



LOGAN CREEK PROPERTY

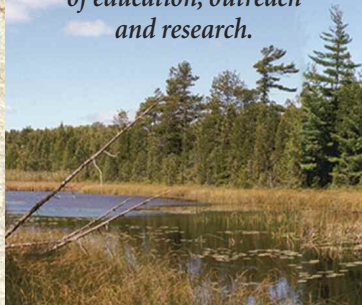
FALL 2019

# sanctuary

A Newsletter of The Ridges

# Logan Creek Property

The mission of the Ridges Sanctuary is to protect the Sanctuary and inspire stewardship of natural areas through programs of education, outreach and research.



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Cover photo: "Fall at Logan Creek" by Marc Demoly



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Large-Flowered Trillium

The Logan Creek Corridor, which comprises of Lost Lake to the north, Logan Creek itself, and Clark Lake, is ecologically significant for many reasons. Lost Lake and the area around it is high-quality, undisturbed wetland habitat that is home to several species of state significance. Logan Creek is a spring-fed Class I and II trout stream that supports abundant aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. In this article of the Sanctuary, we will shine a spotlight on this beautiful piece of property.

Steve Leonard, *Executive Director*

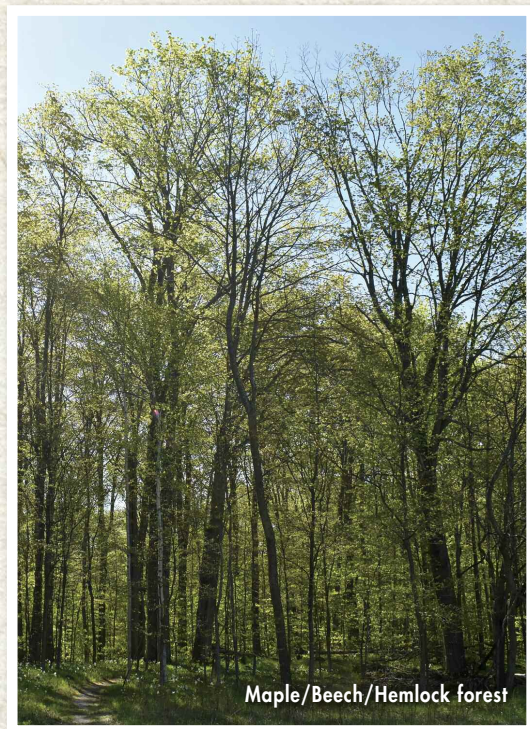
## Flora

In the springtime, the forest floor is alive with spring wildflowers. These spring ephemerals utilize the abundant spring sunshine that is only available to them before the trees leaf out to flower, produce seeds and store energy that will allow them to survive until the following spring.

Arguably one of the most iconic spring wildflowers in the Midwest, the Large-Flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) is seen across the state in rich, upland deciduous forests. It is easily identified by its large white flowers and all plant parts that are in groups of three. This species has a very unusual form of seed dispersal, as it relies on ants to transport the fruit underground where the flesh is eaten but the seeds remain. Other flowers include Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra canadensis*) most easily distinguished by its white, heart-shaped flowers that are winged at the end and the Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), whose flowers are bright yellow at full bloom.

This property is a pristine example of a maple/beech/hemlock forest type, which is the second most common forest type in the state of Wisconsin. What makes this specific forest unique is the abundance of Eastern Hemlock trees and the abrupt and obvious transition from an upland rich deciduous forest to a wet, lowland coniferous forest.

The upland forest of Logan Creek is predominantly deciduous Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*), and Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) trees, which lose their leaves in the winter. Traveling east, the forest slowly transitions to an evergreen forest dominated by Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), and White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), which have needles that survive through the winter. While Sugar Maple, Beech, and Hemlock are the dominant species of this northern mesic (moderate moisture) forest, other species such as White Pine, Balsam Fir, and Birch trees all grow in this forest.



Maple/Beech/Hemlock forest

# Flora & Fauna



Trout Lily



White Pelican



Flying Squirrel

Most of the trees in the Logan Creek property are mature trees, making them at least 60-80 years old. Mature forests have a well-established forest understory and diverse plant life. Many species of herbaceous plants, including orchids, thrive in the forest understory of Logan Creek. In the spring and summer, wildflowers like Trillium and Lady's Slippers carpet the forest floor.

