



The \$755,000 Hank Aaron Challenge!

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

*Ce-le-brate good times, come on!
There's a party goin' on right here
A celebration to last throughout the years
So bring your good times
and your laughter too
We gonna celebrate your party with you*

Do you remember that song from Kool and the Gang? Well guess what folks, we have our own Kool Gang and wow, do we have something to celebrate!

Drum roll please ... We did it! In partnership with the Menomonee Valley Partners we pulled off the largest project ever within the roughly 20-year history of the Urban Ecology Center. We keep pinching ourselves, but we really did it!

Seven years ago, we began a campaign to revitalize, connect and rejuvenate the Menomonee Valley area between Miller Park and the Mitchell Park Domes. When we conceptualized the fund raising goal, the Hank Aaron State Trail was only seven miles long. Where now exists the beautiful and hilly Three Bridges Park, there was a flat, mostly abandoned, fenced-off railroad yard that few ever noticed. Many of the local residents hadn't a clue that one of the best urban fishing streams in the country, the Menomonee River, actually bordered their neighborhood because there was no way to get to it! No one could easily bike to a baseball game or get a pizza at Palermo's even though they lived just a stone's throw away. There was no Urban Ecology Center at 37th and Pierce Street.

Fast forward to today, however, and all that has changed. We're celebrating because the whole thing -- our new Urban Ecology Center

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Connecting Through Stories

by Jamie Fersching, Branch Manager - Riverside Park

As a child I loved visiting other people's houses, because visiting a different house seemed like an adventure. Maybe they would have a secret passageway. Maybe they would have a tree house or maybe a fireman's pole. Maybe they would have a pony, or maybe they had a magic key that I would find! The possibilities seemed as endless as my imagination. I could make myself into a character of a new story with each new setting.

The awareness of these memories are at the front of mind when my nieces come to visit. I have two nieces, Macy and Ella: ages five and two, respectively. I think our house still seems like uncharted territory to them, where mystery and magic can still be discovered and I am happy to play along.

Last time they visited they walked in the door, took off their coats, and Macy said, "Can we go play on your bed? We can pretend you have a magic bed!" Why, of course! As we huddled under the blankets they said, "now you tell us stories." So, I made up a story about a magic pond with golden water and a pink frog. Admittedly it was not my best story, yet they were captivated.

Stories, what remarkable things they are; they entertain us, they transform us, they transport us and they connect us. They have been woven into the fabric of history and of our lives. Children ask for stories and seek out a good storyteller while most adults happen upon them as a pleasant interruption in their busy lives.

Regardless of age or how we hear them, experiencing a good story is like a tasty treat to enjoy and savor and get lost in for a time. We would like to fill the Center with stories from the Urban Ecology Center community, so this year we are trying something new: a storytelling event. You are our community and family who have come through

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Branch Highlights



RIVERSIDE PARK

As you explore the park this spring you may find a field of mud where the west building on our Riverland property used to stand. When the ground has thawed this land will be graded and seeded with native wildflowers. Please avoid walking over this area and give the seeds a chance to grow!



WASHINGTON PARK

We are excited to announce that Terry Evans has joined our staff as our new Washington Park Branch Manager! Terry brings with him years of nonprofit experience and a passion for getting kids outside. Learn more about Terry on page 2, then stop by this spring and welcome him to our community and neighborhood.



MENOMONEE VALLEY

After years of collaborative effort, we are delighted that our "From the Ground Up" fundraising effort in the Menomonee Valley is complete! This campaign brought our branch and Three Bridges Park to life and helped connect each to the neighborhood. Through the generosity and hard work of many...we did it!



Introducing Terry Evans: Washington Park Branch Manager

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

The Urban Ecology Center is delighted to welcome Terrence (Terry) Evans as the Center's new Branch Manager for our Washington Park branch! Terry brings with him 19 years of nonprofit experience, nearly a decade of which has been in leadership roles in Milwaukee. Specializing in youth development, job training and community organizing, he looks forward to focusing those talents in the Washington Park neighborhood. Most recently, Terry was instrumental in opening seven new sites for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Milwaukee.



Terry looks forward to connecting children to the outdoors and sees the Center's role as critical to creating a safe place for nature-based exploration for youth. As we were getting to know each other, Terry reflected upon the strong influence his father had on his appreciation for the great outdoors. While growing up, Terry's father taught him how to camp and hike in wilderness areas, no matter where they lived: the Black Hills of South Dakota, the picturesque countryside of Italy along the southern edge of the Alps or the rural areas of Wisconsin near Fond du Lac, to name a few. Terry aspires to share the same sense of independence and awe he felt when he went on treks with his dad with children and families in the heart of the city who have not experienced this yet.

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Mark your calendars...

Summer Solstice Sairee 2015

Saturday, June 20

Thank You to Our Contributing Members

Many thanks to the local foundations, corporations and individuals who have donated to the Center. The complete list of contributing members who have given within the last two months can be found on our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org/thankyoulist.

Credits:



Carijean Buhk
Editor

The Urban Ecology Center Newsletter is created and distributed through a team effort by the following people: Carijean Buhk, Matthew Gnas, Roxanne Helmeid, Judy Krause, Jeff McAvoy, Pat Mueller and Jessica St. John.

Contributing writers: Jamie Ferschinger, Beth Heller, Ken Leinbach, Miguel Santos and Tim Vargo.

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DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

- Spring is here and we are getting ready for spring/summer equipment lending. Equipment for camping, lawn sports and biking will be available to borrow on April 1st. Watercraft equipment will be available on May 1st. We hope you find some time to borrow equipment. Get out and enjoy!

- **Wish List.** Below are some items we need for our three branches. Visit urbanecologycenter.org/wishlist for an expanded list.

