



Wisconsin Landscapes

An Art and Science Fusion Project

by

Anna Gregory and Praveen Maripelly

The Marie Christine Fellows, Wisconsin Institute for Discovery

In Collaboration with

Arboretum

University of Wisconsin-Madison

April 8, 15, 22

2023

1-3 pm

Objective:

“Wisconsin Landscapes” was a workshop series that blended science and art into a community-based educational program. Designed and led by Anna Gregory and Praveen Maripelly, these programs were a collaboration between the Marie Christine Kohler Fellows (Kohler Fellows @ WID) and the UW-Madison Arboretum. By collaborating with the Arboretum, Anna and Praveen were able to engage with the Madison community in a space that highlights the intersection of nature, science, and art. These programs consisted of an educational nature hike and creating an art piece to understand the beauty of Wisconsin landscapes and how ecosystems function through reciprocal relationships between water, flora, and insect.

Kohler Program:

[The Marie Christine Kohler Fellows](#) is a program for graduate students that fosters interdisciplinary thought and promotes principles and processes that support antiracism, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. The program pairs one science fellow and one art fellow together to envision, create, and execute a science-art fusion project/event for the larger Madison community.

Collaborators Details:

Anna Gregory is a PhD candidate in the Hryckowian lab at UW–Madison. She studies the gut microbiome with a focus on the bacterial pathogen *Clostridioides difficile* (*C. difficile*). She is interested in understanding how *C. difficile* responds to oxygen during infection to discover new targets for novel therapies. Anna is passionate about STEM education. Before graduate school, Anna was a high school biology teacher in Oklahoma. Upon completing her PhD, she hopes to return to the classroom, teaching biology and microbiology at a primary undergraduate institute. In her free time, Anna enjoys hiking, doing jigsaw puzzles, and finding the best mochas in town.

[Praveen Maripelly](#) was born in a small village in the southern part of India. He is a first-generation college student pursuing his second graduate degree MFA-4D at UW-Madison after earning a master’s degree in visual arts (printmaking) in 2009 from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in Gujarat, India. He lost both of his parents at a young age and began pursuing art along with his diligent and mindful practice of yoga. This has shaped him into the person he is today and enabled him to address societal issues through his art. His social practices emphasize Vasudaiva Kutumbhakam means The World is One Family which is a Sanskrit phrase from the ancient Indian scripture, “Maha Upanishad. His research aim is to use various artistic methods to creatively approach every aspect of life to bring about positive social change and build social interactions and relations between people in rural areas and the greater global community through ethical components of generosity, hospitality, connections, and social aesthetic 'conversation'.

Program Details

In April 2023, Anna and Praveen led a program called “Wisconsin Landscapes: Art and Science Fusion Workshops” at the Arboretum. Hosted on three consecutive Saturdays from 1-3 PM, each workshop covered the same curriculum.

Each workshop began with an hour-long nature hike in the Curtis Prairie (April 8 & 22) or WI Native Plant Garden (April 15) designed and led by Anna. During the hike, participants learned about the role of water, flora, and insects in the prairie ecosystem and how these three aspects are interconnected. It was also demonstrated how artists are inspired by these aspects in nature through sharing the work of Mary Burns’s “Women + Water”, Diana Scherer’s “Root System Domestication”, and Dr. Walter Tschinkle’s “Ant Architecture.”

In the second half of the program, Praveen led the participants through a visual art practice to depict Wisconsin landscapes. Praveen began the practice by explaining the use of line, space, color, scale, and texture to render 3D aspects of nature into a 2D space. Praveen actively engaged participants through dialogue to tell stories about the ecosystem while they were doing single-link quick drawings of water, plants, insects, and animals and then used art supplies to materialize the information conveyed on the hike through a creative practice.

Throughout the entire program, participants were engaging in conversation about Wisconsin landscapes, prairie ecosystems, and native flora and fauna through both the lens of science and art to show the interconnectedness of art and science in nature.

Program Impact

“Wisconsin Landscapes” was a workshop series that blended science and art into a community-based educational program. Collective participation through an educational nature hike followed by the production of a visual art piece, created a vibrant social environment that encouraged active engagement to learn how ecosystems function through reciprocal relationships to shape our Wisconsin landscapes.

