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BMAP
BLUE MOUNDS AREA PROJECT

May 2025: Blue Mounds Area Project eBulletin

Conservation and Community. Together.



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Author: BMAP Outreach Ecologist Sam Anderson, ecologist@bluemounds.org

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Outreach Ecologist's Updates

Sam Anderson

Hello BMAP,

I hope you are enjoying the springtime! With fishing opener, mushroom foraging, spring ephemerals, prescribed fire, and invasive species growing, early spring is a busy time for most Wisconsinites. Transplanting root stock and plugs, addressing herbaceous invasive species, and capturing native diversity on your property are excellent endeavors for the early growing season. Many non-native species are blooming and setting seed, so keep a close eye on your schedule to maximize your pulling, spraying, and mowing efforts. Likewise, some native wildflowers are already setting seed, so keep an eye out for seed collecting opportunities as well! In your spare time, attend some community and BMAP events to learn about land management and share your experiences!



Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) - Credit: Sam Anderson at the property of BMAP members John and Olga French

I've officially kicked off site visit season with BMAP members, and I'm still accepting [BMAP's Site Visit Questionnaires](#) for folks interested in a 2025 visit. BMAP will also be beginning our summer season events starting May 31. With property tours, walks with a naturalist, and classes on natural communities, there are plenty of opportunities for us to get together and enjoy the spring and summer.

As plants grow and bloom, don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or

Remember that [your support and the enrollment of new members](#) allows BMAP to continue supporting private land restoration through consulting and building the restoration community in SW Wisconsin.

If you have appreciated any of our summer Site Visits, Property Tours, Winter Conversations, or Walks with a Naturalist, consider an additional [donation to BMAP](#). so we can continue serving the SW Wisconsin region.

All the Best,
Sam Anderson
Outreach Ecologist
ecologist@bluemounds.org.

BMAP on Facebook

The [Blue Mounds Area Project](#) Facebook page is a good place to find information about upcoming events, but it's a one-way flow of information. Did you know we also have a Facebook group? Joining the [BMAP Facebook group](#) is a great way to connect with other BMAP members. To facilitate engagement, we'll soon begin posting regular conversation starters.

At any time you can also post:

- **Restoration-related questions**
- **Requests for help with burns**
- **Extra seeds or plants to share**
- **Photos of what's growing in your prairie or woodland**
- **Anything else that relates to ecological restoration in WI**

To join the group, [visit the group](#) and click Join Group. The group is open to all landowners and allies in the Driftless Area of WI or surrounding areas who are working to restore native biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Upcoming BMAP Events



Native Prickly-pear Cactus (Opuntia) - Credit: Sam Anderson at the family property of BMAP member Logan Albert.

BMAP 2024 Walk With a Naturalist

Take a chance to explore a new location or natural community here in southern WI with

Shea Wetland

Leader: Pat Trochlell

Jul 05, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Barneveld, 3095 Mounds View Rd, Barneveld, WI 53507, USA

IATA Swamp Lover's Section

Leader: Sam Anderson

Aug 09, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Dane County, Co Rd KP & Scheele Rd, Berry, WI 53528, USA

DALC Trail

Leader(s): WI Master Naturalists

Sep 06, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Exact Location TBD

BMAP 2025 Property Tours

BMAP has three scheduled property tours to provide insight and inspiration for your own land management.

Paul Fuchs & Martha Fish

May 31, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM CDT

N9645 Primrose Center Rd, Belleville, WI 53508, USA

See the results of decades of restoration and land management in oak woodlands, wetlands, and dry prairies, and hear about experiences partnering with state, federal, nonprofit, and private contractors on various restoration projects

James MacDonald

Jun 28, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM CDT

8596 Sunnyside Rd, Blanchardville, WI 53516, USA

This property is a family effort, with MacD carrying on the stewardship and land ethic of his parents. Enjoy taking a look at recent oak woodland restorations on the property, including recently liberated ~200 year old oaks.

