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For Immediate Release:

“Sky Dance” of American Woodcock at Wehr Nature Center *Unique mating habits of migratory bird*

Franklin, WI (March 31, 2014) – As temperatures begin to rise, the American Woodcock begin to arrive at Wehr Nature Center just in time for a program on the habits of these birds, Friday, April 11, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The Nature Center is located in Whitnall Park at 9701 W. College Ave.

Wisconsin conservationist Aldo Leopold wrote about the “sky dance” of the American Woodcock in *Sand County Almanac*. He describes the performance of the males as spiraling higher and higher, and making sounds getting louder and louder, and, without warning, tumbling “. . .like a crippled plane, giving voice in a soft liquid warble that a March bluebird might envy.” A few feet from the ground, the males return to their “peenting grounds” where the performance began.

Leopold used “peent” to refer to the sounds the males use to establish territories.

Wehr’s savanna offers one of the Milwaukee area’s best viewing spots for the “sky dance.”

The program begins with an indoor presentation on these unique shorebirds of the woods. At sunset, attendees will go on an evening stroll to witness the springtime ritual of the American Woodcock.

Pre-registration is requested by Thursday, April 10. The fee per person is \$10; Milwaukee County Residents, \$7; and Friends of Wehr Members, \$5. The regular \$3 parking fee is in effect.

Other birding programs at Wehr include workshops for beginners (the spring bird identification workshop filled to capacity in a matter of days), expert-led walks, and citizen-science bird counts. The next workshop, focused on migration, will be offered in September. “Sunset with the Birds,” a free evening walk led by experts from Wehr, Birds & Blooms, and Wild Birds Unlimited Greenfield will be offered April 23 and May 16, and the Sunday-morning “Birding with Paul,” led by expert Paul Boyer, will be offered May 4, 11, and 18.

For more information call Wehr at (414) 425-8550.

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