Riverside Park

- 2 drawer vertical file cabinets
- Alka-seltzer tablets
- Anabat detector
- Blenders
- Ice cream buckets with lids
- iPad(s)
- Log splitter
- Paper shredder (new or gently used)
- Terry cotton towels (new or used)
- Trimble Juno GPS

Washington Park

- Aquarium pumps & filters
- Bicycle air pump (stand-up)
- Box fans or oscillating floor fans
- Chopping knives
- Hand gardening shears
- Large crock pots or nescos with lids (3)
- Large easel
- Poultry wire (4ft x 50 ft)
- Power washer
- Reusable water bottles (20)

Menomonee Valley

- Animal homes (bird or wasps nests)
- Animal mounts, skulls & pelts
- Aquariums & terrariums (55 gallon+)
- Balloons
- Bird feathers
- Blenders (6)
- Chopsticks (4)
- Electric power washer
- Hybrid or Electric Car
- Yoga Mats (20)

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (No really, see what's happened with your support)

RESEARCH AT THE Urban Ecology Center

Our research program has two unique features: an urban habitat focus and the inclusion of volunteer citizen scientists.

The urban wilderness research and monitoring we do provides baseline data that allow us to track how our habitat improvements affect wildlife over time. We're measuring the changes so others can replicate the results in other cities.

We are one of the leaders of an international movement to facilitate community-led research and monitoring. Our Citizen Science program focuses as much on the process of engaging community volunteers as it does on the research process itself. What this means is that everyone can contribute in a meaningful way to scientific research.

You could help us monitor:



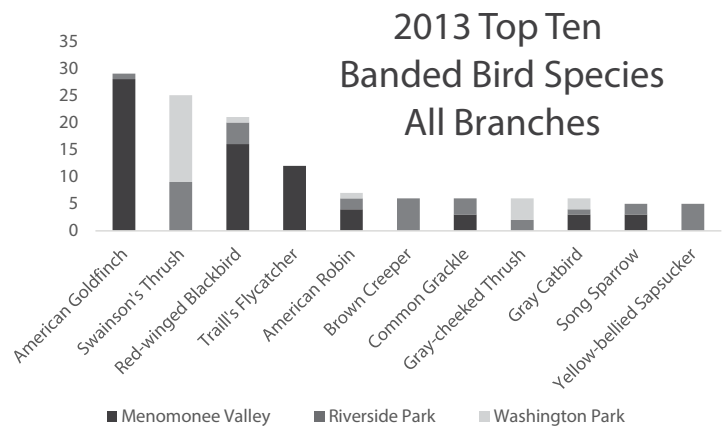
Bats

In our parks, we have found **5** of Wisconsin's **7** bat species



Birds

Our birders have spotted over **131** bird species



Snakes

Our natural areas are home to the **Butler's Gartersnake**. Because very little is known about the Butler's, our research can help determine population size, demographics, and habitat preferences.

Or help us monitor **turtles, invertebrates, mammals, frogs, park use, and more.**



If you'd like to support projects like these, consider volunteering or making a donation. Learn how at www.urbanecologycenter.org



Wild Washington Park

by Tim Vargo, Manager of Research and Citizen Science

Washington Park has a special place in my heart.

I took my wife there for our first date (a birdwalk, of course), we were married on the island, we bought a house that overlooks the park and it is where we found our lovable force of a Golden Retriever.

If you attend any of the programs at our branch there you will see how vibrant the human community can make the park, but a quiet stroll will often reveal an array of wildlife worthy of a show on Animal Planet. Seriously!

I thought of this recently when the lagoon was almost entirely frozen over except for a small patch of open water. The scene reminded me of a Serengeti watering hole. Crows, Herring Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls crowded around the edge while geese, Mallards and

a lone grebe took up every inch of space on the open water. I was just waiting for a crocodile to emerge trying to catch a snack.

It reminded me of the time I was commuting across the old field by the Washington Park Senior Center. An opossum was rambling along, completely unaware of a nearby Red-tailed Hawk. Soon, the hawk launched itself to within inches of the intended prey, then changed its mind and flew back to its perch. The opossum was completely unaware that it had almost been lunch.

Then, there was an urgent call from Ms. Tory and her students, "Mr. Tim, come quick, an Osprey is circling overhead." Not only did I add the Osprey to my Green Birding List, we watched it grab a huge golden Koi from the lagoon. (Did you know Osprey orient fish head-first

when flying to make them aerodynamic?)

Recently, Citizen Science staff and volunteers placed wildlife cameras on one of the islands. One camera recorded White-footed Mice and a Raccoon. How did they get there? Likely during the winter when the lagoon is frozen.

These stories could go on and on — an epic battle between two huge, male snapping turtles, the turkey that hung around the orchard, deer, coyote, fox and some pretty rare birds.

If you haven't visited Washington Park, I encourage you to attend a program or a volunteer orientation, conduct a Park Use Survey or come to a summer concert at the bandshell. But always keep an eye out for the surprising displays of urban wildlife. 🌿



Not Just A Rock

by Miguel Santos, Environmental Educator

The morning sunlight shimmered on the rippling surface of the river. It was a beautiful day in late fall as second graders hiked along the Menomonee Valley trails. The excitement of the kids grew as the trail got more and more covered by the trees. I realized that the border between them and the natural world had started to break down when I heard a few "wows" for a Blue Heron that flew by and a salmon going up the river to spawn. You could sense the connection one student had as she held an improvised walking stick.

The trail led us to the beach across the river bend, not far from Miller Park. After learning about rocks at the Center, they were about to explore our "outdoor laboratory" to look for and examine rocks and fossils. First, the students learned how to skip rocks because, needless to say, kids can never resist the urge to throw rocks

into the river. It was challenging for them at first but, little by little, their flat rocks were bouncing off the water further and further. Some of them kept skipping rocks enthusiastically, while others decided to search for interesting rocks or merely explore the area. They looked like little Sherlock Holmeses searching for different kinds of rocks with hand lenses.