Prairie Spirit Wildlife Sanctuary

Aug 16, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM CDT

1811 Spring Rose Rd, Verona, WI 53593, USA

Owned by John Barnes and Kel Mattice, the sanctuary is a former dairy farm just south of Verona. Moving from dairy to beef, then to crops and pasture, this 200 acre restoration is an excellent example of adaptive land management

Restoration at the former Badgerland Munitions Property

Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance

Hear from a representative of the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance about their efforts in the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant, including management goals, progress, and highlights.

Coyotes in Our Grasslands

Carl Anderson

Learn about coyotes' behavior and impacts on grassland communities in southern Wisconsin. Gain a better perspective on the importance and complexity of Wisconsin's most abundant wild canine.

Garlic Mustard: Natural History and Management

BMAP President Greg Jones & BMAP Outreach Ecologist Sam Anderson

Join our presentation on the natural history and science behind Garlic Mustard, and how WI landowners manage the invasive species in their woodlands.

Other SW Wisconsin Events & Resources

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Showy Orchis (Galearis spectabilis) - Photo Credit: Sam Anderson, at the property of BMAP members John & Olga French

Know of a local event that might be of interest to BMAP Members? Send the information to ecologist@bluemounds.org

Women's Chainsaw Safety Class

With the number of female landowners continuing to grow in Wisconsin, UW Extension is offering a safety course to provide an open and informative introduction to chainsaws for women interested in adding to their repertoire. The course covers general safety, saw maintenance, protective gear, and hands-on practice with a professional sawyer. Only 12 spots are available, so register early!

Details

Date: Saturday, May 31 - June 1st in Lancaster, WI

Time: 8am-4:30pm

Cost: \$200 per Participant

No experience necessary!

Limited saws/gear available during the class

We recommend bringing your own saw/protective gear if possible

Questions? contact Olivia Kovacs at olivia.kovacs@wisc.edu

Ice Age Trail Alliance Events & Workdays

If you are looking to get to know the natural communities of southern WI or are hoping to build skills in land management, the IATA has a weekly hikes and workdays in the Blue Mounds area throughout April and May.

Dane County Parks Events

Dane county parks has a whole host of educational events and restoration workdays for folks interested in enjoying and restoring grasslands and woodlands.

Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale

May 17, 2025, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

1207 Seminole Highway
Madison, WI 53711-3726

In the large tents on the lawn near the Visitor Center, more than 200 species of native grasses, woodland, prairie, and savanna plants are available while supplies last



Blue Eyed Grass (Sisyrinchium); Photo Credit: Sam Anderson, taken at the property of BMAP member Ixchell Ripp

herbaceous plants that grow in Wisconsin. In order to meet restoration goals of fostering biodiversity, promoting habitat, or supporting populations of rare or uncommon species, being able to identify plants correctly is a skill that everyone can practice and benefit from. Here are a few resources from our region that I prefer to use in the field when I come across plants that I can't identify.

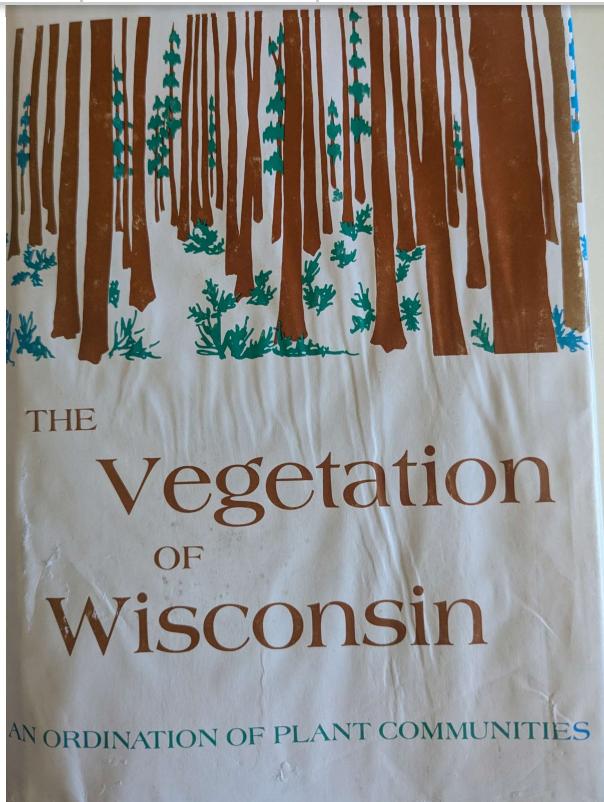
Some of these resources use illustrations or photographs of plants to help readers correctly identify species. These are often accompanied with written descriptions and summaries of their habitat that casual readers can use to get a correct ID. For casual botanists, these visual field guides can be a great introduction!