As you walk through The Logan Creek Property, you will notice the differences between the upland and lowland forest. With all its diversity, this forest serves as an important environmental corridor for the Door peninsula.

## Fauna

### Birds and waterfowl

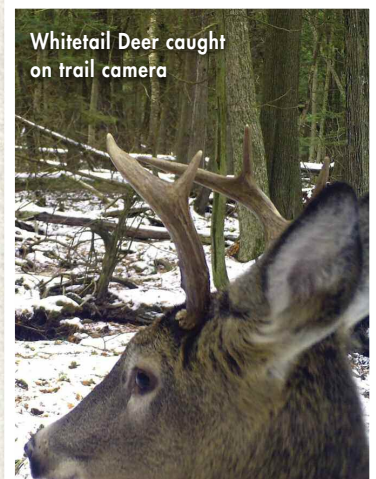
The shallow, protected waters of Clark Lake make it an excellent location for bird watching. In the spring and fall, migratory birds fly through and land to rest at the lake and inland forest. The sounds of native songbirds and waterfowl can be heard here throughout the year. You may even spot birds of prey circling overhead. Logan Creek and Clark Lake are home to many species of ducks, including Mergansers, Green-winged Teals, Mallards, Scaups, and Wood Ducks.

Many migratory bird populations land at Clark Lake throughout the spring and summer, including Sandhill Cranes, Great Egrets, Canada Geese, and White Pelicans.

## Mammals

The Beech-Hemlock forest of the Logan Creek Property is home to many mammals, including Whitetail Deer, Porcupine, Raccoon, Snowshoe Hare, Chipmunk, and Skunk. Logan Creek Property is also home to snakes, salamanders, newts, and hundreds of species of insects. Animals may be hard to spot here because they've adapted to hide from predators. However, you may hear them or see their tracks. The Ridges sets up trail cameras to monitor some of the wildlife that travels through this property.

The evasive flying squirrel lives in the trees of the Logan Creek Property. The Ridges Sanctuary installed flying squirrel nesting boxes around the Sanctuary and at Logan Creek as part of a citizen science project to monitor flying squirrel populations in northern Door County. Flying squirrels are one of many animal species that the Ridges has captured on trail cameras at night! Flying squirrels are nocturnal, so you won't see them while hiking. You may notice one of their wood nest boxes placed high up in the trees.



Whitetail Deer caught on trail camera

# *Clark Lake and Log*

*Lake Michigan*

*Mouth of Logan Creek*



# Logan Creek Property



Lake Michigan

Clark Lake

Logan Creek  
Property parking

Loritz Road

# Early in its Life & Research



The mouth of Logan Creek into Clark Lake

## Clark Lake Early in its Life

As glaciers moved through this area, they deposited sediments from Canadian bedrock into the region that became Lake Michigan. These sediments make up the sand dunes we see along the shore of Lake Michigan today. Over time, wave action in Clark Bay combined with receding lake levels pushed sediments up into ridges. This created Whitefish Dunes and closed off Clark Bay from Lake Michigan ultimately creating Clark Lake. Logan Creek continues to feed water into the Clark Lake, which is eventually drained by Whitefish Creek into Lake Michigan.

Clark Lake, once the outlet of a prehistoric river, is the second largest lake in Door County. Archeological evidence shows the Potawatomi and Winnebago tribes settled in the area of Door County around 2,000 years ago. The county was eventually established by white settlers because of the plentiful natural resources that are found here. White settlers, including the lake's namesake, John B. Clark, were drawn to the area in the mid-1800s for commercial fishing and logging. Clark Lake became a vacation destination in the early 1900s when summer homes were being built on its shoreline.

Clark settled on 2,500 acres of land surrounding the lake, including nine miles of shoreline on Lake Michigan. He later parceled up his property and sold it to other families. In 1937, the property was sold to the Butts family who built a summer cottage there and grazed cattle on the north end of the lake. The Butts property was inherited by Frank Butts Jr., who dedicated his life to conservation. He refused to have any trees on the property, which he named "Tree Haven", cut down. Thanks to Frank Jr., the mature Logan Creek forest remains protected

in perpetuity after selling Tree Haven to The Ridges Sanctuary in 1992. To commemorate the property Frank Jr. had an iron gate constructed at the access road of the property, where it still stands today.

