



A Hawk, a Chipmunk and So Much More

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director and
Cassie Mordini, Donor Relations Manager



“Look! Up there, high in the tree, perched on that branch,” an environmental educator directed his class of students to where a Cooper’s Hawk sat in a tree in Riverside Park.

Just moments before they spotted the hawk, a chipmunk had darted across the path in front of them. Out hunting for signs of spring, the class was thrilled at the sighting because chipmunks are hibernators and only awakened from their deep slumber when the weather warms just enough – a true sign of spring!

But now, they realized they were not the only ones on a hunt. The Cooper’s Hawk had snatched the chipmunk up and held him in the grip of her strong talons.

The students watched intently as she munched on her early spring lunch, fascinated by witnessing the food chain playing out in front of them. The educator leading this group snapped a few photos to capture the moment.

Later, when looking back at the photos the educator noticed a small metal band around one of the hawk’s feet. That’s when our Research and Citizen Science team started to investigate. They enlisted the help of Bill Stout, a hawk researcher in the area. They remembered that in 2010, a whole gaggle of mesmerized kids watched in awe as Bill brought down a nestlings Cooper’s Hawks from the nest so they could see as he put a band on their ankles. Could this be one of those nestlings?

After looking up the band number, Bill reported back that the hawk is a female and was banded in Riverside Park in 2010 when she was

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“Seeing” Nature

by Kirstin Anglea, Environmental Education Manager

I was asked recently, “What is your philosophy of education?” This is a question I’ve explored many times throughout my years as an educator. Depending on the crowd, my answer brought warm smiles or a furrowed brow as some consider my philosophy a bit “dreamy” in this data-driven, standards-based era of education.

To me, a meaningful education is a journey of discovery, exploring the mystery and the magic of the world around us and within us. I had the joy of witnessing this outward and inward journey recently while observing two of our talented environmental educators in action.



Students with visual impairments explore the trunk of a fallen oak in Riverside Park.

One day, midst melting snow and muck, a group of young teenagers with visual impairments were exploring our woodlands, hearing a history of the area’s settlers and tasting the running sap of a maple tree. With a little encouragement they began to climb the grand trunk of a fallen oak. Cautiously, each teen inched along the tree’s trunk and sprawling limbs. Smiles widened as they gained confidence in themselves and trust in the outstretched arms of support. One

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Branch Highlights

RIVERSIDE PARK

We are offering a new service this year to make it even easier for you to get out paddling on the water. Starting in June we will be offering a canoe and kayak shuttling service between Riverside Park and different boat launches along the Milwaukee River. Check the website for more information.

WASHINGTON PARK

We’re making connections at Washington Park! Branch Manager Terry Evans has hit the ground running in building collaborative partnerships with neighbors and friends that will result in new program opportunities this summer. Want to get your organization connected? Contact Terry at tevans@urbanecologycenter.org.

MENOMONEE VALLEY

This year, Menomonee Valley is hosting the Center’s annual Teen Survival Challenge (TSC)! This might be one of the most fun events you could possibly imagine, so if you can get together a team of four teens and one adult, sign up! (For more information on the TSC, see pg 5).



The Importance of Paying Attention

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

Being an ecologist, in many ways, is about paying attention. In springtime, the Center is particularly good at this: the staff have their eyes and ears on high alert for that first jubilant trill of a Red-winged Blackbird or the first striped flash of a chipmunk that will let us know the wait for spring is over.

But the everyday observations are just as important as the "firsts." That's how we learn to understand the natural world and notice changes or needs arising in our own ecosystem.

One of the most fun ways to pay attention that we have at the Center is a little-known

program at Menomonee Valley called "Photo Phenology." Each month, our Community Program Coordinator Lainet invites anyone who is interested to join her on a walk through the Valley. They walk the same route each month, using the Center's cameras to take pictures at the same sites. Over the last two years, they have documented amazing seasonal and long-term changes — after all, they started before Three Bridges Park existed! That photographic record is extraordinarily valuable to understanding what is going on in our ecosystem (not to mention it's a beautiful set of photos).

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Many Thanks, Nancy!

This May Nancy Spransy, HR Specialist at the Urban Ecology Center, will retire, capping several decades of her career as a human resources professional.

Nancy first came to the Center nearly a decade ago as a volunteer, joining a team of HR professionals on the HR committee of the Center's Board of Directors. Several years later the Center was preparing to hire the first staff person dedicated solely to the HR function that now supports a team of 120 people, and Nancy stepped up to take on the role. Her

very full plate included putting into place several systems that support staff learning, performance and well-being so that we are able to reach our mission and goals. She is an exceptional HR professional and, perhaps more importantly, a genuine, strong and sweet soul.

