



Rock River Reflections

A publication of the *Rock River COALITION* produced in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Extension Summer 2007 Volume 10, Number 3

Experiencing science along the Rock River

by Ed Grunden, RRC Monitoring Director

Seventy-four high school students spent the day of May 28th along the bank of the Rock River at Indian Trails Boy Scout Camp studying the water quality of the Rock River. The project entailed the partnering of Union of Automobile Workers-General Motors volunteers from the Janesville plant, the Advanced Biology students and their teachers from the Janesville Public School District (Craig and Parker high schools), and staff and volunteers from the Rock River Coalition and Earth Force. Joining them as educators were Rock River Coalition Volunteer Monitors and City of Janesville, and Rock County employees.

The day began with a briefing on water quality and the importance of the Rock River to Janesville. This was followed immediately by hands on testing of the water from the Rock River. Testing took the teams to the lunch hour, which was followed by data analysis and reports. The students found the water of the Rock to be in fair condition based upon their combined testing that included: biotic index, chemical panels, flow rate and turbidity. In addition the students were able to learn about various careers and interact with professionals from a wide spectrum of the community. The event was well received by everyone involved and plans are

being made to expand the program during the 2007-8 school year.

Earth Force is a General Motors program that engages young people as active citizens who improve the environment and their communities now and in the future.

Earth Force provides training and support to educators that enable young people to lead community action projects focused on creating sustainable solutions to local environment issues in the community.



Top right: Janesville students sample the Rock River on May 28th as part of a General Motors Earth Force activity. Left: General Motors mentor, Jerry Oleston, works with students as they complete chemical tests. Bottom right: Two students analyze the test results.

-photos by Earl Gretschnann



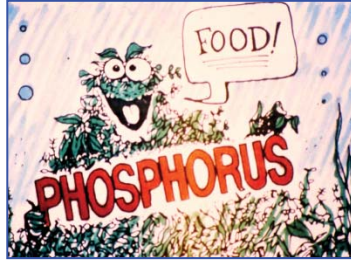
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RRC Promotes Restrictions on Excessive Phosphorus Fertilizer Use on Residential Lawns

The Coalition has completed an electronic presentation on why it's important to restrict the excessive use of phosphorus-based fertilizer. We encourage communities throughout the basin to either enact a ban on the unnecessary use of phosphorus fertilizer on lawns or to follow Jefferson County and the Wisconsin Association of Lakes to encourage the state to enact such a ban. This restriction would not impact the use of phosphorus fertilizer on farms, gardens, flowers, trees or shrubs.

We encourage this since, unfortunately, many of our basin lakes have a problem with excess algae growth and too many rooted plants. We can't turn this problem around quickly, but there are things we can do to lessen the problem. And we can definitely work to keep it from getting worse. The excess plant growth in our lakes can be attributed to two things: sediment and phosphorus. What's great for our lawns and on our farms, is a big



problem for our lakes. Phosphorus is limited in lakes, even when nitrogen and other plant nutrients are available in large amounts. It is the naturally low levels of phosphorus that puts a brake on plant growth. So when phosphorus is added to water you essentially take the brake off. You might be interested to know that one pound of phosphorus added to a lake can result in 500 pounds of algae growth!

Please email the Coalition if you would like to learn more about our concern with phosphorus in our rivers and lakes, or if your group would like to have our presentation "Controlling Excess Phosphorus: A Watershed Approach" given to your group. The development

of the presentation was funded through a DNR Lake Planning Grant.

Rock River Coalition receives two DNR River Planning Grants

Phosphorus Monitoring in the Rock River Basin

As awareness of environmental issues increases, phosphorus remains at the top of the list for surface water quality concerns. Agricultural, TMDL, lake management and numerous federal, state, county, and privately driven projects will all benefit from quality phosphorus loading data. While several localized or short term phosphorus studies have been completed in the basin, consistently collected, basin-wide data would provide a more complete picture of the fate of phosphorus in the basin.

The goals of this project are to develop a comprehensive phosphorus sampling plan using volunteers for the Rock River Basin. The plan will include a ranked list of qualified sampling sites based on the need for data and quality of existing historical data. The final monitoring plan will include this prioritized listing of sites, final protocols, partners, responsibilities and funding.