Thirty-nine individuals attended this workshop series with intergenerational participation. Individuals who attended expressed excitement about having an art-science fusion program at the Arboretum, and a desire for more interdisciplinary spaces in community educational programming. During the program, participants articulated that they learned about the importance of prairie root systems, that anyone can generate a meaningful art piece, about how different artists are inspired by nature, and that scientific concepts and artistic concepts build upon one another in analogous ways.

“Wisconsin Landscapes” was a community-based education program developed in collaboration with the Arboretum. It is Anna and Praveen’s hope that by sharing this program and the art generated by the participants in this booklet, people will develop a greater empathy for Wisconsin landscapes through the realization of deeper connection within and with nature.

Anna Gregory with participants during hike



Anna Gregory speaking about prairie roots during the hike

Anna Gregory with participants during hike



Praveen Maripelly with participants during the artmaking





Art Supplies: an individual Kit

Wisconsin Native Plants, Insects & Birds



Sandhill Crane



Beebalm



Butterfly



Indian Grass



Goldenrod



Wild Turkey



Bee



Bumble Bee



Red Winged
Black Bird



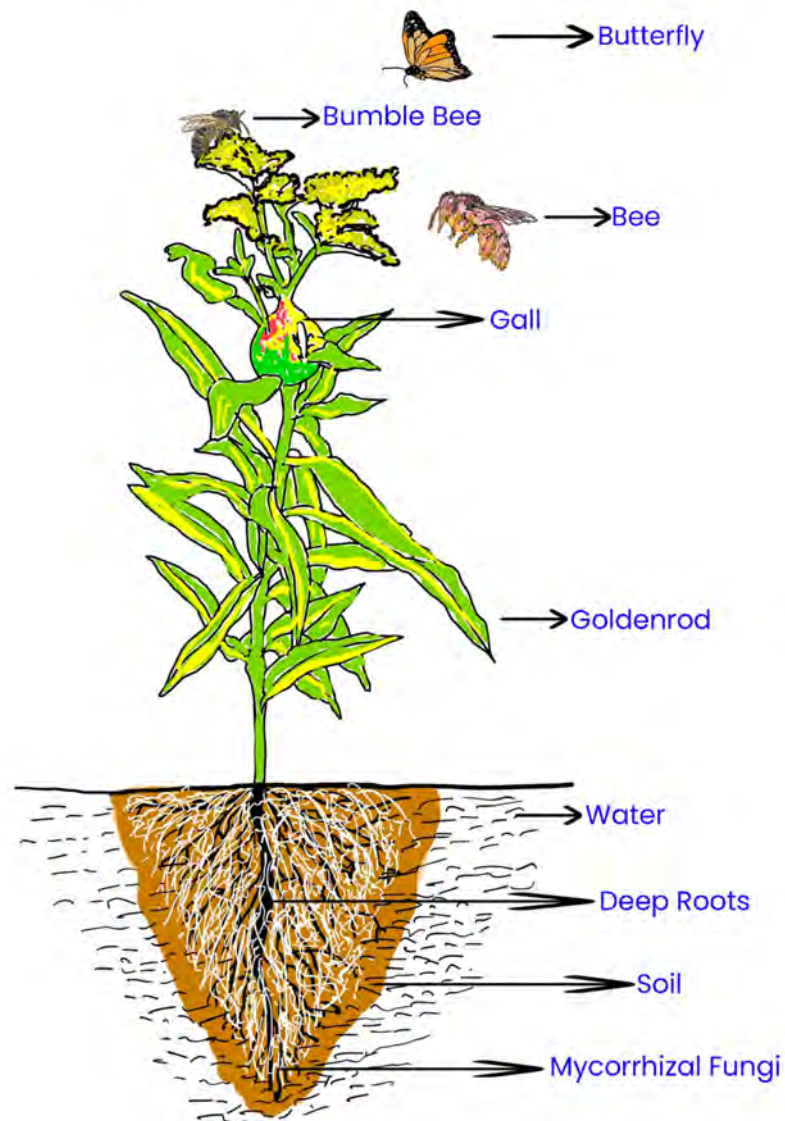
Cone
Flower

Reciprocal Relationship Between Water, Plants, Insects/Birds



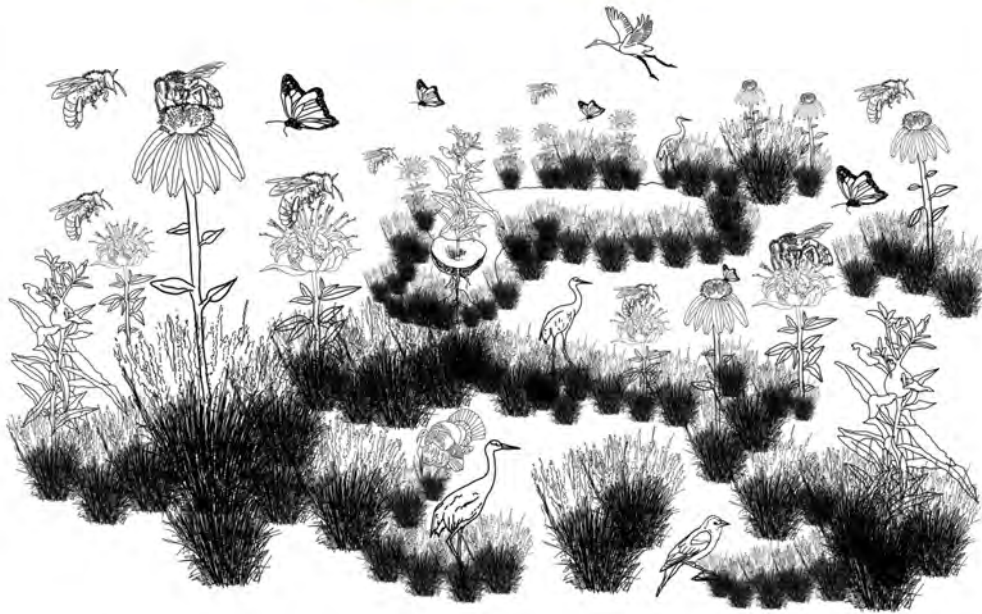
Drawing by Praveen Maripelly

Reciprocal Relationship Between Water, Plants and Insects



Drawing by Praveen Maripelly

Wisconsin Landscape



Wisconsin Landscape

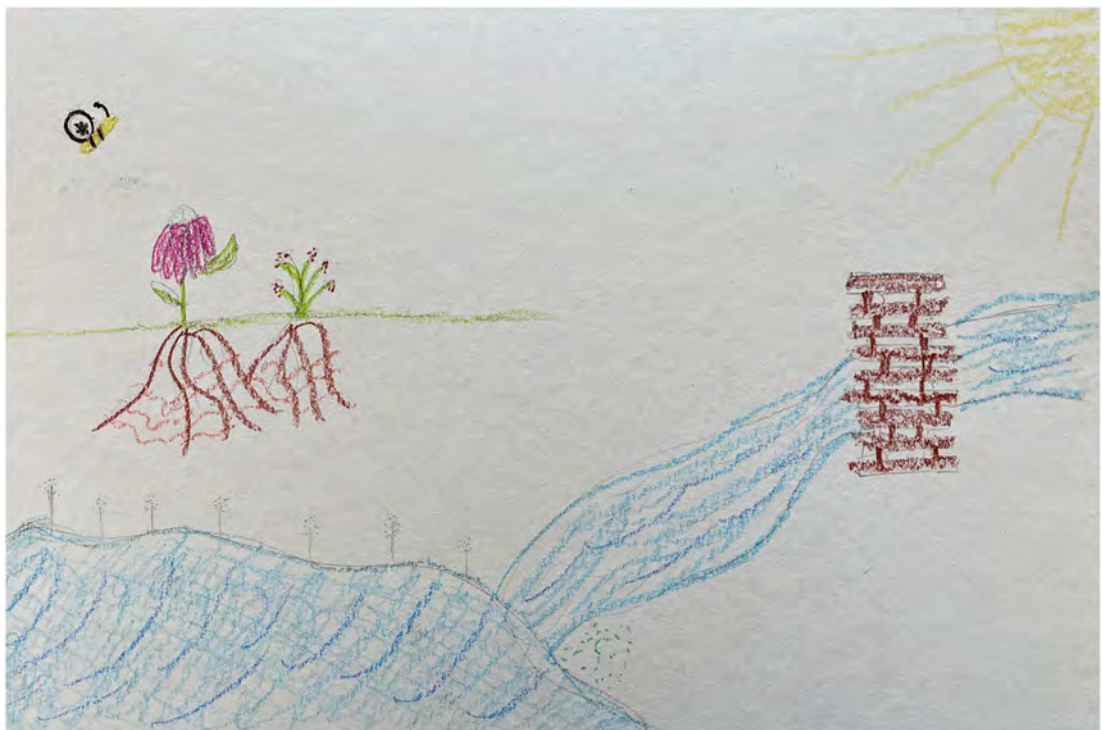


Drawing by Praveen Maripelly

Art pieces generated by participants during the programs