We will miss Nancy: her daily walks through the park, her consistent and grounded presence, her support in growing us as people (and as employees, too) and her gentle sense of humor. Best wishes, Nancy! 🌻

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: Kirstin Anglea, Beth Heller, Glenna Holstein, Ken Leinbach and Cassie Mordini.

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DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

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

For Summer Camp

- 1 gal. milk jugs
- Camping water bladders (3-5 gal)
- Clear film canisters w/lids
- Flower stem water vial/holder
- Inner tubes (big tractor size)
- Lego/blocks/K'Nex building toys
- New white t-shirts for kids ages 9ish
- Picture frame (no bigger than 8x11)
- Picture mattes, various sizes
- Spray bottles
- Water bottles (for kids)

Riverside Park

- Anabat detector
- Blenders
- HD quality video camera
- Ice cream buckets with lids
- iPad(s)
- Log splitter
- Terry cotton towels (new or used)
- Trimble Juno GPS

Washington Park

- 8ft folding tables
- Bicycle air pump (stand-up)
- Chopping knives
- Easel, large
- Large crock pots or nescos with lids (3)
- Large, 2-handled pots with lids (3)
- Podium
- Wooden high chairs

Menomonee Valley

- Digital camera
- Field guides
- Field/trail cameras (3)
- GPS units
- LED flashlights (3)
- Lightweight folding tables (2)
- Musical instruments
- Terry cloth rags
- Yoga mats (20)

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

Our Riverside Park building is 10 years old!

We began our hands-on, environmental education school program serving just 12 schools in a double-wide trailer in Riverside Park. Our dream was to serve all the schools in a two-mile radius and have a vibrant, environmentally-based center connecting people with the outdoors. We definitely needed more space (and indoor plumbing!). With the help of many, many friends, we opened our Riverside Park building in September 2004. Thank you to everyone who made this possible. We look forward to the next 10 years

Thanks to the support of over **500 donors** we moved from this double-wide trailer



to this green, multipurpose environmental community center!



With this new building we could finally serve more schools. We grew quickly from 6,000 student visits from 12 schools to **25,000** student visits from **28** schools!

Our building helped thousands of people explore the outdoors as we grew from only 10,000 visits per year to **61,000** visits per year!



Photo credits: Mark J. Heffron, Barbara J. Miner and Jeff McAvoy

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



Park Adventures

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

This year, on my 43rd birthday, my husband gave me one of the best gifts I've ever received. Along with a beautiful map of Milwaukee County Parks, he agreed to visit all of the parks with me before my 44th birthday. That's 142 parks in one year! How awesome is that?

The green scape of Milwaukee County is part of what I love about living here. At the point of writing this, we are only 8% into the year-long adventure. I could easily write a page about each park, the awe and magic of nature we've experienced, their natural attributes and the way people interact with them. Instead, I'm offering a highlight and an invitation for you to visit as many of the 142 parks as you can so you can create your own stories. Why not start with Riverside, Washington and Three Bridges Parks?

Corkscrew tree at Franklin Park / Franklin Savannah State Natural Area:

Franklin Park, a 164-acre piece of wilderness, lies nestled among farm fields in the southwest corner of the county. It is not accessible by car, but after a short search among road-side ditches we found a suitable parking place. We meandered around thorn-laden brambles and found an opening into the forest. Deer trails and creek-side openings eventually led us to a groomed trail which circumscribes the entire park, leading us through oak openings, along serpentine streams and across the undulating topography of an oak savannah.

It was near the stream that we discovered the "Corkscrew Tree." No, this was not a Chinese

corkscrew willow tree, but rather the strangest configuration of what looked like a black cherry tree trunk I'd ever seen. Upon closer inspection, we could see the cause. A vine had climbed the tree and wrapped around the trunk four times before tracking away from the trunk along one of the branches. The amazing part was that the vine was completely embedded in the trunk



of the tree! We could find an entry and exit point, but nothing in between. This means that the tree somehow grew with and around the vine. I can only imagine that it was a dance for survival — the tree trying to keep its nutrient-distributing layers intact and the vine reaching up for an essential bit of sunlight. How lucky were we to have discovered the mysterious tree! Perhaps you can find it, too. If so, let us know how you think the tree ended up that way.