Suddenly, everybody's attention was diverted toward a couple of pioneer explorers who found the first fossil. Their visible excitement drew everybody else into a gold rush-like search for these precious surprises. "Mr. Miguel, is this a fossil? What kind of rock is this?" they asked again and again.

Although they were not allowed to keep a rock or a fossil bigger than their fist, one girl wanted to take a brick-sized rock home. Her teacher

tried to convince her that it was not a smart choice to take it home for the fact that it was too big and also because it was just a rock. The poor girl burst into tears when she heard that about her prize. Through the eyes of her teacher, it was just a rock. Through the girl's eyes, it was magic. Then, she made a little sanctuary out of sticks to mark the spot and promised to be back with her mother later that day to grab it.

It was her first time at that riverbank even though her school (Pershing Elementary School) and maybe her home were less than a mile away. Connecting to that one simple rock connected her to the place. I don't know if she ever came back with her mother after school, but I know these kinds of deep bonds create a commitment to lifelong protection. Therefore, it is not just a rock, is it? 🌿

MARCH & APRIL

Quick Guide

An abbreviated listing of what's happening at the Urban Ecology Center. Find full descriptions and register online at www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

April 2015 is
EARTH MONTH!

Earth Day is April 22nd, but we are celebrating our planet all month long!

EARTH DAY of SERVICE!

Come celebrate the Earth by giving back! Join us from 9am - noon for a morning of volunteer activities in our park, followed by a community lunch from noon - 1:30pm. Special activities for families will be available too!

Saturday, April 25th | 9AM - 1:30PM
at All Three Branches

Our Earth Month programs are focused on sustainable living!



Look for this symbol on the following pages to find Earth Month programs

Learn more about all of our Earth Month activities at: urbanecologycenter.org/EarthMonth



13th Annual Local Farmer Open House

The best way to get farm fresh veggies aside from growing your own! Meet local farmers and learn how you can buy directly from a farmer through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Whether you are new to CSAs or have been subscribing for years, this event is for you. Attend workshops and stay for lunch! Food available to purchase.

(RP) Saturday, March 7 | 11AM - 3PM | Free!

RIVERSIDE PARK



Come one, come all! We have a new interest group, the **Community Vegan Potluck** that meets on the first Tuesday of every month. Everyone is welcome, vegans and non-vegans alike. Also, the **13th Annual Local Farmer Open House** is on March 7th. Meet the farmers and stay for a workshop.

— *Jamie Ferschinger,*
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Enjoy an evening of film at **Milwaukee Short Films Night**. Included will be *Autumn Vignette* by one of our youth volunteers, Serbata Tarrer. Every Saturday we'll teach you **Maple Sugaring Basics** as we tap the trees in Washington Park. Then join us for our annual **Pancake Breakfast** on April 4th. Last, join me on a **Walk and Talk** through the park. I can't wait to get to know all of you.

— *Terry Evans,*
Branch Manager - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



In March, come enjoy the last days of winter with **Intro to Cross Country Skiing** or **Tracking by Snowshoe!** And then join us in April for any of the programs in our **Earth Month Series: Urban Water, Vermicomposting, or Climate Change and You**. And of course, come celebrate with us on our **Earth Day of Service!**

— *Glenna Holstein,*
Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

This events guide gives you a "snapshot" view of the programs and events happening at the Urban Ecology Center's three branches. Full descriptions and details can be found on our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

Quick Guide

Kids Can Cook Series

In this kids-only class, your child will create healthy, kid-friendly recipes while also learning kitchen safety and cleaning up with instructor: Terri Roller. For kids ages 6-11 years | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20) per session

March Session

Menu includes Kid Cassoulet, Irish Soda Bread in a Bag and Snow Cream. Registration is required by March 9th.

(RP) Sat., Mar. 14 | 10:00 - 11:30AM

April Session

Menu includes Earth Day Birthday Fruit Snack and Go Green Smoothie. Registration is required by April 15th.

(RP) Sun., Apr. 19 | 1 - 2:30PM

Little Explorers

Join our toddler group for activities with furs, bones, interaction with animals and a nature hike!

(MV) Sat., Mar. 21 | 10 - 11AM

For children ages 3-5 with an adult | \$5/child (Nonmembers: \$7/child)

From Sap to Syrup! Maple Sugaring for Families

Follow the flow from sap to syrup as we learn the maple sugaring process, then enjoy pancakes with syrup from trees in the park. Dress for the weather.

(RP) Sats., Mar. 21 OR

Apr. 4 | 10AM - NOON

For families and children | Adults: \$10 (Nonmembers: \$12) Children: \$8 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Cache In, Trash Out!

Join us on an expedition as we search for Geocaches and pick up trash.

(MV) Sat., Mar. 28 | 10 - 11:30PM

For adults, teens, and older children | Free - donations appreciated

Saturday Preschool Series: Wildlife in Your Backyard

Enjoy exploring nature together with your preschooler through indoor and outdoor play, songs, stories and crafts.

(RP) Sat., Mar. 28 | 10 - 11:30AM

For children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Throwback Series:

Friday Fire

Gather around the fire and enjoy live music. Rain or shine. Bring your own snacks if you'd like. This throwback program was last seen in 2008.

(RP) Fri., Apr. 3 | 7:00 - 9PM

For families | \$2 per person (Nonmembers: \$5 per person)

Urban Water

Explore Three Bridges and Stormwater Parks to find out cool features that help us manage rain and storm water. Then discuss what water management techniques you can do at home!