Over the long term we will use this plan to initiate phosphorus and flow sampling at the prioritized sites. Ed Grunden, our Citizen Monitoring Director will oversee this project, along with RRC Board Member Tim Reel, Wastewater Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager. We anticipate working closely with the DNR and others interested in phosphorus loading to the Rock River Basin.

Water Star Community Project

Storm water is one of the most critical environmental issues facing, not only the south eastern portion of Wisconsin, but the entire state. We're looking for methods to encourage communities to not just go for compliance, but to strive for actions that go above the minimum. The ultimate result is increased water quality and habitat, both in established urban areas and in transition areas.

In 2005 the Rock River Coalition, working with the Town and Country R, C & D, oversaw a DNR River Planning Grant funding focus groups to get perspectives on the idea from a variety of municipalities. As a result of the findings, a basic plan for a new program for Wisconsin, titled the "Water Star Community" Project was developed. As envisioned, communities would be able to earn a star in five areas: surface water, groundwater, land use, habitat and human health/recreation.

Thus this project would not only foster better storm water control it would also improve other aspects of the environmental and human community.

We plan on doing this by organizing a state-wide partnership of stakeholders concerned about urban stormwater pollution and the enhancement of all aspects of the urban environment. This partnership will develop program elements including specific activities, a point structure to receive a star, municipal incentives, and all other logistical components for the project plan. We will then look to establish at least three pilot Water Star Communities within the Rock River Basin.

Our first step will be to hire a project coordinator who will oversee all aspects of the project. We are hoping to have the coordinator work out of an office of one of our partners in Madison. For more information contact Suzanne Wade.



Mission

"To educate and bring together people of diverse interests to protect and improve the economic, environmental, cultural, and recreational resources of the Rock River Basin in Wisconsin"

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RRC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, providing equal opportunity in employment & programming.

If you need special accommodation for programs please contact the RRC at least two weeks in advance.



Introducing new board member: Patricia Cicero

The RRC is pleased to welcome our newest board member who brings a wealth of experience in working with farmers and lake groups. She has exceptional management and writing skills having developed many management plans and projects. Here's a little more about her:



Hi, I'm the Water Resources Management Specialist at the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department. I've been with the county for 9 years giving me the opportunity to work with farmers, lake owners and many others. I truly value partnerships, such as the Coalition's

efforts, as I feel they result in better resource protection. Here are some of my experiences, which I bring to the Coalition.

Lakes: I helped write the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and I also worked on the Rock Lake Priority Lake Project to prevent sediment and phosphorus runoff through implementation of conservation practices in the Rock Lake Watershed. Then in 2006, we completed a Rock Lake Management Plan in partnership with the public and two lake committees. I helped secure grant funding which allowed Jefferson County to put together a plan for the 26 lakes in the county, and since then I have been helping to implement the plan.

In partnership with the Lake Ripley Management District and the DNR, we researched the effect of pier shading on fish, plants, and macroinvertebrates. I am now involved in a new research project to perform water quality, fish, and plant sampling for Mud and Hope Lakes in Jefferson County resulting in new holistic management plans.

Agriculture: I helped draft the county's Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management ordinance and have been implementing the ordinances since 1999. I've also worked with farmers & engineers on both manure storage design and closure and have performed inspections on both. In addition I have investigated manure complaints and taken the necessary actions to rectify the problem. I also review farmer's nutrient management plans and work with them on the implementation of many other conservation practices.

Every county must have an approved Land and Water Resource Management Plan. I wrote Jefferson's original plan & its updates. Currently I am involved with the implementation of the plan.

Habitat Restoration: I worked with the Parks Department at Korth Park on shoreland, wetland and prairie restorations.

I'm looking forward to the prospect of working on the Rock River Coalition Board. I'm hoping my agricultural, water resource and public process experience will be beneficial to the board.

Patricia

President's Message

During the past quarter the RRC has had our annual meeting in Lake Mills on May 8, we completed our annual canoe trip 'Send Your Legislator Down the River' (SYLDR) on June 11 in McFarland and we completed our preparation of a PowerPoint presentation describing the effects of Phosphorus on water quality. In addition, we have continued working with our issue teams and have made progress raising funds for the GFLOW model.

