Nancy Dickson	2019
Mitch Leavitt	2019
Charlotte Lukes	2021
Marsha Wilson	2020

Dr. Robert Howe, Director UWGB Cofrin Center  
 Dr. Vicki Medland, Associate Director  
 Bobbie Webster, Cofrin Center Land Steward  
 Charlotte Lukes, Newsletter Editor

### Membership Report

Annual members	196
<u>Life Members</u>	<u>134</u>
Total	330

#### New Annual Members:

Brenda Andrews & James Cauley, Milwaukee, WI  
 Phil Biebl & Kevin Grohskopf, Madison, WI  
 Vanessa Brotske, Manitowoc, WI  
 Demaris & Tony Martinez, Portland, OR  
 Dan & Maureen Meinhardt, Green Bay, WI  
 Caroline Beckett & Frank Sandner, Blue Mounds, WI

#### New Life Members:

Nick & Katherine Gerritts, Milwaukee, WI  
 Barbara Sylvia, Inverness, FL  
 Roy & Mary Thilly, Baileys Harbor, WI

### Get Your Newsletter Faster

You can save The Friends of Toft Point money by asking for your quarterly newsletter to be sent via E-mail as a PDF document.

Just send a message to the editor telling which E-mail address to use. Go to [clukes@mwwb.net](mailto:clukes@mwwb.net) to make your request.

**Check your address label** to see if the date is highlighted in color. That tells you this will be your last issue until you renew your membership. We all thank you for your continued support.



American goldfinch in winter plumage Roy Lukes photo

**Invasive species management** – *Phragmites australis* was mapped at the Toft Point Natural Area in June 2018 by two UW Green Bay students as part of a collaboration with The Ridges Sanctuary. Because this was the third consecutive year of mapping followed by treatment, there was a significant decline in the acreage of the plants found. A contractor was hired by The Ridges to treat exotic *Phragmites* in the project area, which also included The Ridges Sanctuary property and dozens of private landowners. At the Toft Point Natural Area the *Phragmites* was treated in the circled areas in late October. UWGB will continue to monitor these sparse scattered patches that are most likely the native variety of *Phragmites*.



The areas circled in red are where *Phragmites* was mapped earlier this year and treated in October.

The UWGB Natural Areas crew worked on managing exotic European marsh thistle (*Cirsium palustre*) again this summer in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy’s Ramsar Natural Areas crew. European marsh thistle was hand-pulled by the UWGB Natural Areas crew beginning in the middle of June to early August. Areas of focus were the southern part of Toft Point and previously mapped and treated sites near the Big Bayou.

The university crew used Collector (an app on an iPad or mobile phone) to find and update old patches as well as to map new patches. They removed rosettes, cut and bagged flowers from mature plants and removed those with trowels. The final count of plants, both rosettes and adults, hand-treated by the crew was over 4,179. The total time spent treating European marsh thistle was over 150 hours by the UWGB crew.

In June and July two garlic mustard patches were found, mapped and pulled in the northern side of the Big Bayou. These are very small and sparse patches that the

Friends and the university have managed for several years.

Finally, the Ramsar Natural Areas crew conducted significant mapping and treatment work at Toft Point. The invasive species included mostly reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and European marsh thistle.

**Student Research** – In addition to invasive species management, research was conducted at Toft Point in 2018. First, Vanessa Brotske finished her thesis which studied dwarf lake iris (*Iris lacustris*). She presented a summary of her findings at the Friends 19<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in August.

Undergraduate student Becca Malcore utilized funding from the Krischan Botany Fund to study wild orchids at Toft Point under the guidance of Dr. Lisa Grubisha. Three root samples from striped coralroot (*Corallorhiza striata*) and one root sample from spotted coralroot (*Corallorhiza maculata*) were gathered at the end of June.

These samples were collected from various points along the main trail at Toft Point and six soil core samples were taken from around each plant sampled. Roots were sanitized, sectioned and placed on nutrient agar plates to culture the ectomycorrhizae. Pure cultures of various mycorrhizae have been obtained, grown on gel-drying film and placed in DNA isolation tubes. Soil samples have been sieved and prepared in DNA isolation tubes as well. DNA isolations for fungi and soil will begin in the next few weeks. Becca took care to minimize disturbance to the plants from which root samples were collected. Plants were monitored post root sampling and no negative impacts were observed.

