

Introducing... the UEC Puppet Pack!

Meet your new virtual best friends! The Puppet Pack is a crew of creatures that is here to help you explore the outdoors in creative ways and teach you what they know about nature.

Each Puppet has special and unique interests, hobbies, and ideas for fun activities. Check our Puppet Adventures section of our UEC In My Backyard page for new posts from the Puppet Pack.

And, if you really want to join the fun, you could even create your own puppet and become part of the Puppet Pack too.

Are you ready to meet your new favorite creatures? Let's go!

Name: Boxer

Species: Box Turtle

Boxer is a Box Turtle who lives in Wisconsin, Boxer is a native species to North America. He does especially well in the habitat of North America because that is where Boxer is an omnivore, and can find all his favorite foods. He likes to eat worms, snails, berries, mushrooms and even flowers!

Boxer really enjoys thinking outside of his box shell and exploring all the small things that are at his eye level. Join Boxer sometime and get close to the ground to see the world as a Box Turtle sees it!



We asked Boxer, ‘What’s the coolest thing you’ve seen at the one of the Urban Ecology Center branches?’ He gave us that award-winning Boxer smile, and he replied:

“I *shell* say I really like exploring the lagoon at Washington Park There is a lot of other turtles there and sometimes I even get to see the Young Scientist Club hiking around exploring there too.”

Name: Bussy

Species: Monarch Butterfly

Bussy is a monarch butterfly! Bussy enjoys flying in the prairie, the sunshine, and helping flowers pollinate. Bussy is a female monarch, and you can tell that because she doesn't have black dots on her back wings - as male monarchs do. She is here to teach you all she knows about flowers, pollination and metamorphosis. Bussy is so excited to meet all her new friends!



We asked Bussy, 'What's the tastiest thing you've ever eaten?' Her eyes lit up, and she said:

"I remember back when I was a caterpillar, I would just *munch munch munch* on milkweed leaves all day. That's how I got big enough to form my chrysalis and turn into a butterfly! Now that I'm all grown up, I drink nectar from flowers, but sometimes I miss the crisp taste of a milkweed leaf...ah, the wonders of childhood."

Name: Thizo

Species: Porcupine

Thizo is our friendly-neighborhood rodent scientist coming out from his chaparral lab to explore the world like he's never seen it before! As a North American porcupine, he is able to see things clearly from the ground and up in the trees. We'll see what epic treks and treats await this curious porcupine.



We asked Thizo, 'What's your favorite season?' Thizo scrunched up his face in scientific thought, and then a lightbulb appeared above his head, and he told us:

"Well, it'd have to be winter because of all that majestic snow covering the trees. And I know for a fact that it covers more than one branch. I've seen it at all the branches of all the trees in the park! It would be hard to only cover one branch, no? I love the snow because it makes a good treat as a snowcone!"

Name: Oscar

Species: Great Horned Owl

Oscar the Owl is our nocturnal friend at the Urban Ecology Center! Do you know what nocturnal means? He has cool adaptations like big, wide eyes that can see far to help him see especially well in the dark! This allows him to be able to catch prey like insects and small rodents.



We woke Oscar up in the middle of the day to ask, ‘What is the coolest thing you have seen at one of our branches?’

“HOO HOO HOO, I was surprised by the biodiversity in the parks, especially because we are in a city! I was worried I wouldn’t find any food but alas, I found so much to eat here!”