(MV) Sat., Apr. 18 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults and families | Adults \$6 (nonmembers \$9), Children \$4 (nonmembers \$7)

Busy Bees

Learn about our busy pollinators, their life cycle, anatomy and place in our environment and then sample honey!

(MV) Sat., Apr. 11 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults and children | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Drama Class with Above the Clouds

Above the Clouds will help students learn voice projection, use of body and build confidence in their presentation skills. To register, visit abovethecloudsmilwaukee.com.

(MV) Every Wed. | 4:30 - 5:45PM

For children ages 5-8 | Free - donations appreciated

Afterschool and Weekend Programs at the Center

From hiking to gardening to helping with research to caring for our animals, after school and weekends are full of new adventures!

We have programs for ages 5-12 and families (See list below). Check out our website details.

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Animal Feeding

Nature Rangers

Young Scientists Club

Highlighted Programs

Milwaukee Short Films Night

Serbata Tarrer, one of our youth volunteers, recently filmed a short in Washington Park entitled the *Autumn Vignette*. He has since connected with local filmmakers who are excited to screen their works and discuss their craft. The evening will feature screenings of independent short films. Contains some violence and harsh language.

(WP) Wed., Mar. 18 | 6 - 8:30PM

For adults and teens 16 and up | Free - donations appreciated

Community Storytelling

We invite you to share stories of the Center — memorable experiences of you, your family and your community. Submit a story to tell or listen to stories told by friends and neighbors. Opportunities for spontaneous stories available. Light refreshments provided.

(RP) Thu., Mar. 19 | 7 - 9PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Pancake Breakfast

Join us for a pancake breakfast to celebrate the coming of spring. Pancakes will be served with 100% maple syrup made from trees in Washington Park. Fruit, coffee and juice will also be provided.

(WP) Sat., Apr. 4 | 10 - 11:30AM

For everyone | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Kids Celebrate the Earth

Kids can enjoy a morning craft, hike, puppet show and still get home in time for their afternoon nap. Registration required. Please register all attending family members. Space is limited.

(WP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 10:30AM - NOON

For children ages 5 and younger accompanied by an adult | Free - donations appreciated

Native Landscaping Open House

Deepen your understanding of native landscaping benefits and practical know-how. Meet landscaping and native plant professionals, attend workshops and learn how to get started with native landscaping.

(RP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 11AM - 2PM

For adults | Free - donations appreciated

28th Annual Earth Poets and Musicians Extravaganza

The Earth Poets and Musicians group hosts this year's event in remembrance of their founder, Milwaukee Poet Laureate Jeff Poniewaz. The group will be joined by guest artists.

(RP) Fri., Apr. 24 | 8 - 10PM

For everyone | Suggested donation \$5 to benefit the Urban Ecology Center

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Abiotic Factors

Plants and animals fill an ecosystem with life, but the abiotic factors in nature are the foundation for this life. In this series we will study the non-living factors that shape ecosystems.

For children age 5 and older | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10) per session

Energy **(WP)**

Tue., Mar. 10 | 1 - 3PM

Weather **(MV)**

Tue., Mar. 24 | 1 - 3PM

Soil **(RP)**

Tue., Apr. 14 | 1 - 3PM

Water **(WP)**

Tue., Apr. 28 | 1 - 3PM

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

1 ONLINE:
www.urbanecologycenter.org

2 BY PHONE:
(414) 964-8505

3 IN PERSON:
Just stop by!

(RP) = Riverside Park
1500 E. Park Pl.

(WP) = Washington Park
1859 N. 40th St.

(MV) = Menomonee Valley
3700 W. Pierce St.



= Accessible for persons with disabilities
Please call 2 weeks ahead of time

Quick Guide

Winter Tree Identification, Trees of Southeast WI

For adults and teens | \$5 per session (Nonmembers: \$7 per session) Land steward or Arboretum volunteers: \$3

Overview of Characteristics Used to Identify Trees with No Leaves

(RP) Wed., Mar. 4 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Oaks

(RP) Wed., Mar. 11 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Maples and Ashes

(RP) Wed., Mar. 18 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Walnuts, Hickories, American Beech, and Sycamore

(RP) Wed., Mar. 25 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Birches and Elms

(RP) Wed., Apr. 1 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Rose Family

(RP) Wed., Apr. 8 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

Basswood, the Legume Family and Other Non-Natives

(RP) Wed., Apr. 15 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

The Once and Future Forest: Managing Urban Forest Biodiversity

Learn how the diversity of Milwaukee's urban forests have changed over time and why. Speaker: David Rogers, PhD, Dept. of Biology, UW-Parkside.

(MV) Tue., Mar. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Throwback Series: Nestbox Building Workshop

Construct a box at our full workshop or just learn about birds without building a box at our Informational Session. Register by March 8th.

(RP) Sat., Mar. 14 | 9:30AM - NOON

For adults and teens | Full workshop: \$20 (Nonmembers: \$30); Informational session only: \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Sustainable Coffee Tasting

Join coffee experts from the MKE Coffee Guild as you taste locally-roasted coffee from around the world.

(RP) Sats., Mar. 14 &

Apr. 11 | 10 - 11AM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

From Beak to Tail:

All About the Life of Birds

Join us for an in-depth look into bird ecology, conservation and behavior.

(RP) Tue., Mar. 24 | 5 - 6:30PM

(WP) Thu., Apr. 30 | 5 - 6:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Basic Culinary Knife Skills

Chef Annie Wegner LeFort will teach basic cutting techniques as well as selection and care of knives. Registration required by March 23rd.

(RP) Tue., Mar. 24 | 7 - 8PM

For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20)

Photo Phenology

Photograph and draw the natural area around the Center with us.