As we look ahead we are finding it necessary to perform more fund-raising as our existing grants are diminished and our activities are increasing. We were able to obtain high rankings for two new DNR river planning grants to work on a Phosphorus monitoring plan and to promote the Water Star Community program. However, our work with citizen stream and wetland monitoring is short of funds and we have completed all our grants for rain gardens.

As a result we will be increasing our fund-raising efforts and asking our staff to work harder with less.

Some of our future interests include developing an education center for watershed issues, developing a water conservation program for the watershed and developing water resources related to recreational opportunities in the watershed.

-President Joe Dorava

jdor@vierbicher.com

Welcome Dan Heim as DNR Rock River Basin Water Resources Management Specialist

Dan Heim, has accepted the position of the Rock River Basin Water Resources Management Specialist, taking the place of the recently retired, Ruth Johnson.



Dan Heim explaining the protocols for measuring dissolved oxygen at one of our first citizen stream monitoring training workshops.

Dan is a long-time friend of the Rock River Coalition. He participated in the original forum that led to the establishment of our unique partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Dan, through his participation in the Horicon Marsh Area Coalition, helped develop the Rock River Basin monitoring program and was one of our first local citizen monitoring coordinators working with volunteers in upper Dodge County and the Fond du Lac, Washington and Green Lake areas of the basin.

Over the past 17 years he has been a Wastewater Specialist for the Upper Rock River Basin.

When asked what his goals for his new position were Dan explained "I am really looking forward to devoting more time to the water resources of the basin. I have always had a keen interest in looking at the flora and fauna of our waters and

will now get the chance to do just that. I expect to spend the majority of my time in the field looking at the bugs, fish and vegetation in our rivers and stream. I think it is very important to know the quality of our rivers and streams and then be able to relate that information to the public. I think there has been a lack of information sharing with the public about our waterways and a goal of mine will be to take technical information and present that information to the public in an understandable and meaningful way. I very much look forward to working with the Rock River Coalition and other groups in achieving that goal."

We're looking forward to Dan participating in our issue teams and other projects. Welcome Dan!

Take the Natural Step

The Natural Step is a self-directed grassroots effort aimed at leading and accelerating a municipalities transition to an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable community. Through education, a participative process and working from the citizens on up, the Natural Step framework helps businesses, organizations, schools, municipalities and individuals develop sustainable practices. Communities interested in the Natural Step, first listen to a presentation, then hold study circles, adopt an eco-municipality resolution, train municipal employees and then prepare plans for action.

Eco-municipalities in the basin are: City of Madison and Village of Johnson Creek. Communities either exploring the eco-municipality model or hosting Natural Step study circles are: Fort Atkinson, Monona (tnsmonona.com), Jefferson, Oregon, Palmyra, Watertown and Whitewater.

For more information contact Greg David at prairiedf@globaldialog.com.

Successful Rain Garden Workshop held in Pewaukee

The Kettle Moraine Garden Club (KMGC) hosted a very successful rain garden workshop in Pewaukee on June 26 with 69 people participating. The workshop: "Rain Gardens...a beautiful solution for water pollution" showed the way, (especially in Waukesha with their groundwater drawdown issues), a rain garden could be a valuable and functional asset to a home, business or school.



Students discuss how the rain garden was planted, and the purpose of the garden, with workshop participants.

The Pewaukee Library has a very large rain garden that captures the rain from the roof and parking lots, allowing the water to soak in instead of running off. Students who helped install the rain garden in the spring of 2006 were on hand to talk to people about the rain garden and why it is important.

The audience found value in the presentations, judging by how many stayed to the end and the number, 21, who plan to install a rain garden and the 29 people who are considering it.

Sponsors of the workshop included Lake Pewaukee Sanitary District, UW-Extension, SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners, Lake Pewaukee Sanitary District, the Pewaukee River Partnership, Fox Lake Partnership and Waukesha County.

Residents of Waukesha County, through a generous grant by the Graham-Martin Foundation, can apply for rain garden plants at a reduced rate. Contact Jayne Jenks, Waukesha County at jjenks@waukesha.gov or at 262-896-8305 on how to apply.



