

# Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame



**Sergius A. Wilde**

Inducted, 1994



WISCONSIN  
CONSERVATION  
HALL OF FAME

*“An understanding of the forest lies just as much below  
as above the ground.”* —Wilde

## Facts

About  
Sergius A. Wilde

University of Wisconsin  
Madison Professor of  
Soils and Forestry

Developed a holistic  
approach to forest  
management

Wrote ground breaking  
books on soil science

Assisted in Wisconsin  
reforestation efforts

## Dr. Sergius A. Wilde

**1898-1981**

A pioneer in the field of forest soils research, Dr. Sergius Wild dedicated much of his life to promote logging practices that did not harm the soil or contaminate the environment.

A native of Moscow, Russia, Dr. Wild came to the US in 1929. Five years later, he joined the Department of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he educated over 1,000 students. Wild wrote several books and over 200 research papers on forest ecology. One of his books is still one of the most widely used reference books on forest soils.

When Wilde arrived in Wisconsin, he was faced with a state that had been stripped of most of its virgin forests. Extensive logging had left many forest ecosystems destroyed. Dr. Wilde actively participated in reforestation programs and surveys of forest plantations in this state.

Throughout his work, he was aware of the delicate relationships of toxic chemi-

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**About Wisconsin's  
Conservation Hall of Fame**

**Location:**

Schmeckle Reserve  
Stevens Point, Wis.

**Attractions:**

Displays, information on Wisconsin's conservation history and leaders. Schmeckle Reserve, owned by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, provides hiking and wildlife viewing opportunities.

**Purpose:**

To educate and inspire people with information about how resource conservation has shaped our environment and our lives.

**Hours:**

M-F: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sat: Noon - 4 p.m.  
Sun: Noon - 4 p.m.

**Support:** The Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame is funded solely by contributions. Donations are tax deductible and may be sent to:

WCHF Foundation Inc.,  
Schmeckle Reserve,  
UW-Stevens Point,  
Stevens Point, Wis. 54481  
715-346-4992.

**Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame**  
Honoring our state's rich conservation history

**Sergius A. Wilde**  
(continued)

cal, soil ecology and groundwater quality to forest ecosystems. His studies of forest soils, woody-plant nutrition, tree-mycorrhiza relationships and reforestation led to an environmentally friendly reforestation of Wisconsin. Wilde also established minimum soil fertility standards and guidelines for woody plant species.

“Doc's professional life was influenced strongly by his knowledge of European soils and silviculture, by his association at the University of Wisconsin with Emil Truog and Aldo Leopold, and by his day-to-day contacts with students and colleagues,” said Garth Voigt a graduate student who studied under Wilde in the 1950s. “He watched with more than paternal interest as his students returned from their scholastic struggles and when he saw application to a problem of current interest, he struggled with them.”

According to Voigt, “Doc” Wilde was a lover of horseback riding, sailing, hunting game birds, fishing, chess, woodworking and music. He was known to belt out passages of German operas while working in the Soils Building in Madison.

Wilde's research had an enormous impact on the forest economy of the state. Practicing foresters in Wisconsin, managing private and public lands, state and federal forest services, private nurseries, the pulp and paper industry, and owners of Wisconsin's private woodlots are better off today because of Doc's insight and approach to sound forest management.