(MV) Sats., Mar. 28 &

Apr. 25 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults, teens and families |

Free - donations appreciated

From Sap to Syrup! Maple Sugaring for Adults

Take an in depth look into how maple syrup is made and enjoy pancakes with real, homemade maple syrup.

(RP) Sats., Mar. 28 &

Apr. 11 | 10 - NOON

For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Maple Sugaring Basics

Help collect sap and boil it down into syrup. Samples of finished maple syrup included! Dress to be outside.

(WP) Every Sat. in Mar. |

10 - 11:30AM

For adults and accompanied children |

Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)

Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

Fruit Tree Grafting Workshop

Graft and take home two semi-dwarf apple, pear or plum trees. Root stocks and scion wood provided. Additional materials available for a fee. Bring a sharp knife. Register by March 29th.

(RP) Sat., Apr. 4 | NOON - 2PM

For adults | \$18 (Nonmembers: \$20)

Scion Wood Exchange

Join fellow fruit tree enthusiasts as we swap stories and trade scion wood from various trees. Bring as many types of cuttings as you wish.

(RP) Sat., Apr. 4 | 2 - 4PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spider Silks & the "Nano" World

Discover the link between the molecular structure of spider silks, their high mechanical strength, and why scientists are interested in mimicking it. Speaker: Dr. Sujatha Sampath, Research Professor, Physicist, University of Utah.

(MV) Tue., Apr. 7 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Walk and Talk at Menomonee Valley

Join Branch Manager Glenna Holstein to explore both our building and Three Bridges Park.

(MV) Wed., Apr. 15 | NOON - 1PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Walk and Talk at Washington Park

Explore the Center, park and neighborhood with our new Branch Manager Terry Evans.

(WP) Thu., Apr. 16 | 5 - 6PM

For everyone | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Walk and Talk at Riverside Park

Take a tour through our Center, park and neighborhood. Register by April 17th.

(RP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 10 - 11AM

For everyone | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Tips for Making Your Backyard a Bird Habitat

Ornithologist Vicki Piaskowski will discuss the importance of native plants in providing bird food and habitat.

(RP) Wed., Apr. 8 | 7 - 8pm

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Build Your Own Vermicompost Bin!

Learn all the basics of how to make your own bin out of simple materials. You'll leave with a bin full of worms!

(MV) Fri., Apr. 10 | 5 - 7PM |

Please register by

Friday, March 20th

(WP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 10 - 11:30AM

Please register by April 3rd

For adults | \$35 (Nonmembers \$40)

The Canary, the Miner and the Mine: Linking Social and Environmental Justice with Health Disparities

Explore some of the key determinants of health disparities and strategies to promote health equity. Speaker: Emmanuel Ngu, DrPH, UW-Milwaukee Zilber School of Public Health.

(WP) Tue., Apr. 14 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Landscaping with Native Plants for Ecological Beautification

Learn how to incorporate native plants into your landscapes to create an ecologically sound sanctuary and aesthetically appealing look.

(RP) Wed., Apr. 15 | 6 - 7:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Homemade Pasta Workshop — Two part series

In this two-part, hands-on workshop we'll practice rolling, cutting and shaping different pastas then make sauces to pair with them. Bring an apron and containers. Registration required by April 17, 5pm.

(RP) Mon., Apr. 20 & Tue.,

Apr. 21 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$40 (Nonmembers:

\$45) for both classes in the

series (fee is non-refundable)

Climate Change and You!

Paul Geenen of Organizing for Action will discuss the grassroots movement addressing climate change at both the federal and state level.

(MV) Wed., Apr. 22 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | \$5

(Nonmembers: \$10)

Mushroom Cultivation Tour at Sugar Bee Farm

Explore Sugar Bee Farm, Milwaukee's only farm dedicated to mushroom cultivation. Transportation provided. Registration required by April 24th.

(RP) Sun., Apr. 26 | 10:30AM - 1PM

For adults and teens | \$10

(Nonmembers: \$15)

The Benefits of Urban Habitat Islands

Learn the benefits of native plantings and why, how and where (well, really everywhere!) we should incorporate native plants into our landscapes.

(RP) Wed., Apr. 29 | 6 - 7PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Hatha Yoga for All Levels

Join Certified Yoga Teacher Lisa Lewis for weekly classical Hatha yoga classes. March 5th class is free! 8-class passes available (purchase by March 1st).

(RP) Every Thu. | 5:30 - 6:45PM

For adults and teens | Single class

\$15 (Nonmembers \$20); 8-class

pass \$80 (Nonmembers \$96)

Quick Guide

Winter Camping Crash Course

Learn basic winter camping skills including snow shelter construction, building fires in the snow, deciding what to pack and other basic skills.

(RP) Sun., Mar. 1 | 10AM - NOON
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Full Moon Cross-Country Ski

Join us for an adventure through a snow covered woods. Some cross country skiing experience required. Equipment and transportation provided. Weather dependent.

(RP) Thu., Mar. 5 | 6 - 9PM
For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Introduction to Cross-Country Skiing

We will provide introductory cross-country ski instruction and then head out into the park. When we're done, we'll return to warm up with a mug of cocoa around the fire. Equipment provided. Be sure to dress in layers.

(MV) Sat., Mar. 7 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Mar. 21 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and accompanied children |
Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)
Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Tracking by Snowshoe

Join us in a hike through Three Bridges Park to search for tracks and signs of our favorite winter friends. If there is snow, we will travel by snowshoe. If not, we'll hike. Both snow and mud are great for finding tracks. Dress for the weather. **(MV)** Sat., Mar. 14 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and families | Adults \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Water Safety Course

Get a head start on the summer — take a Water Safety Course today! Contributing members can borrow our canoes and kayaks for free. To take advantage of this unique benefit, become a contributing member, then take this 30-minute (on land) water safety course.