Workshop participants explored the Pewaukee Library rain garden learning about the plants and insects they attract.

-photos by Suzanne Wade



Revisiting our Rain Gardens

Over the last four years the Rock River Coalition, through the work of Ellen Rulseh, Outreach Coordinator, we have overseen the installation of fourteen rain gardens. Periodically, we will revisit them to let you know how they are doing. In this article we will look at the first one completed and the last one as well as one of our other projects completed with the help of High School students.

The UW-Extension Jefferson County Rain Garden



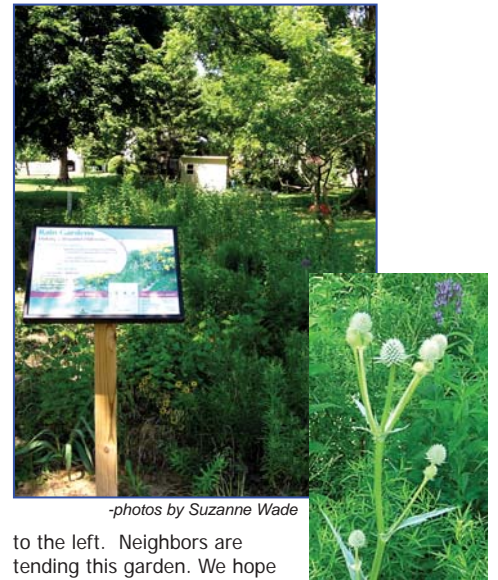
was the first one established back in 2003. It was in fantastic shape until staff changes resulted in less maintenance. Currently it has an issue with encroaching grass and invasive plants including smartweed, Queen Anne's Lace and Canada Goldenrod. There was also impact from a herbicide that either washed in or drifted through the air. Sunflower type plants were the most effected by it. The Jefferson County Parks Department plans on helping with the encroachment of grass by digging out a foot of lawn all the way around and filling it with mulch. But, this garden could still use some TLC. If you have a couple of hours to help get it back to health, please contact Suzanne at 920-674-8972 or suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu.

The last garden installed as part of our "Rain Garden in Every Community" Project is this turtle-shaped



garden next to the wastewater treatment plant in Beloit. Even though these tough little plants didn't get into the ground until Halloween, they are currently doing great as shown in this early July photo.

While most rain gardens are planted in the sun, the one in Stoughton was planted in the shade. Not many plants were in bloom when this photo was taken, except for some very nice rattlesnake master shown



-photos by Suzanne Wade

to the left. Neighbors are tending this garden. We hope to host a plant identification workshop late this summer to help them with their garden maintenance.

Looking for a Rain Garden Speaker?

If your group is looking for a speaker on rain gardens, or help with the development of a rain garden workshop, contact Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension Rock River Basin Educator at 920-674-8972.

Other topics she can speak on include groundwater, stormwater and phosphorus concerns in the Rock River Basin.

Adopt a Rain Garden

The Jefferson County UWEX rain garden, one of the Johnson Creek rain gardens and possibly others need someone who can help with weeding and maintenance. If you'd like to help, contact Tracy Novak, RRC Board Member at 262-903-0698. The Middleton rain gardens needs someone to help facilitate twice a year weeding by students, including helping identify the 'good' rain garden plants from 'weeds'.



Recipients of awards at the RRC Annual Meeting include: From left Don Esposito, Veridian Homes, Gloria Hafemeister, Mark Martin, Madison Audubon Society (MAS), Janice Redford, RRC monitor was presented the Wisconsin 2007 Citizen Monitoring of the Year Award, Paul Moderacki, Susan Foote-Martin, MAS and MAS President Joanne Herfel. Congratulations!
-photo by Jerry Matzelle

RRC Honors Award Recipients

Protector Awards

Individual:

Paul Moderacki, Village of Johnson Creek Administrator, for his work in promoting the Natural Step as well as his support of the RRC GFLOW Model. Without his leadership the model would never have begun.

Gloria Hafemeister, reporter, who has helped promote the RRC policies on land use not only in the basin through stories in the Watertown Daily Times, but also through articles in the Wisconsin State Farmer. Her coverage of the Rock River Coalition programs and projects has brought awareness to many citizens of the concerns we have for the basin.

