



Adam Birding Conservancy

A Prairie & Wetlands
Reserve in Cold Spring, WI

2025 End of Year Update

Looking Ahead to 2026

1. With the help of Rich, our neighbors and hunt crew, we hope to partially burn the prairie this spring. It has been four years since the last burn.
2. If the drone spraying done this fall takes hold, the ponds should be more visible this summer. The cattails may not die off until late spring.
3. Thanks in part to donations from the Wild Ones Kettle Moraine Chapter, Graham at Goose Pond and Zach, we have planted another 30 species of natives in the late fall, primarily around the woods and fens. Excited to see what comes up in the next few years.



Howard Rothstein took this picture of an osprey at the ABC getting ready to serve up a two-piece fish fry. Amazing.

Highlights

Birding was slow the second half of 2025 as open water views were obscured by cattails and the trumpeter swan family was unusually skittish after losing one of their cygnets shortly after birth. Hopefully the drone spraying of invasives done this fall coupled with selective prescribed burning will liven things up in 2026.

The woods and the water flowage from the fens continue to reveal new plant species showing up on their ownsome, including Kalm's Lobelia (a 10 on the coefficient of conservation scale).

Archaeological finds, ranging from early 20th century glass to possible Paleo Indian knapped stone objects, lay credence to a long history of former occupants and passers-by. It humbles one to walk the trails thinking we are stewards of land for animals, plants and for the people over the millennia who called this home.



Five of the seven trumpeter cygnets fully fledged...making 18 that have survived to fly south over the last three years. In 2025, we lost one in July to unknown causes and a second in October that hit a power line.



Prairie blazing star with Viceroy



Short-eared Owl from mid-November [Rich R]

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



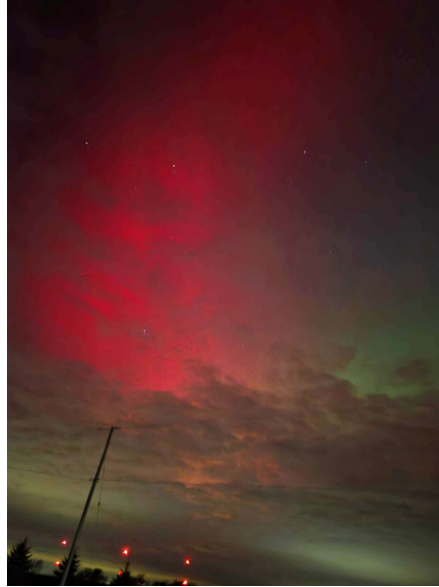
Adam Birding Conservancy

A Prairie & Wetlands
Reserve in Cold Spring, WI

Miscellaneous



UW-Whitewater students utilize a Trimble to complete a GIS assignment by Treebeard, our hollowed-out silver maple to the south of the woods.



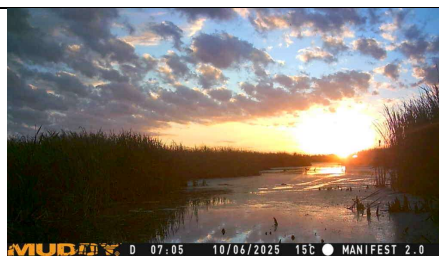
Rich R took this awesome aurora photo



The ABC served as an aid station for migratory marathoners in the Discover Whitewater run in September.



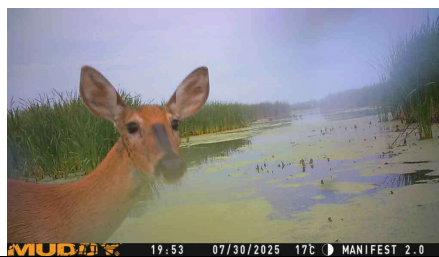
AirCrop, LLC used drones to spray cattails and sandbar willows that were taking over the ponds and encroaching on the prairie. Time will tell if it works.



Atilla of the Hilla this fall removed some invasives and will hopefully permit Brenda's mini cows (below) to have some winter wheat come spring. Thanks to Zach and a few others who donated seeds. We hope to make the top of the hill a more natural prairie.



A raccoon family feasting by the bubbling springs.



A trail cam facing east caught some nice sunrises, lots of wildlife like the Great Egrets and many deer. Rich and his crew harvested four this fall during gun season.





Adam Birding Conservancy

A Prairie & Wetlands
Reserve in Cold Spring, WI

Prairie Plants

We identified nineteen new plants at the ABC in the second half of 2025, bringing the total to 290 different (both good and bad) species. Interesting finds include Kalm's lobelia, bog clearweed, nodding bulrush, false mermaid-weed, black cohosh and marsh skullcap.



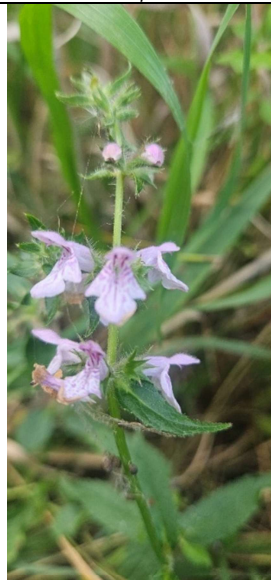
Black Swallowtail on Purple Prairie Blazing Star



Cup Plants and Wild Bergamot [Ann M]



First time visitor...relatively rare by Wisconsin standards - Kalm's Lobelia.



Marsh Hedenettle & False Dragonhead



Great Blue Lobelia



Heart-leaved Skullcap



Rattlesnake Master.



Adam Birding Conservancy

A Prairie & Wetlands Reserve in Cold Spring, WI

Archaeology Update

New finds since June include a lanceolate point with broken tip and base that hint at a Paleo Indian campsite. That's 9,000+ years ago. In addition, early 1900s glass, including a bottle of Dura-Gloss nail polish with contents still inside (albeit dried out) and a bottle of mayo, point to a more modern party or a dumping ground.



A Raddatz or Matanzas Point, ~ 3,000-5,500 years old



Point with a wide range of possible dates from Early Woodland (~2,500 years ago) to Paleo (9,000+ years ago). Found by Zach K.



This poor guy has seen better days. Tip is broken off.



A probable Lanceolate point with broken base and tip. May be 9,000+ years old.



Brachiopods from the Paleozoic Era some 400 million years ago. Found in a Native campsite context and knapped on the bottom and sides. This may have been an object of veneration for an ancient culture.



Cochrane chert from western Wisconsin shaped interestingly like a dog.



A roughed out celt before being ground to final form. If finished, it would have been used for tree cutting, making canoes, harvesting wood, etc. Age range of 3,000-5,500 years old.



Perhaps a scraper or knife



Hellman's Blue Ribbon Mayo from the 1920s. Not usually found in WI.



Dura-Gloss Nail Polish sold for a nickel back in the 1930s with dried polish still inside.