Today, Clark Lake is highly praised for its great water quality and is home to countless aquatic plants and animals. There are three protected areas around the lake: Cave Point County Park (managed by Door County), Whitefish Dunes State Park (managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) and the Logan Creek Property (managed by The Ridges Sanctuary). The lake is a favorite location for recreational activities including fishing, kayaking, swimming and boating. Great efforts have been made by the Clark Lake Advancement Association and others to preserve, protect and improve the ecologic significance of Clark Lake. Initiatives such as the "No Motor" zone, bulrush restoration, and fish habitat improvements have contributed significantly to the overall health of Logan Creek and Clark Lake.

## Clark Lake & Research

In 2005 and 2006, the Clark Lake Advancement Association and the UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education conducted a comprehensive study of Clark Lake, Logan Creek, and their watersheds. Funding for the study was provided through a Lake Management Grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The study included water quality sampling of both the lake and creek, as well as stream flow measurements, macroinvertebrate sampling, and a fisheries study. Data collected during the study was used to develop a long-range plan for land use and water quality protection in the watershed, as well as protection of the lake and stream habitats. The Logan Creek Property includes over 2,500 feet of shoreline on Clark Lake and Logan Creek, so protection of the lake and its surrounding habitats is a high priority for us.

Starting in 2017, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) stocked the stream with Brook Trout as part of their native fish stocking program. With the introduction of Brook Trout, the WDNR has classified the creek a Class I Trout Stream, meaning the populations of Brook Trout in the stream are able to sustain themselves through natural reproduction. The WDNR has also designated the creek as an "Outstanding Resource Water," which is given to streams with good water quality, recreational opportunities, and streams that support wildlife habitat.



# Logan Creek & Future



The Logan Creek Property features 2 miles of trails. As you walk through it you will notice an elevation change of around 40 feet. This marks the beginning of the abrupt divide between deciduous and evergreen trees. Cuestas, like this one, are common features of the Niagara Escarpment and can be found in many places along the peninsula. Open year-round, the Logan Creek Property trails are ideal for hiking and snowshoeing. Several boardwalks help hikers pass over some of the lowlands as you approach Clark Lake. One of the best ways to explore is to take a guided hike, led by a Ridges' Naturalist. With its lush deciduous forest, fall hikes feature some of the most beautiful fall colors in Door County.

## Improvements, Protection & Future

Many improvements have been made to the property over the years. Led by volunteers Sarah and Jay Hubner, along with members of the Ridges famed Wednesday Crew, a new trail was completed in the fall of 2018. Along with this, a grant was awarded to install brand-new interpretive trail panels this fall. These 12 panels will help educate all who walk the trail system about the ecological and cultural significance of this property. In addition, there will be a new entrance kiosk at the parking lot and a sign added to the entrance along Loritz Road.

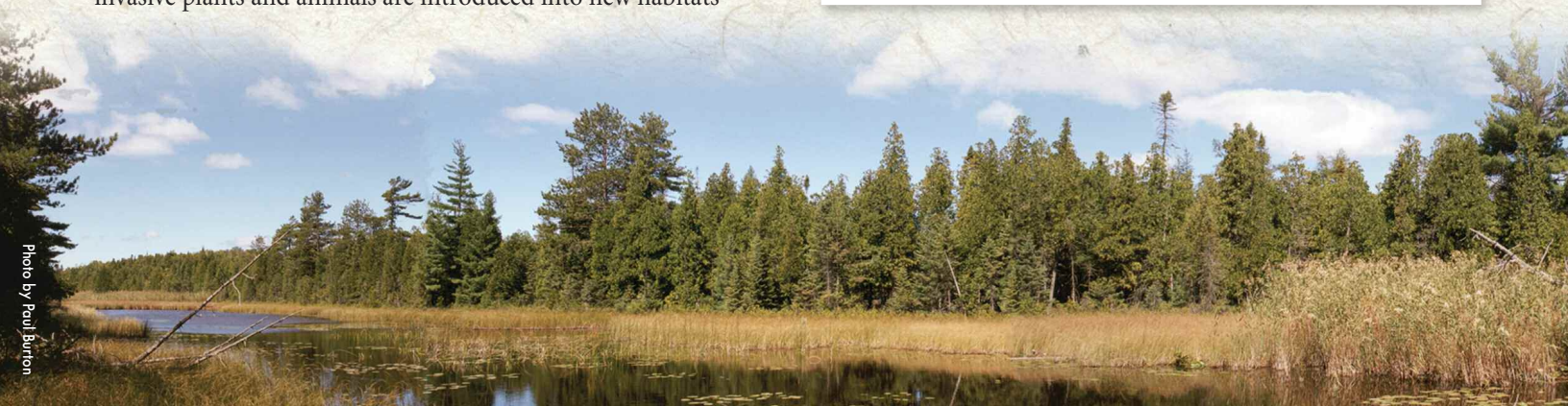
One major challenge to managing and maintaining a protected area is the ongoing battle with invasive species. These invasive plants and animals are introduced into new habitats