Business:

Veridian Homes: They are the first builders in the state to receive a Wisconsin Green Tier Charter. Veridian goes above and beyond what is required in their permit to insure they are protecting the environment both during construction and afterwards. They are doing innovative work, such as controlling erosion with chipped lumber remnants, which used to go to the landfill and are now an asset.

Elected Official:

Greg David, Jefferson County Supervisor has lead the push for sustainability in the county, encouraging the development of study groups for the Natural Step and working with the Town and Country R, C & D to establish a Sustainability Team. His award was presented at 'Send Your Legislator Down the River'.

Organization:

Madison Audubon Society for their work in restoring the Zeloski Muck Farm to a wetland and for their support of the Rock River Coalition's Volunteer Wetland Monitoring Program.

Friends Awards

The Rock River Coalition presented Friends Awards to past president Warren Topel, past board member Margaret Burlingham, past Outreach Coordinator Ellen Rulseh and to former Watertown Mayor John David, who established a mayor's committee for the Watertown Riverwalk, promoting further development of the river walk plan.

The award is a framed photo taken by Jeffrey Strobel at the Horicon Marsh. Shown here is Ellen receiving her award at Send Your Legislator Down the River.



-photo by Pat Eagan



Assemblywoman Sondy Pope-Roberts and State Senator Mark Miller address the SYLDR participants as they welcome them to their area of the state. -photos by Greg David

Send Your Legislator a splashing success

A flotilla of canoes and kayaks enjoyed a splendid summer evening paddling down the Yahara River south of McFarland during this year's Send Your Legislator Down the River (SYLDR). Amazingly, for such an urban area, an adult bald eagle soared over the group as they paddled through Lower Mud Lake. Prior to the paddle, a number of elected officials addressed the group and answered questions including State Senators Mark Miller, Monona and Neal Kedzie, Elkhorn and State Assemblymen Sondy Pope-Roberts, Middleton, Andy Jorgenson, Fort Atkinson and Steve Nass, Whitewater. DNR spokeswoman Mary Schlafer also discussed some of the agencies priorities and concerns for the basin.



-photo by Ed Grunden

Two other invasives found in the Rock River Basin



-photo by Stephen Derbyshire, Canada

Black swallow-wort, a twining vine with dark purple star-shaped flowers is in the milkweed family. It can form extensive patches that crowd out native vegetation. Old field habitats of goldenrod and grasses can be replaced almost exclusively by swallow-wort, completely changing their physical structure and most likely results in a decline in grassland bird presence. Investigations into impacts on the monarch butterfly, which requires milkweeds for reproduction, indicate that the butterfly will cue into black swallow-wort and lay eggs, but the larvae do not survive.

Eradication is difficult once a colony is established because plants form a dense, knobby mass of underground roots. Initial control efforts should concentrate on plants in sunny areas since they produce the most seeds. All pods should be removed before they open, and then burned or landfilled to prevent seed release. Triclopyr or glyphosate with a surfactant can be applied to foliage during the growing season. Cut-stem treatment with glyphosate is also effective but labor intensive. Monitor for populations in late summer when plants turn golden yellow and pods become prominent.

Japanese Hedge Parsley

Hedge parsleys are parsley-like annuals with taproots and erect, ridged stems. They grow in a spreading form up to 3 feet in height. Leaves are alternate, pinnately divided, 2 to 5 inches long and may be slightly downy. Small, white flowers are clustered in small, open, flat-topped umbels. Japanese hedge-parsley has 2



-photo by Dan Tenaglia

or more pointed bracts at the base of each umbel. The small fruiting structure is covered in velcro-like hairs which attach to clothing and fur, readily dispersing the seed. In the Rock River Basin, it has been found in Rock, Walworth and Dane counties.

Two Invasive Mustards Threaten Our Basin

After spending much of the spring pulling garlic mustard, none of us want to hear of potential new invasive plants. But at least two have been found close enough for us to be on the look-out. If you come across a plant that you suspect is one of these, either take a sample to your county UW-Extension office, or snap a digital photo and send it to either the RRC at rriver@excel.net or to suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu. We'll try to identify it from the photo, or ask you for more information, in order to pinpoint what you found. The information provided below is from fact sheets developed by UW-Extension Weed Specialist Mark Renz. More information and links to other invasive plant sites can be found at <http://www.ipaw.org>.

