



## VAN DER BROHE ARBORETUM AND BIRD SANCTUARY

Fall Update • October 2020

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Fall is upon the land, and the Arboretum prepares for a season of repose. Responsive to the opportunities afforded by an annual cycle, we can progress only in cadence with the seasons. (Albeit in 2020, we have been impacted also by the delay created by the Trail contractor.) Certainly, we all measure the realization of the mission of an Arboretum by the planting of trees. We mark progress as a bird sanctuary by the presence of "birdberries" and other habitat and forage. But until we have established the canvas on which to apply the palette of these installations, we are not ready to commence the envisioned plantings. We will develop the vision of Van der Brohe Arboretum on broad fields of Prairie and Pollinator Meadows, and that installation, though delayed, remains on track and in progress.

### ENTRANCE AT 3800 N. LINCOLN AVE. (HIGHWAY 42)

The entrance to the Emerald Links Golf Course was accessed from Riverview Drive. Upon creating the Arboretum, we desired to make the entrance to the property from North Lincoln Avenue, which is much more visible and more readily located. The existing curb cut at that location ran straight into an elevated former green, making parking very difficult and haphazard. Francis Dier has the equipment to address the problem, and on the first of October he graded the site and installed a compacted gravel parking lot for 10 vehicles. Francis was pulling out his equipment on Saturday morning just as the visitors were arriving for the Glacial Lakes Conservancy tour. We appreciate his diligence in preparing for that event.

The new address will be announced by a highly visible berm sign, shown being fabricated by John Durbrow, Director of Van der Brohe Arboretum. The aluminum and acrylic sign will have back lighted logo and text, with the lighting being powered by solar cells. The concrete base was installed earlier this summer, and the sign will be erected in November.



John Durbrow works on the entrance sign.



Francis Dier prepares for parking lot at the VDBA site.

### EARLY ADOPTERS

The South east corner of the Arboretum site is a small marshy wetland. Overgrown with collapsing Alders and some ash and aspen, the area would be considered as unsightly by most observers. Walking into the area to install a border sign, a slight whirr of wings alerted me to an American Woodcock as it rose and quickly disappeared into the thickets. I was delighted. A solitary bird had found respite in a very limited corner of the grounds known to be favored by the species. VDBA will be protecting and augmenting this habitat, which is also favored by the Alder Flycatcher and several species of Warbler.



American Woodcock.

Photo by Rhododendrites

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Two weeks later, watching the excavator grade the parking area, I found myself surrounded by a multitude of migrating Eastern Bluebirds. They were flitting around the brush pile, standing on the earthen mounds, and resting on almost any perch available. The Van der Brohe Arboretum and Bird Sanctuary has a long path ahead in the development of the site attributes we intend to serve the avian community, but we have affirmation that the birds are enthusiastic about the prospect.

### ■ PRAIRIE AND POLLINATOR MEADOWS

We are very appreciative of the support given VDBA by the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Pheasants Forever towards the installation of the Prairie and Pollinator Meadows. Through their help we are funded to install 44 acres of grasses and forbs which become the base for all subsequent planting programs. As a successful planting of the meadows requires the elimination of the existing cool season turf grasses which are typical of golf courses, we need to conduct three herbicide applications over the course of a growing season. The goal is to eliminate current plant materials, which have limited value to birds and wildlife, and then the immediate seed bank left by those plant species. Replanting can only occur in either fall or spring, forestalling attempts to accelerate the process. The first herbicide application was made in early September, and regrowth has not merited a second spraying this year. We anticipate a spring and a fall spraying next summer, and the subsequent seed planting to be conducted in the fall of 2021. Planting of trees and shrubs can begin immediately at the time of the groundcover installation.



An herbicide application.

### ■ FRANCISCAN GARDENS READY FOR ADOPTION

The nine Franciscan Garden sites are mounded, covered with weed barrier, and mulched with wood chip produced on the grounds. Three of the sites have been sponsored, and will be planted in Spring of 2021. Each Franciscan Garden will contain native plantings selected for their beauty and their high value to birds and wildlife. The VDBA website offers four suggested palettes, but each sponsor is encouraged to choose the material they wish, within the context of the Franciscan ideals. Sponsorship of a Garden is open to individuals, organizations and businesses, and may be secured for \$3800.



Weed barrier is laid over a Franciscan Garden plot.

### ■ GLACIAL LAKES CONSERVANCY TOUR A SUCCESS

On the 3rd of October, VDBA Director John Durbrow conducted a tour of the Arboretum as a benefit for Glacial Lakes Conservancy. Despite the poor weather and C-19, turn out was good. Attendees were challenged to imagine many aspects of the vision for the development of the grounds, but received a clear impression of the framework for the project. Glacial Lakes Conservancy is a Land Trust serving five counties in northeast Wisconsin, including Manitowoc County. VDBA donated a Conservation Easement to GLC to insure that the grounds will be retained as an Arboretum and a Bird Sanctuary in perpetuity. GLC's conservation officer monitors the grounds annually and evaluates all activities to insure they are in conformance to the Management Plan.



Tourgoers meet at VDBA on Oct. 3, 2020.

### ■ IRRIGATION RECONFIGURED AND POWERLINES REMOVED

With the assistance of Randy Kulpa and Rick Albright, the electrical supply to the two panel boards operating the high capacity irrigation pumps was disconnected and the supporting structures were demolished. The submersible pumps in the wells were re-wired to run from a generator, and will be used to fill the Arboretum's water trailers and the ponds.

With the elimination of the power requirement, the powerlines crossing the site from Highway 42 will be removed. Some poles will be retained and re-purposed as supports for Osprey nests, which we will feature upon completion of that installation.

### ■ EMAIL DELIVERY OF NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are delivered via e-mail using the service MailChimp. You may add yourself to our mailing list on our website, [vanderbrohearboretum.org](http://vanderbrohearboretum.org). We do not share our email list with any third parties.



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*It is only through the passage of the seasons, the recurrent rhythms of light and dark, reflections in states of repose, and the glories of regeneration that individuals connect to the pattern and structure of living in a sentient world.*

*Johann van der Brohe*

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