



Adam Birding Conservancy

A Prairie & Wetlands
Reserve in Cold Spring, WI

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Seven of the state's eight species at the ABC? It's enough to drive one batty.

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The Trumpeter family of nine were fun to watch through September.

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The first burn of the woods and recurring seedlings made it a great year for new plant sightings.

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One Point, hundreds of flakes and some old nails and cloth surfaced.

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What's Atlas Obscura?

2024 Year-End Update



Snow White with Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, Sneezy, Dopey and Prince Florian

Highlights

The DNR conducted a bat survey for two weeks this summer that captured the echolocation emitted from seven of the state's eight species (page 2). Birding was blah the second half of the year. Too much freestanding water coupled with aggressive cattail growth contributed (page 3). A small burn of the woods early this spring, the first ever attempted, helped contributed to over half the 40 new plant species identified in 2024 (page 4). Over 300 Native American knapping flakes and some early European settler artifacts were uncovered in late summer and fall (page 5). Lastly, the ABC now has Cold Spring and Whitewater's only entry into Atlas Obscura with a post on the Big Foot Rock (page 6).



Feedback or to be added/dropped from the mailing list: adambirdingconservancy@gmail.com

Bat Survey at the ABC



Hoary Bat (60.6%)



Big Brown Bat (33.5%)



J Paul installing the detectors



Thanks to J Paul White, Mammal Ecologist from the Wisconsin DNR for installing two Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope detectors at the Trumpeter Blind and on the berm where the Bufflehead Blind will someday be near the Bark River.

The seven species echolocated are on this page with the percentage of observations in “()”. Those species with 0.5% or less of the sightings could have been mis-identified. That would be called an at bat leading to a strike out. The only species not ‘heard’ was the federally endangered Northern Long-Eared bat.

The last bat survey along the ABC’s Bark River that was done in 2018 showed greater incidences of Little Brown Bats and far fewer Hoary Bats. The deadly white-nose syndrome has impacted Little Browns to a greater extent with the growth in Hoary Bat’s filling the void.

Silver-Haired Bat (3.6%)



Evening Bat (1.0%)



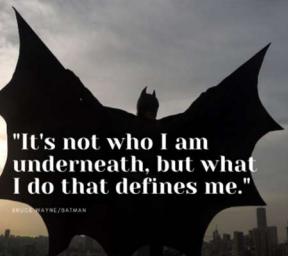
Eastern Red Bat (0.2%)



Tricolored Bat (0.5%)



Little Brown Bat (0.8%)



A bat can eat between 4,000 and 8,000 insects a night which is roughly equivalent to the weight of two grapes. Nursing mothers will eat more. Bats often eat ‘out’ twice a night...shortly after sunset and just before dawn. They eat a variety of insects, including mosquitoes, moths, dragonflies and beetles.



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All About Birds



The Ugly Truth...Cattails Took Over the east-facing ponds this Summer...view from the Trumpeter Blind in August.



I'm not a great bird ID'er...female bobolink?

The trumpeter ninesome was fun to watch through early fall. This year's family seemed unusually shy. A few weeks after giving birth, they relocated their nest to the south side of the Blackbird blind (the Cattail Condo). One of the seven cygnets, we'll call him Sleepy, often stayed in the nest with a perturbed parent while the other six cygnets with parent #2 did their morning swim to the birth nest where they would splash about, eat and then go back to the cattail condo.



Cup plant supports a sparrow



American Tree Sparrow – frequently found in fall and winter.

Sweet clover was subdued this year. 😊 That made observing the grassland birds easier than in 2023.



An infrequent trail cam catch-Hummingbird



Last Full Family Trumpeter photo in late September. A few were still seen in December but the pond was frozen and they flew by. Like having kids who left the nest pop in for the Holidays.

No new birds have been sighted since spring. Still holding at 215 different species.



The west-most pond in September gets as crowded as Florida on spring break as waterfowl seek respite from duck hunters.