Perennial Pepperweed, a New Invasive Mustard is found in Wisconsin



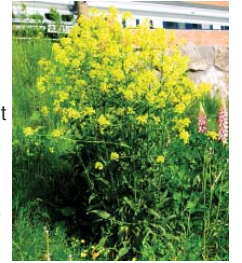
Originally from Europe and Asia, perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium* L.) is an invasive creeping herbaceous perennial weed recently found in Green Bay. This plant is capable of invading pastures, alfalfa fields, roadsides and many other upland sites, as well as riparian areas, irrigation ditches, floodplains and wetlands. Shoots emerge early in the spring forming a rosette which will persist for several weeks. By late spring, plants bolt producing an inflorescence where flowers will develop. New rosettes can emerge in the fall in moist soils. Concern for large-scale spread is high as perennial pepperweed has the potential to invade natural and managed areas. The population found in Wisconsin was along a disturbed roadside near a large transportation hub for a shipping company. This indicates that propagules are being imported from long-distance sources. Rapid response and eradication of existing infestations is critical to prevent the spread of this invasive weed throughout the state.

IDENTIFICATION: STEMS are green, semi-woody, and can be numerous. They can range from 2 feet to over 4 feet tall, but senesce by late summer. **ROOTS** can be herbaceous or form semi-woody crowns. Herbaceous roots are often creeping and are responsible for localized spread. **LEAVES** are smooth and green to gray-green in color. Rosette leaves are 4 to 11 inches long and 1 to 3 inches wide with long petioles. Leaves on the stem are reduced in size compared to rosette leaves and have a shorter petiole. **FLOWERS/FRUIT:** Small, white flowers form dense clusters throughout the top third of the stems. Fruit are small, round, 2 chambered pods, 1/16th of an inch long.

The full fact sheet can be printed from: <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Invasive-Plants-of-Wisconsin-Perennial-Pepperweed-P1219C252.aspx>

Hill mustard (*Bunias orientalis* L.) is found in a few locations in Wisconsin.

This plant, native to southern Europe, was first documented in Wisconsin in 1958, but recently has been spreading rapidly throughout the southwestern part of the state. It inhabits a wide range of habitats, but is typically found in CRP fields, along roadsides, and in other minimally disturbed areas. Once established this plant forms a monoculture of hill mustard plants. Adult plants can survive for many years, but populations appear to spread from seed as young seedlings are observed the following year along the leading edge of the infestation near parent plants.



-photo by Jan Wesenberg

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Herbarium documented the original infestation in Green County west of the intersection of Co. Highway N and Buehler Road (north of Monroe approximately 3 miles). An inspection of all roads in the vicinity of this site in 2005 found that most hill mustard infestations are within 5 miles of this site. Recently additional infestations were found in Lafayette County, indicating its ability to spread long distances. Further monitoring is needed to determine if hill mustard is present in other counties and to further pinpoint known infestations in these two counties.

It is also known as Turkish rocket, Turkish warty-cabbage, warty cabbage, and warted bunias.

IDENTIFICATION: LEAVES on mature plants can be 12 or more inches long (basal leaves) and become progressively smaller up the stem. Leaves are lanceolate, highly lobed with sharp points.

STEMS are erect, 10 to 45 inches tall and are branched in the upper region as flowering begins. A key characteristic of hill mustard is the "warty bumps" (tubercles) on the stems which are easily felt by running your finger over the stem surface. Leaves may also have these bumps and a cabbage-like smell which gives rise to the name "warty cabbage." Both leaves and stems are somewhat hairy.

FLOWERS have bright yellow petals, are very fragrant and are borne on dense racemes. Fruits are ovate, irregularly warty, 0.25 to 0.4 inches long, contain 2 to 4 seeds, and are borne on stalks about 0.5 inch long.

Similar species: Hill mustard resembles yellow rocket but is easily distinguished by its leaf shape, stem texture, height and fruits. Leaves of yellow rocket do not have pointed lobes and are hairless unlike hill mustard which has toothed and hairy leaves. Yellow rocket stems never have the warty bumps found on hill mustard. Additionally, yellow rocket tends to be shorter and flowers before hill mustard.