Many of these resources focus on using morphology and anatomy to move readers through a dichotomous key, which is a series of paired choices that help readers correctly identify unfamiliar species. Dichotomous keys can be fairly complex, and even experienced botanists sometimes get lost in the vocabulary! If you haven't used a dichotomous key before, the Native Plants Trust has an excellent example that you can familiarize yourself with [here](#).

The Vegetation of Wisconsin

J.T. Curtis

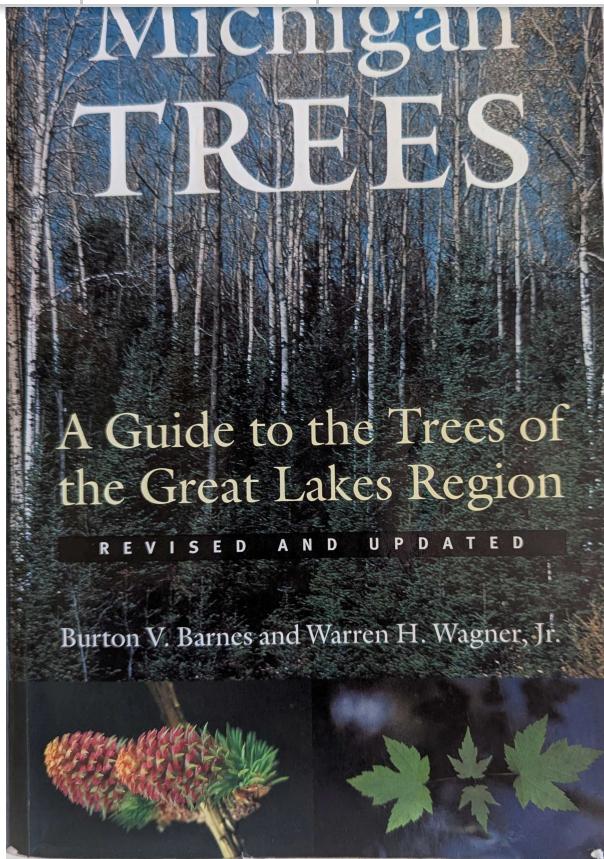
While not a field guide, The Vegetation of Wisconsin is a go-to for understanding the types of plant communities we have in Wisconsin, environmental factors that shape their structure and distribution, and the important species they are comprised of. The written descriptions of these communities and summary species lists are particularly helpful if you are thinking about improving biodiversity on your property. You can also get a good idea of which species are more broadly distributed, which species are diagnostic of their respective communities, and which species have increased/decreases since the 1950's. Fun fact: Box Elder was considered uncommon in upland forests back when this was written!

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Michigan Trees

B.V. Barnes & W. H. Wagner Jr.

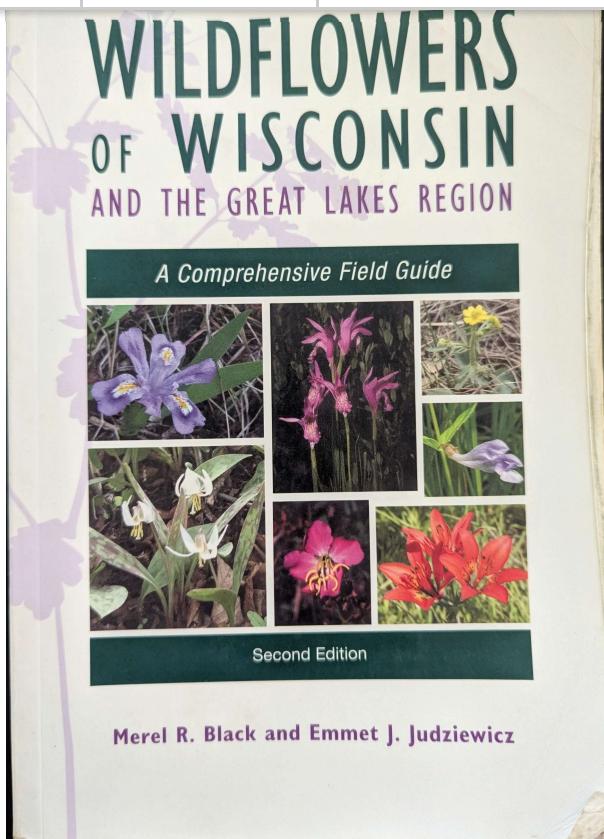
Though not Wisconsin focused, the dichotomous key in Michigan Trees will get you to the correct ID for most tree species in WI in both the summer and the winter. This book also possesses particularly helpful illustrations and descriptions of important morphology. While helpful with trees, quite a few of our shrub species are absent, so subsequent resources might be more helpful.