©lapotosmugmug.com

<- By August, the Trumpeter family only visited their birth island on the Blackbird Blind pond on late morning play dates. By September, all vegetation was gone until a muskrat family built a mini-mountain on this spot in November ->





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Plenty to Observe in Summer

40 newly ID species this year brings the total to 223 different (and sadly not all high-quality native) species. Higher on the coefficient of conservatism ratings since July include False Dragonhead, Slender False Foxglove, Marsh Hedgenettle, Blue Toadflax, Side-Flowering Skullcap and Rough Blazing Star. Apologies if I've mis-ID anything.



Wild Onion



False Dragonhead



Blue Toadflax



Butterfly Milkweed



Glade Mallow



White Snakeroot



Marsh Hedgenettle



Great Blue Lobelia



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Dig It - Archaeology Annals

The nice thing about plants and archaeology is that the pursued stays put, which works great for a slow-witted observer like me. Even better for archaeology...the deer don't eat the artifacts.



A tiny base and stem – without tip, hard to identify but could be a Preston style (3,500 years old).
Found by my sister-in-law Kris K.



This 'tube' rock may have been natural or created...archaic societies used these as throw weights, pipes and fire starters. Found by Rich R.



A 'frosted' flake with a semi-transparent appearance. Many flakes; few points. Would enjoy seeing the end product of this rock.

The ABC is within several miles of a camp of American soldiers who were pursuing Chief Black Hawk in early July, 1832. In this contingent was Abe Lincoln, Zach Taylor and Jefferson Davis (two US and one Confederate Presidents).

At this time, Mineral Point had a larger population than Chicago and the size of General Atkinson's force of up to 5,000 men would have left a large, albeit temporary, footprint on the landscape.

Part of the ABC is close to an old military road that was once an Indigenous Peoples path. Could some of these early European finds stem from that era or might they be from more recent times?



More than 300 primary and secondary flakes found this fall in a five-meter circle indicates somebody was busy making stuff.



One of several square-headed nails. Blacksmith crafted, likely from late 1700s to mid-1800s.



Transferware...a type of pottery popular in the 1820s and 1830s but still present decades later.



Blue cloth piece with a wide, hand-made stitch. Found by Kris K.



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And Now for Something Completely Different

No, there are no Pythons, Monty or otherwise, at the ABC. Just Garter snakes...though we do have prairie crayfish...here's one of their chimneys from this summer. ->
Find them along the Inner Peace Trail between the osprey platforms and the woods.



Before I travel to destinations unknown, I research the area with Google searches, starting first by looking at both TripAdvisor and Atlas Obscura. The latter gives more non-touristy, somewhat quirky but often fascinating sites and experiences...so I submitted the ABC's Big Foot Rock for consideration and it was accepted this fall. If you are footloose and fancy free and up for a two+ mile round trip hike, give it a go.

WHITEWATER, WISCONSIN

Big Foot Rock

A glacial erratic in the shape of a foot rests in the woods of a restored oak savanna prairie.



4 ADDED BY
David Adam

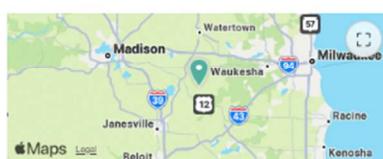


Big Foot Rock [Adwadam \[Atlas Obscura User\]](#)

About

A mile-long walk through a restored prairie takes one to a woods of large bur oak and shagbark hickory to the site of a large glacial erratic deposited by the Wisconsin glaciation period over 10,000 years ago. Local legend states that those who place an ice cube in the heel of Big Foot Rock and make a wish will witness their hands dry off and their wish come true.

A walk through the prairie of this birding hotspot known as the Adam Birding Conservancy in spring offers the opportunity of seeing many wetland and grassland birds like yellow-headed blackbirds, bobolinks, eastern meadowlarks, and dickcissels. In summer, breeding trumpeter swans and their hatchlings can also be found in the ponds



📍 **Big Foot Rock**
11636 Findlay Rd
Whiteewater, Wisconsin, 53190
United States

.LatLng 42.897984, -88.739339



Monarch on a New England Aster

Monarch or Viceroy?

The ABC has both but more Viceroys given the preponderance of aggressive Type-A sandbar willows in the wetlands over chill milkweeds in the prairie.

Viceroy are generally smaller than monarchs and have a wide black "V" or "U" (depending on how bad your penmanship is) at the base of their lower wing.



Viceroy in the grasses