The full fact sheets can be reached from:

<http://ipcm.wisc.edu> in the May 24-issue of Wisconsin Crop Manager

Rock River COALITION

Join in the fun at Zeloski Marsh Aug. 15th evening bird walk

The Jefferson County Parks Department is excited to announce a bird walk at Zeloski Marsh. Walks are held the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Please join us on Wednesday, August 15th to tour the Zeloski Marsh and its prairie, which should be in full bloom, while watching for a variety of birds that call the park their home. We also hope to observe shorebirds that are stopping over at the marsh on their way south.

Those interested in participating in the bird walk should meet at 6:30pm at the Jefferson County Korth Park pavilion, which is located off of Elm Point Road.

The event is free and open to all ages.

Participants should wear comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars and spotting scopes if you have them. Insect repellent is also suggested as the best birding is just at sunset.

Korth Park is located on Rock Lake just east of county highway S, watch for the signs.

Any questions regarding this event may be directed to Peggy Sundquist, Volunteer Coordinator, Jefferson County Parks Department, at either peggys@co.jefferson.wi.us or 920-728-3719



Rain Barrels: A way to change a water quantity problem into a valuable resource

Just today we had one of the first good rains in a long while, so you may wonder why we would say that rain is a problem. Well, when it rains in our urban areas, much of the rain runs off of our roofs, roads, parking lots and driveways, rushing down into stormdrains which connect directly to a local river or lake.



This rush of stormwater causes a lot of problems in our waterways, resulting in increased flooding and 'flashiness' where a stream or river rises very quickly with extreme force and then drops just as quickly once the rain ends. This causes many problems including destroying habitat and eroding streambanks.

One solution the Rock River Coalition has been promoting is rain gardens, but not everyone is interested in managing a garden, or has a yard that works for a rain garden. Another alternative is to install rain barrels.

Today's rain barrels are not the same as the old picturesque pickle barrel under the downspout, but they function very similarly. A home-made rain barrel, like the one pictured, is typically made from a plastic 55 gallon drum. It is either located under a downspout or has a diverter in the downspout that leads to the rain barrel. They are typically sealed or screened in such a way as to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs. Commercial ones come in a variety of styles, sizes and colors, usually of molded plastic.

They all have a faucet near the bottom of the barrel to facilitate draining and an overflow mechanism; since most rain barrels are full after less than a half an inch of rain.

The rain water is terrific for watering flowers and house plants. They thrive on the slightly acid water, which they much prefer to either a home's 'hard' well water or chlorinated municipal water, typical in the basin.

A number of utilities, non-profit and commercial sources of rain barrels are found in the region. Some of these include: Sustain Dane: <http://www.rainfordane.org>, Upper Sugar River Watershed Association: email usrwa@usrwa.org with rain barrel in the subject line and request an order form, Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association: email mike.maddox@ces.uwex.edu for order form.

To receive a listing (or to be added to the listing) of rain barrel sources in Southern Wisconsin email suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu or go to the rain garden links at <http://basineducation.uwex.edu/rockriver/relatedLinks.cfm>.

Become a RRC Member

In addition to supporting RRC work, members receive newsletters, notices of forums, conferences, and special events. To become a member, complete the following:

Name _____

Title _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

E-mail _____

Individual	\$ 25	_____
Family	\$ 35	_____
Student/Senior Citizen	\$ 15	_____
Classroom	\$ 25	_____
Affiliates*	\$ 50	_____
Corporate	\$ 200	_____

*Includes small businesses, organizations, lake districts, and municipal departments

Any donation of \$100 or more will be recognized and linked to your website from our website:

www.rockrivercoalition.org

Tax deductible donation	
Amount	Purpose
	General Support
	Citizen Monitoring
	Rain Gardens
	Other:

Donations are greatly appreciated and can be targeted towards specific projects.