(RP) Sun., Apr. 26 | 1 - 1:30PM
(RP) Mon., Apr. 27 | 6 - 6:30PM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

ROOT (Restore Our Outdoor Treasures)

It's a game changer, name changer, for Land Stewardship! All of the Land Stewardship volunteer opportunities will now share the same name. No more Burdock Brigade, Work Outside Wednesdays, Forestry Fridays, etc. We are Restoring Our Outdoor Treasures. Help improve vital urban habitat during ROOT!

(RP) Every Tue. | 9 - 11AM
(RP) Every Fri. | 2 - 4PM
(RP) Sat., Mar. 7 | 9:30 - 11AM
(RP) Sat., Mar. 21 | 9:30 - 11AM
(RP) Sat., Apr. 4 | 9:30 - 11AM
(RP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 9:30 - 11AM

(WP) Every Wed. | 9AM - NOON
(WP) Every Thu. | 3 - 5PM

(MV) Every Thu. | 9 - 11AM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Volunteer Papermaking

Learn the art of recycled papermaking to create gifts for our supporters.

(RP) Thu., Mar. 5 | 4 - 6PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Volunteer Park Rangers

Join other volunteers as we walk through the park picking up trash and noting any maintenance needs.

(RP) Sat., Apr. 4 | 9:30 - 11AM
(MV) Sat., Mar. 7 | 11AM - NOON
For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

Volunteer Orientation

Come find out how you can contribute your time and talents to the Center.

(RP) Fri., Mar. 13 | 3 - 4:30PM
(RP) Tue., Mar. 17 | 5:30 - 7PM
(RP) Sat., Mar. 28 | 10:30AM - NOON
(RP) Tue., Apr. 7 | 5:30 - 7PM
(RP) Sat., Apr. 18 | 10:30AM - NOON
(RP) Fri., Apr. 24 | 3 - 4:30PM

(WP) Sat., Mar. 14 | 1 - 2PM
(WP) Tue., Mar. 31 | 4:30 - 5:30PM
(WP) Tue., Apr. 14 | 5 - 6PM
(WP) Tue., Apr. 28 | 4:30 - 5:30PM

(MV) Tue., Mar. 3 | 5:30 - 7PM
(MV) Thu., Mar. 19 | 5 - 6:30PM
(MV) Sat., Apr. 4 | 10:30AM - NOON
(MV) Tue., Apr. 21 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Youth Project Squad

Work on various projects — equipment repair, plant/animal care, building maintenance, grounds keeping, etc. while learning new skills.

(MV) Sats., Mar. 7 & Apr. 4 | NOON - 2PM
(MV) Thus., Mar. 26 & Apr. 16 | 4 - 6PM
For families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Net Repair: Bird Banding Prep Party

Help us prep the bird banding equipment for the season. This session is a great way to see the nets we use and meet our banders.

(RP) Tue., Apr. 7 | 9AM - 1PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding Workshop

Learn how to become involved with the Center's bird banding program. We will spend a portion of the workshop outdoors, so dress for the weather. Registration required.

(RP) Thu., Apr. 9 | 8 - 11AM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding

Experience the rush of holding a wild bird in your hands. This event is highly weather dependent. Please RSVP with Jennifer Callaghan at 414-687-3345 before attending.

(WP) Wed., Apr. 15 | 5:30AM - NOON
(MV) Tue., Apr. 21 | 5:30AM - NOON
(RP) Thu., Apr. 30 | 5:15AM - NOON
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Park Use Survey Workshop

Interested in finding out how people use the parks? Learn about the Park Use Survey project and how to conduct a survey on your own.

(RP) Tue., Apr. 28 | 6 - 7:30PM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated

INTEREST GROUPS

Ojibwe Language Study Group

(RP) Every Mon. | 6 - 8PM

Photo Club

(RP) Thus., Mar. 5 & Apr. 2 | 6:30 - 9PM

Community Vegan Potluck

(RP) Tues., Mar. 3 & Apr. 7 | 6:30 - 8PM

350.org General Meeting

(RP) Tues. Mar. 10 & Apr. 14 | 7 - 8:30PM

Friends of Real Food: Potluck Dinner and Program

(RP) Weds., Mar. 11 & Apr. 8 | 6 - 8PM

Good Food Book Club

(RP) Tue., Apr. 21 | 7 - 8PM

Faith and Ecology

(RP) Tues., Mar. 17 & Apr. 21 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Echo Poets

(RP) Thus., | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers

(RP) Thus., Mar. 12 & Apr. 9 | 7 - 8:30PM

Transition Milwaukee: All City Hub Meeting

(RP) Mons., Mar. 23 & Apr. 27 | 6:30 - 8:30PM

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. | 8am
(WP) Every Wed. | 8am
(RP) Every Thu. | 8am

The \$755,000 Hank Aaron Challenge!

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branch, the completely constructed and planted 24-acre Three Bridges Park, the complicated design and construction of three beautiful pedestrian bridges, creating community gardens and doubling the length of the Hank Aaron State Trail* — its all done! We even covered the cost of doing Center programs throughout the construction timeline as well as the important work of setting up an endowment for the long-term preservation of the park we created. All this work came with a whopping \$25 million collective price tag.

It took quite the “gang” to pull this off. This Kool project epitomizes the “many hands make light work” philosophy that is now embedded within our work culture. It took three nonprofits (Urban Ecology Center, Menomonee Valley Partners and Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail) and help from City, County, State, Federal and Tribal governments, tens of thousands volunteer hours, 73 corporate donors, 30 foundations, 244 individual donors, in-kind contributions from local businesses and help from the media ... truly just about everyone!