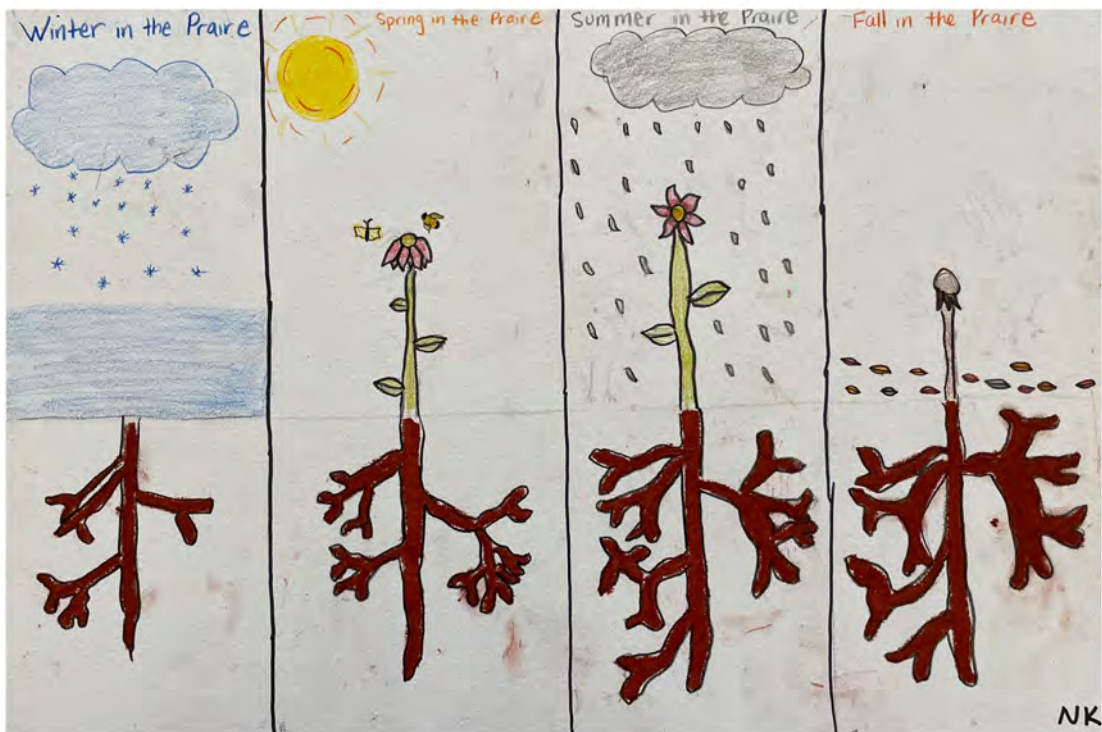




















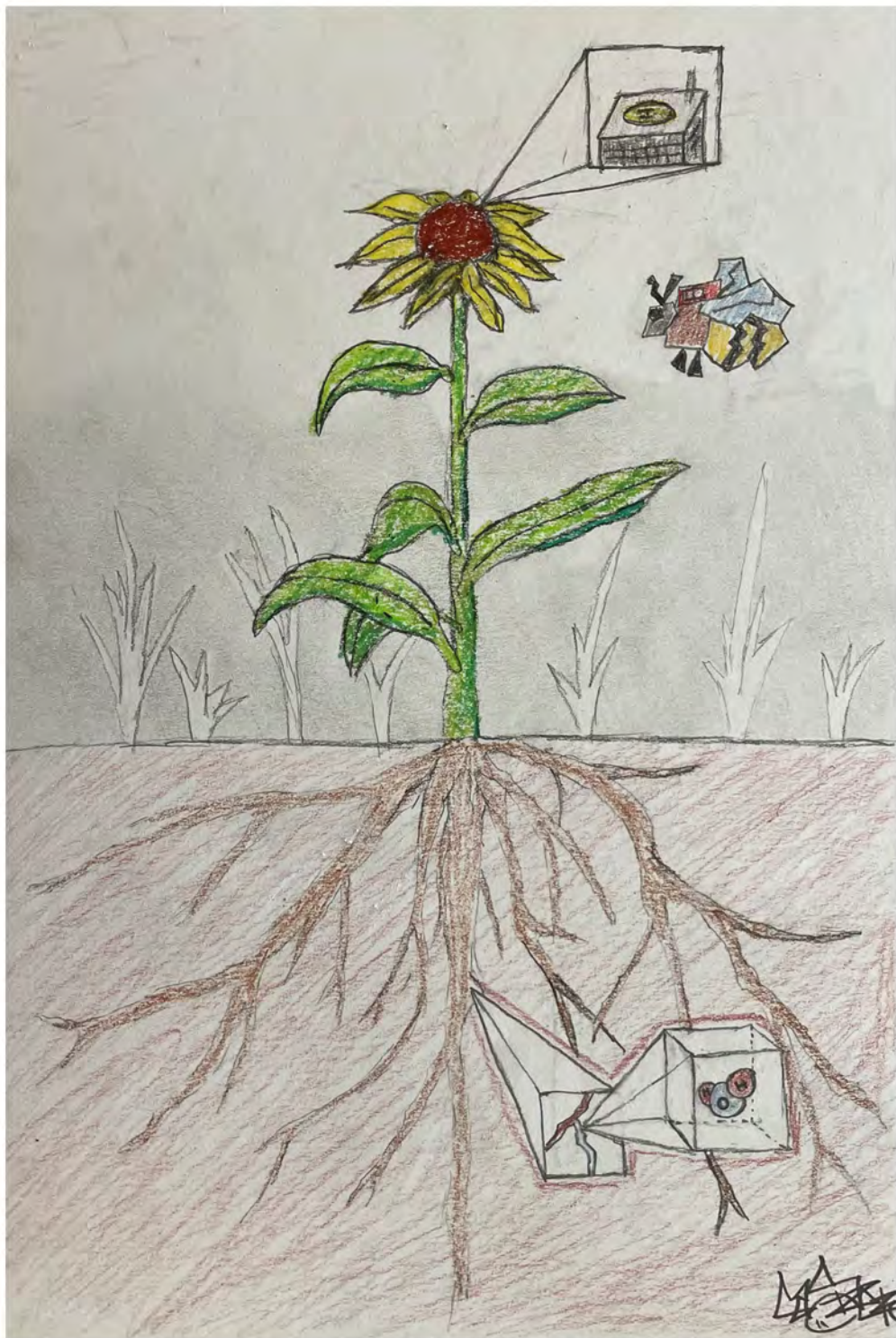




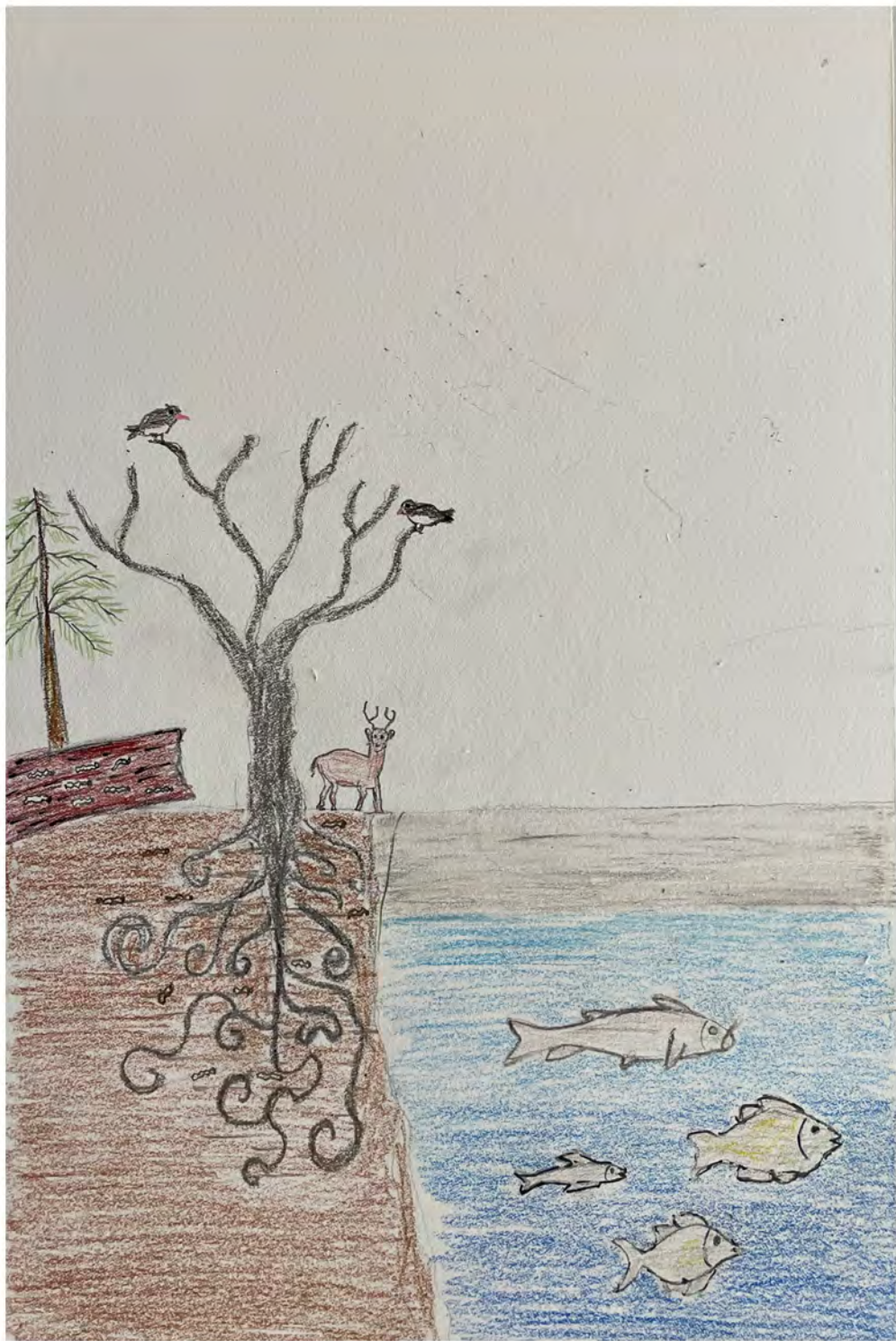












Acknowledgements

Anna and Praveen feel extremely grateful to all the organizations and individuals who made this project possible. Thank you to the Kohler Fellowship at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery for generously establishing a space for graduate students to explore and create projects that highlight the intersectionality of art and science. Thank you to all the staff at the UW-Madison Arboretum for their dedication and passion to preserving Wisconsin landscapes, and for their enthusiasm in collaborating with Anna and Praveen to create a science-art fusion program on-site.