Please mail this completed form with check to:

Rock River Coalition

823 Lucas Lane

Jefferson, WI 53549 -1182

or register and pay online with PayPal at:

www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp





Lake Mills Wildlife Area ~ Zeloski Marsh Dedicated

More than 200 people were on hand at the dedication of 1461 acres of restored wetlands just west of the City of Lake Mills on June 14th. The land, which had been drained in the 1940s for agricultural purposes, was purchased by the Madison Audubon Society through grants from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. The area, after being restored to a wetland and prairie ecosystem, was turned over to the Department of Natural Resources in September of 2006 for public use.

The dedication ceremony included speeches from previous land owner Dennis Zeloski, various officials and representatives of several organizations including Citizen Monitoring Director, Ed Grunden, from the Rock River Coalition. His speech focused on the work of the volunteers, who are collecting data on the plant and animal life that is returning to the area. It was noted that over 148 species of birds have been spotted using the area so far this year. The ceremony included displays by various environmental organizations, birding tours, and a bison burger lunch.



RRC Citizen Monitoring Director, Ed Grunden explains the depth and breadth of the Rock River Coalition Wetland Monitoring Program and the value it will provide scientists as the marsh changes over time. Anyone interested in becoming a wetland volunteer monitor should contact Jerry Matzelle, wetland monitoring coordinator at 920-648-3380 or wetlands@rockrivercoalition.org. -photos by Suzanne Wade

August 15 Bird Watching Program at Zeloski see page 7

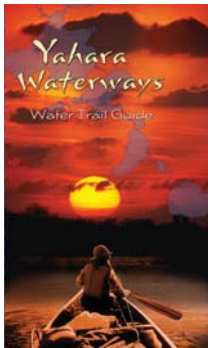
Meet your Rock River Coalition Board



-photo by Jerry Matzelle

Rock River Coalition Board Members were elected at the annual meeting on May 8, 2007. They are looking forward to a challenging and exciting year as we explore ways to fund an Executive Director, expand monitoring to include phosphorus testing, continue to develop the Water Star Community Program and explore ways of participating in the Rock River TMDL Project. Back Row: Ken Wiesner and President Joe Dorava; Bottom Row, new board member Patricia Cicero, Tracy Novak, Secretary Tim Reel, President-Elect Lisa Conley and Suzanne Wade. Jan Ruster, Treasurer, was unable to attend.

Yahara Waterways Water Trail Guide now available



Paddling the Madison area lakes and the Yahara River just became more interesting with the introduction of a new paddling guide that includes the typical information such as locations for launching your paddle craft. However this guide includes many ecological, historical and cultural highlights as well. The RRC Send Your Legislator Down the River Event was part of the week-long series of paddles held to kick-off the release of the book. The Yahara Waterways Water Trail Guide can be purchased for \$5 at most of the paddle shops in Madison, at the UW-Extension Jefferson and Dane county offices or it can be downloaded from the web at www.danewaters.com.

To the right are just two of the paddle enthusiasts who joined Rutabaga staff at the Lake Monona paddle kick-off.



Calendar of Events

RRC Stormwater Issue Team

Aug. 2, 9:30 - 11:30am UWEX Jefferson County

RRC Board Meeting

Aug. 9, 5:00pm UWEX Jefferson County

RRC Groundwater Team Meeting

Aug. 14, 1:30 - 3:30pm UWEX Jefferson County (location tentative)

RRC Planning the Rock Team Meeting

Aug. 21, 1:30 - 4:00pm UWEX Jefferson County

Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the fall newsletter is Oct. 9, 2007

A letter-sized, full color version, of this newsletter is available at www.rockrivercoalition.org.

For more information about these and other area events, meetings, workshops, or conferences go to www.rockrivercoalition.org/events

Rock River Coalition presents Protector and Friend Awards

The Rock River Coalition presents awards every other year to individuals, businesses and organizations who have gone above and beyond in their work to protect and improve the resources of the Rock River Basin.

The Protector Awards were presented at the Annual Meeting and included a brass plate on a wood plaque with a hand-painted turkey feather by RRC member Marsha Vomastic of an animal native to the Basin.

Friend Awards, and the Elected Official Protector Award, were presented at the Send Your Legislator Down the River Educational Event.

Below Past-President Warren Topel is presented a well deserved Friend of the Rock River Coalition Award. More pictures and details about the award recipients and Send Your Legislator Down the River can be found on page 5.



-photo by Greg David