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Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region

M.R. Black & E. J. Judziewicz

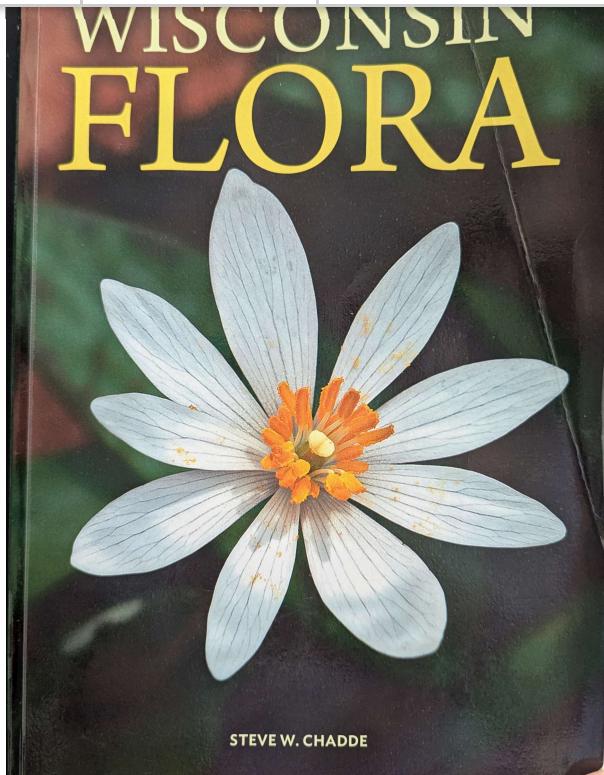
This field guide is focused on our flowering flora, and the pictures are incredibly detailed and helpful for identifying species in Wisconsin. Both native and non-native plants are included along with distribution maps, descriptions of their ecology, and their conservation status. This is a great resource for folks making their first leaps into field identification



Wisconsin Flora

S.W. Chadde

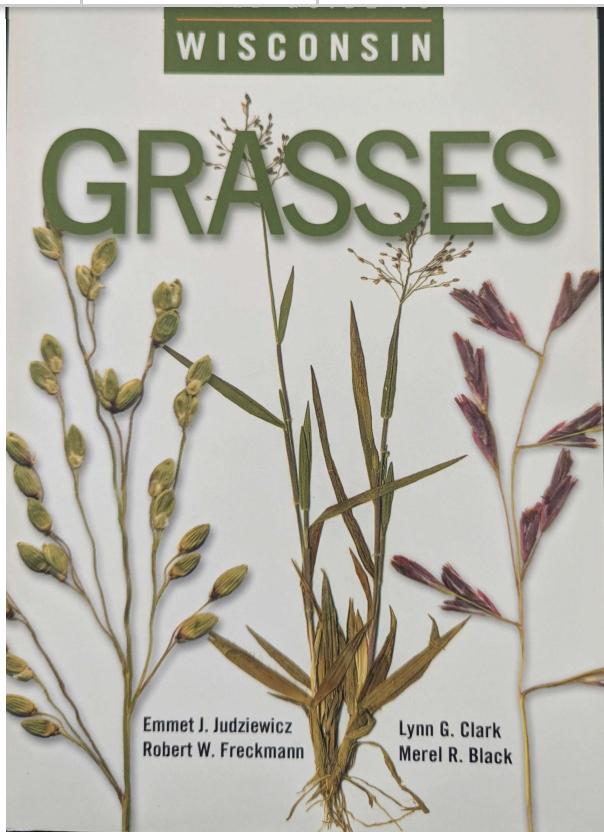
I consider Wisconsin Flora to be a beefer analogue to Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region. Both are great resources, but Wisconsin Flora includes more species (over 2000), non-flowering plants, and has a host of illustrations that are incredibly helpful. This book isn't as easy to carry in the field, but it is an excellent addition to a naturalist's library and for more tricky identifications.