Another student, Colton Tanner, reported that despite previous studies that failed to demonstrate genetic diversity in dwarf lake iris (*Iris lacustris*) his study using microsatellite markers did find modest levels of genetic diversity in two populations.

The two populations that were tested, Red Banks Alvar populations and the Toft Point/Ridges population showed that the Red Banks group had a higher genetic diversity than those at Toft/Ridges. The data provides weak but not convincing evidence to support the hypothesis that the Red Banks group is the progenitor of other populations. However, the higher number of distinct genotypes present in Red Banks does suggest it may be significant for conservation management.



Dwarf lake iris blossom

Roy Lukes photo

## Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 11, 2018

President Nick Anderson opened the meeting at 1 PM in the Baileys Harbor Town Hall after a fabulous potluck lunch. Thirty-six members and friends attended.

The minutes of last year's meeting were sent to all people attending today so they were not read. Nick asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the 18<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of August 19, 2017. A motion was made by Mitch Leavitt and seconded by Gail Anderson and was approved.

**Treasurer, Ruth Stewart**, gave the financial report including the funds we have in the Door County Community Foundation. She told us that an internal audit will be done and volunteers Nancy Rafal and Dave Link will assist with this.

A **membership report** was given by Charlotte Lukes showing that we have 193 annual members and 129 life members for a total of 322 Friends members.

The **trail docent report** was given by Liz Wallner and she thanked all docents who have helped visitors to Toft Point during the season. She made a plea for more trail docents to help next year.

The **UW Green Bay report** was read by Mitch Leavitt in the absence of Bobbie Webster. Each year UWGB allows deer hunting on the Toft Point Natural Area to control over-browsing and loss of plant life due to high populations. In 2017 of the 31 permits granted to hunters only 21 hunted at least one day and ten did not hunt. A total of 8 antlerless deer and 1 buck were taken.

In 2016 The Ridges Sanctuary was awarded a \$375,166.00 grant from the Wisconsin DNR to map and treat *Phragmites* over 3 years at Toft Point, The Ridges and Clark Lake. Greater details can be read in the UWGB report elsewhere in this newsletter.

New signs are being made for the Toft Point and Judson Fuller properties which are managed in Door County by the university. Several Toft Friends members have been working on an effort to simplify the entrance signage at the main gate by moving the historical and cultural information to a new kiosk to be built near the old homestead at Mud Bay.

Other research not covered in the UWGB report is being done on birds and frogs in the Mud Bay coastal wetland area. It was done this past summer by scientists from the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Project and is in its 8<sup>th</sup> year. More information can be seen at their web page:

[www.greatlakeswetlands.org/Home.vhtml](http://www.greatlakeswetlands.org/Home.vhtml).

Nick reported very little damage this year to wind blowing down trees along the main trail. He and Joe, Mitch and Steve all handled the few that did fall. He also invited members of our Friends group to contact him if they are interested in serving on our board of directors. He asked those on the board to stand and be thanked for their service.

The tree-year terms of Ruth Stewart and Charlotte Lukes have ended but each has agreed to server another term. It was moved, seconded and passed that these two candidates be accepted for new terms.

Our long-time treasurer, Nancy Rafal, is retiring from the board of directors and was given a round of applause

and thanks from the members present. Beth Bartoli, the naturalist at Newport State Park, has accepted an invitation to serve on the board. A motion was seconded and approved to welcome her to the board.

On behalf of the UW Green Bay Cofrin Center for Biodiversity the Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Nancy Rafal for her long service and dedication to the Friends of Toft Point. Nancy was pleased to accept the award and thanked the university.

There being no further business, the 19<sup>th</sup> annual meeting was adjourned at 2:03 PM.

Charlotte Lukes presented her new program – Animals of Land and Water for the members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Wallner, Secretary



### *Door County's Quiet Time*

By Charlotte Lukes

No sunset cruise, no cherry train,  
No gentle soft refreshing rain...

No trilliums, no daffodils,  
No biking up those long steep hills...

No insect bites, no sandy toes,  
No tourists lining up in rows...

No bumblebees, no butterflies,  
No sailboats slicing sunny skies...

No flowers in bloom, no birds that sing,  
No heavy traffic lingering...

November!

## White-tailed Deer

You may wonder why the UW Green Bay Cofrin Center for Biodiversity allows deer hunting at Toft Point during the nine-day gun season. UWGB has the responsibility to preserve the native plants and all other creatures, shrubs, trees and wildlife.