We closed this campaign down in a very unique fashion too. A little over a year ago we felt that we had asked just about everyone in Milwaukee and were still short by a little over \$1.5 million dollars. Then in August we “pitched”

an idea to an anonymous donor. This donor sized up the pitch and knocked it out of the park! To honor Hank Aaron’s 80th year, this



donor offered us \$755,000 if we could match it. The number 755 is significant as it reflects Hank Aaron’s incredible accomplishment of hitting 755 career home runs. The Challenge also honors Hank Aaron’s involvement in this project which doubled the length of his namesake -- the Hank Aaron State Trail.

We spent the fall quietly sharing this challenge with many in the community and, once again, the community responded in force. It was amazing! I love this town. Then, with this simple email sent to us on

Christmas Day from Marybeth Budisch of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation ...

Ken, Good news! The Enroth Family Fund is making a \$100,000 grant to your 755 campaign. Merry Merry! MB

.... and suddenly we were done.

This Christmas gift capped off the \$755,000 Hank Aaron Challenge and the entire \$25 million From the Ground Up Campaign!

... we did it!

Kool huh?

Thank you everyone!

*It’s time to come together
It’s up to you, what’s your pleasure?
Everyone around the world come on!
Celebrate!*

*Can you believe that the Hank Aaron State Trail now runs from the Lake all the way out to the Zoo Interchange? And when the interchange is complete a short link is in the plan which will connect the Hank Aaron State Trail to bike paths that will reach all the way to Madison! 🌿

2015

SUMMER CAMPS

June 29 – August 14

Week-long day camps for
Preschool - 8th grade

Scholarships Available

Learn more and register at
urbanecologycenter.org/summercamp
Or call (414) 344-5460

Introducing Terry Evans: Washington Park Branch Manager

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As the leader of our Washington Park branch, he looks forward to building strong community partners, reconnecting to colleagues he's worked with in other capacities, meeting the hundreds of volunteers that make our work possible and developing new friendships in the Washington Park neighborhood.

In addition to nonprofit management, community organizing and program development, Terry has poured his heart and energy into football, coaching at MPS high

schools (Vincent, King and Marshall) and Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center for the past 15 years. He played football throughout his college career, and even tried out for the Packers! Note: this does not mean that the Packers are his favorite team. You'll need to talk to him about that.

To learn more about Terry, we invite you to join him at the Walk and Talk at Washington Park on Thursday, April 16th. 🍁

Connecting Through Stories

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our doors for ten years and through the park for many more. You are the people who have helped to create the Center's sense of place. You are the characters of the stories that take place at the Center and in the park and you have stories to tell. We are calling teen and adult storytellers (practiced and


novice) and story listeners to come together for an evening to connect through stories.

So whether you would like to tell stories or listen to stories, please join us on March 19th. For more information about the event and how to submit a story, visit urbanecologycenter.org/storytelling. 🍁

There wasn't much snow for this year's Winterfest in Washington Park, but looking at all the smiles it's clear that no one seemed to mind!

Thank you to **Time Warner/Connect a Million Minds** and **Joy Global** for their generous support of this event!

See more photos from the day on our Facebook page!

SATURDAY
MAY
23
2015

AT THE
URBAN
ECOLOGY CENTER

**TEEN
SURVIVAL
CHALLENGE**

*Will you
accept the
challenge?*

*Join us for a
SURVIVAL CHALLENGE*

- × *hiking*
- × *fire building*
- × *orienteering*
- × *team building*
- × *puzzle solving*
- × *and more!*

for teens

led by teens



FIFTH ANNUAL

GREEN BIRDING CHALLENGE

MAY 9, 2015

Get a team of beginners or experienced birdwatchers and join this fun event to benefit our Research and Citizen Science programs.

Contact Jennifer Callaghan at jcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org or **watch our website for details!**



NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a publication of the **Urban Ecology Center**, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Thanks to the generous annual contributions of 215 foundations, corporations and organizations, 3300 members and many in-kind donors the Center provides safe parks and programs for over 300,000 people per year.

To make a contribution, please see below for the easy to use form, visit our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org or call the Center at (414) 964-8505.

The **Urban Ecology Center** fosters ecological understanding as inspiration for change, neighborhood by neighborhood. Our Environmental Community Centers:

- Provide outdoor science education for urban youth.
- Protect and use public natural areas, making them safe, accessible and vibrant.
- Preserve and enhance these natural areas and their surrounding waters.
- Promote community by offering resources that support learning, volunteerism, stewardship, recreation, and camaraderie.
- Practice and model environmentally responsible behaviors.

LOCATIONS & HOURS

Riverside Park

1500 E. Park Place
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211
(414) 964-8505 Fax: (414) 964-1084
jferschinger@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Monday - Thursday: 9am - 7pm
Friday & Saturday: 9am - 5pm
Sunday: Noon - 5pm

Washington Park

1859 N. 40th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(Mailing address: 4145 W. Lisbon Ave., 53208)
(414) 344-5460 Fax: (414) 344-5462
tevens@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Tuesday - Friday: Noon - 6pm
Saturday: 9am - 5pm

Menomonee Valley

3700 W. Pierce St.
Milwaukee, WI 53215
(414) 431-2940
gholstein@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Tuesday - Friday: Noon - 7pm
Saturday: 9am - 5pm

www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org
Find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!

BECOME A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

By making your gift, you become a contributing member of the Center. Your support provides learning opportunities for thousands of urban youth each year and allows you to enjoy contributing membership benefits at all three of our branches.