Anna and Praveen would like to thank all those who generously donated their time, support, and expertise to help make this project possible. A special thanks to the following individuals, who helped coordinate the logistics of the project. Because of them, this project was fun, successful, and seamlessly executed.

- Gail Epping Overholt, Education Program Manager at the UW-Madison Arboretum, for serving as the project's main contact at the Arboretum during this collaboration, and for being continuously enthusiastic about the project during its development.
- Susan Day, Communications Manager at the UW-Madison Arboretum, for coordinating and leading much of the project's advertising.
- Andrew Hanus, Director of the Illuminating Discovery Hub, for overseeing the Kohler Fellowship, and providing feedback and support as this project went from an idea on paper to an educational event.

Praveen and Anna were fortunate to speak with many experts in ecology, Wisconsin native flora and fauna, and art as they developed this project. Many thanks to those individuals who generously donated their time and expertise:

- Susan Carpenter, Wisconsin Native Plant Garden Curator at the UW-Madison Arboretum
- Marian Farrior, Restoration Outreach Coordinator at the UW-Madison Arboretum
- Barrett Klein, Professor of Biology at UW-La Crosse
- Jennifer Angus, Professor of Design Studies at UW-Madison
- Karen Oberhauser, Director of the UW-Madison Arboretum
- Angela Richardson, Kohler Fellowship Leadership Committee
- Maddie Smith, Outreach Specialist at the UW-Madison Arboretum
- John Yin, Kohler Fellowship Leadership Committee

Finally, much gratitude to all those who attended the event! Anna and Praveen were thrilled to have so many people show their interest in an art-science fusion project, and hope that everyone found the program valuable, informative, and fun!

Many thanks and appreciation to all that helped make this project possible!