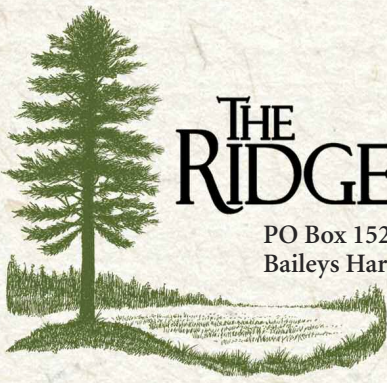
and have largely negative impacts on the surrounding ecosystem by outcompeting or damaging the local flora and fauna. Controlling the populations of these aggressive invaders, when possible, is crucial to protecting the property.

Beech Bark Disease is one of the most prominent invasives which occurs when a scale insect bores into the tree, which allows *Neonectria* fungi to grow inside, eventually killing the tree. An infected beech tree will have a white fuzz covering its bark. It is estimated that Beech Bark Disease will kill 95% of beech trees in Door County within the next decade.

Woodland and Aquatic Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis sylvatica* and *M. scorpioides*) grow in different habitat types (upland forest for Woodland Forget-Me-Not and lowland wetland areas for Aquatic Forget-Me-Not) but they look similar and have similar negative effects on native habitats and have been rapidly expanding. While manual control of these species is relatively easy the seeds seem to persist for many years, requiring many years of repeated pulling.

Maintaining and protecting this pristine corridor is essential to the health of Logan Creek and Clark Lake and everything living in and near it. This incredibly diverse area, which includes multiple species of state significance, is under threat from residential development, agricultural runoff and invasive species. Protecting this corridor will help maintain a healthy ecosystem that benefits both humans and the natural world.





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## How Can You Get Involved?

### DONATE

- **Undesignated Funds** – Undesignated contributions are used by the organization in any matter of greatest need. Typically, these funds go to offset operational expenses.

- **Orchid Restoration Project** – This is the largest orchid restoration project in the history of The Ridges. We have documented 16 of the 26 orchids

originally found on our property; we need your support to conduct our research and to save the Ram's Head orchid.

- **Planned Giving** – Please consider the lasting impact of a Planned Gift. If you'd like to know more about including



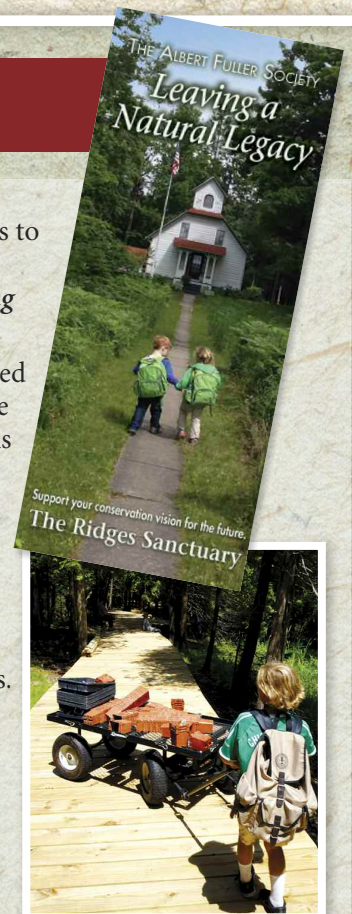
Photo by Len Williams

The Ridges in your estate, call us to request a copy of our brochure *The Albert Fuller Society: Leaving a Natural Legacy*.

- **Endowment** – Funds contributed to The Ridges Endowment ensure long lasting, regular contributions to help offset operational expenses.

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are the backbone of The Ridges and the core of many of our important programs. Over 100 dedicated individuals assist our staff in a number of different areas. Visit our website or call to find out how you can be a part of the team.



[www.RidgesSanctuary.org](http://www.RidgesSanctuary.org) • 920.839.2802