

## Our Land Stewardship Leaders:

Bringing strong science and best practices to WCLC

(Article Continued)

Our land-management committee recently visited Martins Woods, one of WCLC's most valuable preserves, to evaluate how they might use a geographic information system to make better restoration and stewardship decisions. Using this technology, the committee will track changes in the preserve's plant communities to determine best restoration and stewardship procedures and their effectiveness. The committee is pictured below viewing a bladdernut tree, a rare, native shrub species that will continue to thrive at Martin's Woods thanks to their hard work.

Martin's Woods is a state natural area (a designation granted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources), and our Geigner Preserve is adjacent to a large county park and greenway. The Fox River, one of our community's ecological gems, runs through this 600+ acre area. Together, these lands form a significant, highly diverse primary environmental corridor that sustains hundreds of native plant, bird, insect, fish, and animal species.

We are partnering with Waukesha County to steward and restore this important ecosystem as a whole. This partnership marks a primary step toward developing a new conservation alliance—one of our major 2019 initiatives—that will help us broaden our focus. Birds, turtles, and other wildlife know no boundaries, so to save their habitats, we must work together and protect *all* of the land and water on which they depend.

This alliance of conservation and education organizations will allow us to protect important wildlife communities on a larger scale; share volunteers, resources, tools, and expertise; market events to a wider audience; and deliver more impact with the dollars you give. Other founding members include Waukesha County, The Nature Conservancy, Tall Pines Conservancy, and Riveredge Nature Center. Additional experts and regional leaders who support our conservation efforts include Mark Sass of DNR Forestry, Dr. Dan Carter of SEWRPC, Dr. Todd Levine of Carroll University, Lydia Scott of The Mortem Arboretum, and The Oak Recovery Initiative of Southeast Wisconsin. These collaborations help us leverage the best conservation practices and share them with everybody. In fact, in 2019, we will publish information regarding these practices on our website so that they are available to everyone.

We are also grateful to collaborate with some of the area's best restoration and stewardship service providers including Peter Zeigler of [EC3](#), Aaron Feggestad of [Stantec](#), Clay Frazer of [ERC](#), Chris Mann of [Kettle Moraine Land Stewardship](#), and Joanne Kline of the Conservation Strategies Group. These competent, dedicated conservation leaders have **donated thousands of dollars** in service, expertise, and best practices to WCLC at no cost to us. They strengthen our conservation impact with every hour and dollar they give.

Keep your eyes out for more information on the new conservation and education alliance in the New Year.

