



# Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, Inc.

Volume 10 • Second Edition

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR FRIENDS

July 2012

## ANNUAL MEETING



### SPLPT Annual Meeting

Monday, July 23rd, 6 p.m.

New Richmond High School

Annual Meeting Featured Speaker : Brian Collins  
Birds of Wisconsin, 1,000 Surveys and Counting!

We are pleased to have Brian Collins share his enthusiasm and knowledge of Wisconsin birds at our annual meeting. We hope you will join us for his captivating presentation!

Brian is a biologist who works as a teacher at Unity High School during the school year. In summers, he can be found in Wisconsin's Northwoods conducting bird surveys for the Wisconsin DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This June, Brian completed his 1,000th bird survey!



Brian's presentation will celebrate years of work where he has detected over 22,000 birds and compiled a list of 154 species. His surveys provide an understanding of where birds live in the wild lands of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois, and the habitats they depend upon. Brian's photographs are beautiful, and he has many interesting, inspiring stories to share!

Learn about the techniques used to gather this information, the habitats where birds live, and how we can help to enhance them. Bring questions, so Brian can share identification tips with you!

To learn more about Brian's work including his beautiful photos, go to [saintcroixbirds.blogspot.com](http://saintcroixbirds.blogspot.com). An excerpt from his blog:

*I don't know who coined the term "Birds of Two Worlds", but it has been an important rallying cry in international conservation since the early 1990s, as I recall. Wood Warblers and other "Neotrops", long distance migrants moving between the North American continent and the tropical Americas, cross numerous political borders in completing their life cycles. Many of these birds hatch from the egg in Canada and overwinter in northern South America, even within the Amazon basin. They are truly tropical wonders, romantic and poetic travelers, miniature, charismatic, colorful and determined. At less than five inches long, they risk it all every year to accomplish through muscle and verve what humans would, at the very least, find impossibly frightening.*



Blackburnian Warbler

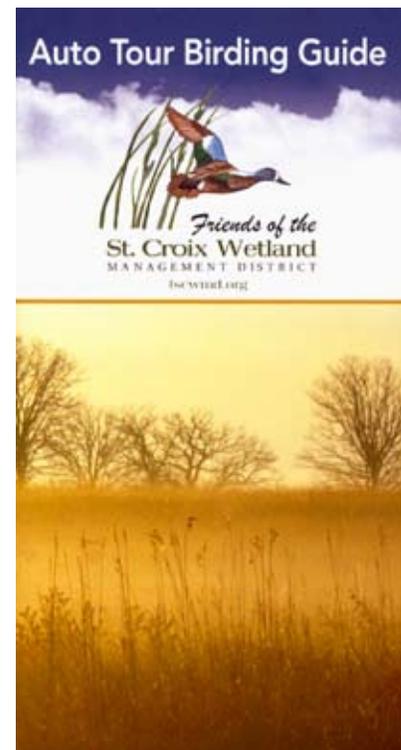


## Auto Tour Birding Guide

The recently published Auto Tour Birding Guide will benefit birding enthusiasts, hikers, and nature-lovers of all kinds. This nicely illustrated guide features sixteen Waterfowl Production and State Wildlife Areas in St. Croix, Polk, and Dunn Counties. It includes an introduction to the Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area, management practices (such as tree removal, burning and grazing), and the Federal Duck Stamp Program.

The body of the guide spotlights each of the sixteen areas including a brief description of the natural features and history, birds of interest, hiking trail difficulty ratings, and directions to each site.

For more information, contact  
Friends of the St. Croix Wetland Management District  
at 715-246-7784,  
or go to [www.fscwmd.org](http://www.fscwmd.org)



## Lower Apple River Project Funded!

Two DNR River Protection Grants will support new initiatives led by the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust! The initiatives are guided by the Lower Apple River Action Plan which was developed by several partner organizations and sponsored by the St. Croix River Association. We are pleased to also have strong support of partner organizations in carrying out this project.

Much of the work focuses on the Apple River, including a habitat inventory, restoration strategy, land protection strategy, and a lecture series. The area of focus is the Apple River within St. Croix County boundaries. The grants will also improve land trust operations with activities guided by the land trust's strategic plan. We will now have the support we need to update information about the land trust and reach out to our members, and landowners, organizations, and businesses in the area.

Project tasks include:

- Habitat Inventory of the Lower Apple River – with help from Star Prairie Fish & Game and St. Croix County Land and Water Conservation Department
- Habitat Restoration Strategy for the River – with Lower Apple River Action Plan Partners based upon the inventory
- Lower Apple River Land Protection Strategy - will include a survey of property owners to assess interest and develop conservation priorities along the river. GIS map tools will help to interpret project results. An outreach plan will be developed to encourage protection of river shoreline with conservation easements.
- Lecture Series Focusing on River Protection – with help from St. Croix County Zoning
- Development of Ongoing Educational Strategy for the Land Trust –based on the results of lecture series

Please join us at the annual meeting to learn more about this exciting new project!



## Water Action Volunteers Train at McMurtrie Preserve

On June 10th, The McMurtrie Preserve hosted a training workshop for Water Action Volunteers (WAV). Participants enjoyed beautiful Cedar Creek as they learned how to sample for habitat, macroinvertebrates, temperature, transparency, dissolved oxygen, and stream flow. WAV samplers choose their own sampling site on a stream near them, or near to their heart, and sample throughout the summer. The sampling data is collected and shared with the Department of Natural Resources to help monitor our streams. Interested in getting out and into a stream you love? Contact Aleisha Miller, [aleisha.miller@comcast.net](mailto:aleisha.miller@comcast.net) or (715) 531-1915, to find out how to become a Water Action Volunteer.

## Service Learning Day at the McMurtrie Preserve

On May 18th, a dozen New Richmond High School students spent the morning at the McMurtrie Preserve working with the guidance of teacher Ken Bessac on a variety of upkeep projects. Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust board members Mike Kelly and Mike Reiter, along with Erv Erickson (Star Prairie Fish & Game), assisted by working with small groups of students to accomplish various projects including:

- clearing downed tree branches and trimming back overhanging limbs along the nature trails;
- removing large sections of a downed tree in the clearing north of the dam;
- trimming areas of the yard surrounding the cabin, to facilitate mowing; and
- other general clean-up.

Students worked hard on what was a very warm morning, and enjoyed some good-natured competition using handsaws, brush clippers, and various other tools to perform their work.

This was the sixth consecutive year that a group of service learning day students has helped maintain the natural beauty of the McMurtrie Preserve.

For more information go to: [starprairielandtrust.org](http://starprairielandtrust.org)



Star Prairie Land  
Preservation Trust, Inc.

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## Become a Board Member!

The Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust is seeking board members to provide guidance and management of this all-volunteer organization. Board meetings are held bi-monthly, and each board member is asked to serve on one of its five committees (education, marketing, membership, property management, or board development). If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Beth Wood at 715-248-7300 or [president@starprairielandtrust.org](mailto:president@starprairielandtrust.org).

If we want children to flourish, to become truly empowered,  
then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it.

- David Sobel