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Field Guide to Wisconsin Grasses

E.J. Judziewicz, R.W. Freckmann, L.G. Clark, M.R. Black

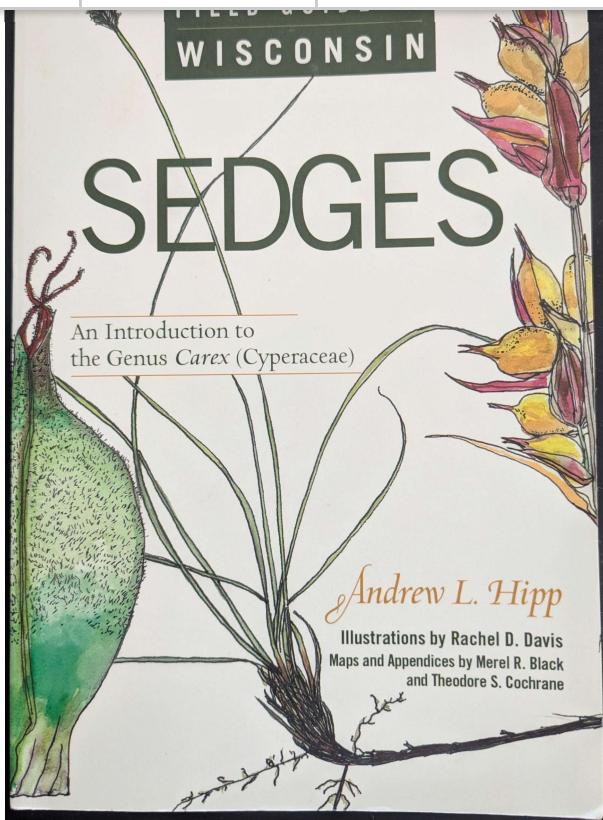
Despite being a defining guild in our grassland ecosystems, grasses receive much less attention than other plant groups, especially when considering biodiversity. If you are interested in diversifying the structure of your restored prairies or would like a better understanding of the dynamics between native/non-native grasses, this field guide is a great launching point. Just make sure you have access to a hand lens!



Field Guide to Wisconsin Sedges

A.L. Hipp

The diversity of sedges in Wisconsin is truly remarkable, especially considering how they dominate and shape so many of our plant communities. Despite this, many folks, including professional botanists, shy away from keying-out and identifying sedges to species. Andrew Hipp's field guide is an excellent resource if you are curious about this mysterious clade, though you may want to hone your plant ID skills by practicing on trees and forbs before jumping into Carex.



Other Resources

iNaturalist

Technology can play a great role in supporting education and conservation. iNaturalist allows you to upload images of plants (or other organisms) you find, suggests identifications, and allows other users to suggest ID's or corroborate your ID's. Not only does iNaturalist put you in contact with other amateur/professional botanists, it supports community science and research. I particularly like using iNaturalist to organize my photos, have collections for specific places, or find new locations I would like to explore!

Wisconsin Virtual Flora

Recording herbarium vouchers from as far back as the 1800's, the Wisconsin Virtual Flora is an excellent resource to see examples of specimens for most species found in Wisconsin. Not only is there an image library to compare plant morphology, specimens are also mapped and available for download.

Community

Despite all of these excellent resources, the best way to learn plants is to get out and botanize with other people. While botanizing with more

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more fruitful and enjoyable.

Make a donation

The Blue Mounds Area Project is a community-based organization that seeks to inspire, inform and empower private landowners in the Southwestern Wisconsin region to enjoy, protect and restore native biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Thanks to all our members for your support!

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