Choose a Contributing Member Level:

- Student** - benefits one college student \$30
- Individual** - member plus one guest \$35
- Family** - two adults, and all children or grandchildren under 18 in a household plus one guest. \$45
- Other** - contributions above \$45 receive family level benefits and can help us:
provide a membership for a family in need (\$90)
provide a Summer Camp scholarship (\$200)
restore urban land with native plants (\$500)
Please enter an amount \$_____

Give a gift membership:

Gift memberships are a great way to connect your friends and family to the natural world.

Recipient Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Occasion _____ Deliver by _____

Membership Type: Individual \$35 Family \$45

Send the announcement card to: Me Gift Recipient Card picked up

Total \$_____

Name I would like to remain anonymous

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Charge my Card Check enclosed (payable to **Urban Ecology Center**)

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ 3-digit code _____

Signature _____

Everyone is welcome! Thanks to generous donors we are able to offer need-based scholarships for memberships. For more information and to apply, please contact our Membership Staff at (414) 964-8505 or drop into one of our Centers and speak with our Visitor Services staff.

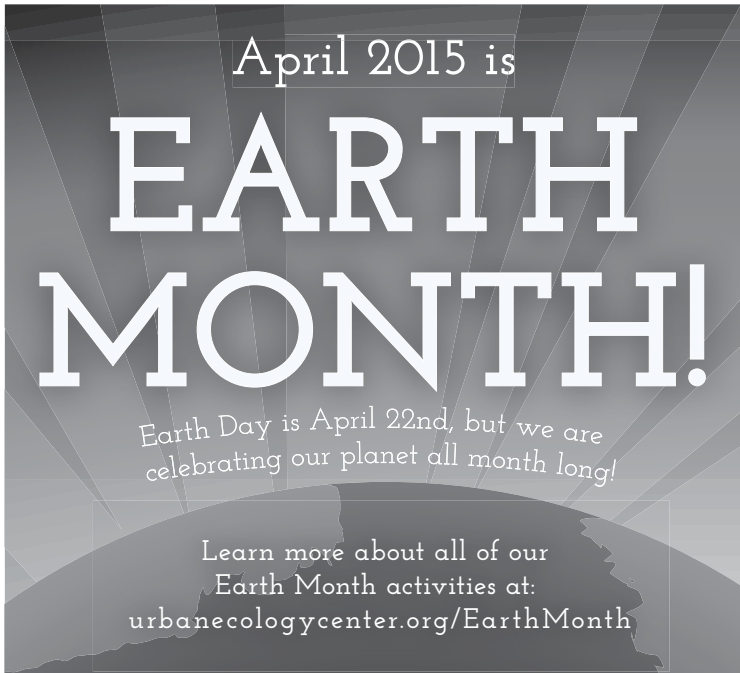
My gift is in honor of or in memory of _____

My employer (list below) has a matching gift program _____

I would like information about estate and planned giving

Please return this form to: Urban Ecology Center, 1500 E. Park Place, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Did you know you can become a contributing member securely online? Visit urbanecologycenter.org and click membership.



FSC logo

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SEE FOR YOURSELF: RESEARCH AT THE URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER

INTRODUCING TERRY EVANS: WASHINGTON PARK BRANCH MANAGER

by Beth Heller,

WILD WASHINGTON PARK

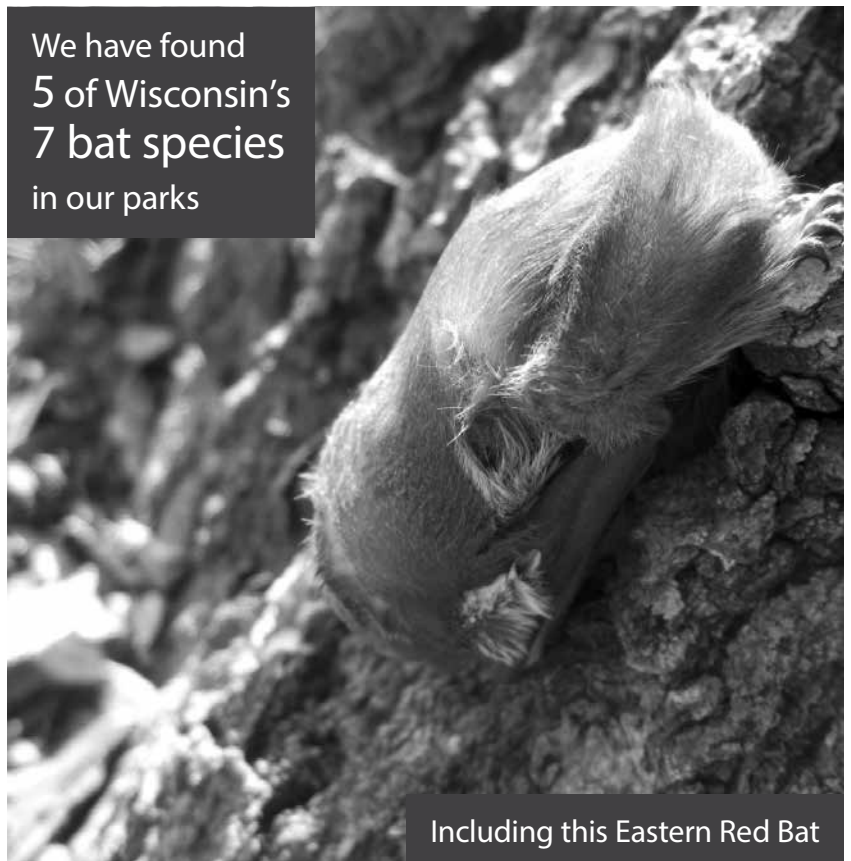
by Tim Vargo

NOT JUST A ROCK

by Miguel Santos

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (NO REALLY, SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED WITH YOUR SUPPORT)

We have found
5 of Wisconsin's
7 bat species
in our parks



Including this Eastern Red Bat