An overabundance of deer on a property will bring about destruction of ideal habitats. They have certain foods that are favored such as eastern white cedar and hemlock. When the population gets too large for a land area to handle they start foraging on other plants and begin to destroy their natural environment.

Conditions were not always this way at Toft Point. My husband Roy would help Miss Emma in winter by bringing food for deer out to The Point. She also relied on Roy to help her patrol the Toft Point boundaries each gun deer hunting season to keep trespassers out.

I will repeat a story that Roy wrote back in November 1973 about the history of this animal in Wisconsin. Here it is.....

"How eagerly my brothers and I, attending grade school at the time in Kewaunee, looked forward to a Sunday afternoon in spring when my Dad would take us out to Lipsky's swamp to see the deer. It was an exciting event even though they were enclosed in a large pen several acres in size. My Dad's main objective was to get several bushels of dried peat for his gardening. Ours was to get to scratch the friendly deer's nose through the fence and to admire them.

The deer herd in that part of the state, including Door County, was now on the upswing having hit a low in the early 1900's. As an example no deer were reported from either Door or Kewaunee counties in 1912. To better appreciate and more fully understand our number one (official) wildlife animal of Wisconsin let's take an overall look at the animal and its history in our state.

Deer are browsers, not grazers. They much prefer the tender shoots, twigs and leaves of woody plants over grass-like vegetation. If they, in their home range, come across some of their favorite foods they will remain in the area until the supply is exhausted. Their prime choices include acorns, beech nuts, hazelnuts, apples, corn, cabbage, lettuce and newly fallen leaves. Reading this list makes it easy to understand the fact that deer have adapted, in some areas, almost too well for existing conditions.



Deer eating young hemlock tree

Roy Lukes photo

These animals invariably prefer soft succulent leaves over leathery ones. Plants having bitter or milky juices are most often passed by. Plainly and simply the food must provide them with heat and energy, promote growth and reproduction, and protect against deficiency diseases.

As the natural food supply becomes overbrowsed, coupled with deepening winter snows, the deer must accept food far down the scale of palatability and nourishment. Now they resort to their starvation foods such as red pine, balsam fir and the spruces. Balsam fir stands at the head of the list of winter foods eaten by Wisconsin deer in distress.

With most of their natural predators, including wolves, lynx and cougars having been shot, a large number of deer, especially where the snow is deeper, starve to death. One predatory animal, the coyote, is frequently hunted down because they are thought to kill a lot of deer. They don't! The fact is that one of the main foods of coyotes is snowshoe hares. The snowshoe hare eats a tremendous amount of deer browse. Reduce the number of these rodents and you obviously will help the winter deer herd. Better yet, protect the coyote and they will help immeasurably to control the hare population.



A deer in winter with snow on its back *Roy Lukes photo*

Surprisingly to most people, the 10,000 or so American Indians who lived in our state before we came along experienced fewer white-tailed deer than we do today. The northwestern quarter of Wisconsin, grown over with huge stands of evergreens and some hardwoods held fewer than ten deer per square mile. The

northeastern quarter contained more swamps and marshes. Here there were ten to fifteen per square mile. However, the southern half of the state with its miles and miles of beautiful oak-maple prairies supported anywhere from twenty to fifty deer to the square mile.

Fur traders entered the area in the early 1800's. The Indians, being natural-born traders, unknowingly eagerly aided in the beginning destruction of their empire. By 1836 Wisconsin was part of a Territory and by 1848 a state. As the fur trade declined the logging industry began to boom. By 1870 as much as one billion board feet of pine lumber were being sawed a year. The Civil War ended and the Homestead Act of 1862 was drawing more people to the state. By 1889 three and one-half billion board feet of lumber was the annual output.

By the late 1890's the pioneering era was over. Now only the northern hardwoods, hemlock, spruce, balsam and cedar remained to be cut. Uncontrolled fires followed the loggers. Greedy landsharks needed cleared land to sell. Much remaining timber and especially the soil, through deep burning, were destroyed. Watershed protection was greatly damaged bringing about a high degree of soil erosion. Sadly most of these conditions were preventable had there not been such a high degree of human greed.

About this time, there still being no well-established and reinforced game laws in Wisconsin, the market hunters too, had their day. Game was in great demand and was killed off in unbelievable numbers. Some animals, such as the elk, bison, turkey and passenger pigeon were to become extinct in the state.

Predatory animals, including the cougar, lynx, marten, fisher and wolverine were wiped out of existence, or nearly so. Populations of deer, ducks, geese, prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse took a nose dive. By 1910 the deer herd, along with other game animals, had reached its all-time low.

Little by little the burned over and cleared areas of the state began to produce exactly the edge-type of browse demanded by healthy deer and slowly the population began to climb. They were common by 1940 and overabundant by the early 1950's. This is when good sound research by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources brought about better knowledge of the carrying capacity of the land and of the annual variable quota of deer allowable. With a little bit of luck our total Wisconsin deer herd of about three-fourths of one million can yield about 70,000 to 100,000 to hunters each year. Any less and winter starvation becomes a severe problem."

NOTE – In checking the Wisconsin DNR web site for all deer harvest numbers, about 600,000 deer, a record high number, were harvested in the year 2000. For more recent years the numbers are in the 300,000 range.

Charlotte Lukes

## Trail Docent Report

This year eleven trail docents volunteered at Toft Point walking the main trail and greeting visitors. They also were able to report any trees that fell over hiking trails and possible maintenance issues with other areas of the property including the historic cabins.

Several benefits of having these member-volunteers there is to help people understand the rules of protecting this Natural Area and to learn where visitors came from and how they found out about Toft Point. A fair number of hikers learn about the Point when stopping in at the Baileys Harbor visitor center.

Many people love the quiet serenity of the trails and being able to walk without the possibility of wheeled vehicles or dogs breaking this solitude.

All docents fill out a daily report form which is returned to Charlotte Lukes. Often notes are made indicating what birds were seen or heard and the flowers that were in bloom. That is helpful for knowing how the blossoming calendar compares to previous years and the abundance of the avian population during the breeding season.

Some docents will also work at removing invasive plants during their 3-hour shift.

Some trail docents have been helping with this important service for over 18 years and had to resign from helping this summer due to health issues and other family matters.

We are very grateful to the eleven docents who put in many hours of volunteer time for the Friends of Toft Point and for the Cofrin Center for Biodiversity at the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay.

They are:

Nick Anderson

Susan Basten

Jay and Nancy Dickson

Judy Hollingshead

Nancy Hoppe

Charlotte Lukes

Judy Turner

Joe and Liz Wallner

Jane Whitney

We need more members to step up and help with this vital volunteer work. Before the Friends group was organized there were a few acts of vandalism. The area was not watched over as much so some young people felt it was a good spot to have bon fires or late night drinking parties during the summer.

Once we established the Friends of Toft Point there was more activity and a human presence out there which helped to prevent these unwanted events.

Many visitors who have been away from Door County for a long time are so grateful to learn that the Toft Point land has been preserved and is open to the public.

Contact Nick Anderson 920-868-3499 or Liz Wallner 920-743-6314 to offer to help with this vital volunteer service. We have an organizational meeting each spring for all docents.



The American tamarack tree is a deciduous conifer, meaning it has cones but is not evergreen. By early November each year the soft flexible needles turn a golden yellow and will fall off leaving the bare branches to weather the cold winter.

*Roy Lukes photo*

**Friends of Toft Point, Inc. – Membership Form**      New\_\_\_\_ Renewal\_\_\_\_

Single Annual \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Single Life Membership \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 (payable in 2 annual installments)

Family Annual \_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 Couple Life Membership \_\_\_\_\_ \$400 (payable in 2 annual installments)

Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for General Expenses \_\_\_\_\_ Operating Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Student Research Grant \_\_\_\_\_ Invasives Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Please print clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Friends of Toft Point, Inc.  
Is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization  
All dues and donations are tax deductible.

Make check payable to **Friends of Toft Point, Inc.**  
MAIL TO Charlotte Lukes  
3962 Hillside Rd  
Egg Harbor, WI 54209

---

### Volunteer Opportunities

Trail Docent (training provided) \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Maintenance (supervised crews) \_\_\_\_\_

Invasive Plant Removal \_\_\_\_\_

Big Tree Recording \_\_\_\_\_

Serve on Board of Directors (6 meetings per year) \_\_\_\_\_

Help with Annual Meeting & Potluck in August \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in form and mail to **Nick Anderson, PO Box 586, Fish Creek, WI 54212** or call 920-868-3499

Friends of Toft Point, Inc.  
% C. Lukes  
3962 Hillside Rd.  
Egg Harbor, WI 54209



Wishing all of you a Happy Thanksgiving and a joyous Holiday Season!

*Roy Lukes photo*