Continuing on, we traversed carefully across log bridges laid over flowing water, feeling like we were in a different world. Leafless trees revealed the shape of an established oak savannah, giving a majestic feel to the late-winter landscape. Prehistoric sounds of Sandhill Cranes rattling their percussive songs filled the air in all directions. Walking in silence, we actually felt part of the forest – the crane calls resonating deep into our own lungs, as we breathed in the moist sweetness of the promise of spring. Coming upon a familiar part of the trail, with boots appropriately muddied, we knew that the adventure was coming to a close. We slowed our gait and made our way back to the car feeling energized by the hike and delighted in having discovered this hidden treasure.

This is just one of the 11 parks we've visited so far. Some are charming little pockets with playgrounds filled with children. Others are vast spaces with walking trails or land groomed for sports like golf, disc golf or soccer. All provide much needed green spaces that support healthy lifestyles for nearby residents. This year, they will provide an affordable, refreshing and fun adventure for me and my husband.

Looking for a gift idea? Please steal this one and enjoy the amazing variety of Milwaukee County's 142 parks!

For more about the year-long adventure, please visit the Urban Ecology Center blog. Next highlight: Kohl Park on the north end of the county. 🍄

"Seeing" Nature

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student, completely blind, ascended the fallen trunk with walking stick in hand! Laughter and words of encouragement were all you heard from the adults and classmates nearby.

These kids were as eager and able as those with clear vision to explore the natural world. This sunny day in the park allowed them to discover the mystery of maple sugaring and a magic within that propelled them past perceived barriers to discover and play in the woods.

I feel honored to work with educators who help kids see a world of possibility, outwardly and within. 🍄

MAY & JUNE

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



fifth annual
**GREEN BIRDING
CHALLENGE**

(RP) SATURDAY, MAY 9 | 6AM 1PM

\$25 per person or \$50 per team depending on challenge selected register at urbanecologycenter.org/greenbirdingchallenge

Join us for a fun day of green birding to support research at the Urban Ecology Center. All experience levels are welcome.

NEW THIS YEAR: Training and Strategy Session
(RP) Saturday, May 2 | 9am-noon
SEE DETAILS ON NEXT PAGE



SATURDAY
**MAY
23**

9am - 2pm

led by teens

for teens

- ✕ hiking
- ✕ fire building
- ✕ puzzles
- ✕ team building
- ✕ biking
- ✕ and more!

Our High School Outdoor Leaders created a survival course just for teens that runs through the urban wilderness of Three Bridges Park. Come learn more about nature, your friends and yourself!

(MV) For teams of four teens and one adult | \$40 per team
Register at urbanecologycenter.org/teensurvivalchallenge

7th Annual
Summer Solstice Soirée

Celebrate nature in the heart of the city on a magical summer evening.

Proceeds directly benefit the students, families, neighborhoods, & natural environments in which we carry out our mission.

Saturday, June 20 | 6:00PM

AT Riverside Park

Tickets are \$150

Please check our website or contact Cassie at cmordini@urbanecologycenter.org or 964-8505, x104 for more information

RIVERSIDE PARK



We are excited to host singer, songwriter, poet and wordsmith **Johnsmith** for a concert on May 15th. Along with guest Dan Sebranek, Johnsmith's music will

fill the night with excellent guitar playing and spirited, heartfelt and uplifting songs. All proceeds benefit the Urban Ecology Center. Also, the **Family Mystery Dinner** is coming up on May 30th – so bring your family and come on by to help us solve a mystery!

— *Jamie Ferschinger,*
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Spring is here and we are planting roots, so let us enjoy! Start with **Exploring Spring Wildflowers** on May 2nd and then help us **Restore Our Outdoor Treasures**

(ROOT) every week as we improve natural habitats for native plants and wildlife. Fly high with **Spring Bird Banding** on May 1st and 20th. I'm sure something is bound to catch your eye.

— *Terry Evans,*
Branch Manager - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



We are ready for summer and we hope you are, too! Come out and plant native plants in Three Bridges Park alongside your neighbors on **Community Planting Day**

on June 6th! Plus, get everything you need for your own native garden at our **Native Plant Sale** on May 30th. And, if you're up for some exciting exploration, join us for the first excursion of our summer-long **Southside Biking Adventure Club** on June 20th!

— *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

Green Birding Challenge Training and Strategy Session

Help your team really soar at the Green Birding Challenge. We'll go over event logistics, basic ID skills and help you strategize before the big day. Binoculars and registration packets will be available. Dress for the weather.

(RP) Sat., May 2 | 9AM - NOON
For Green Birding Challenge participants | Free - donations appreciated

Johnsmith Concert to benefit the Urban Ecology Center

We are excited to host singer, songwriter and poet Johnsmith — along with guest Dan Sebranek, for a night filled with excellent guitar playing and spirited, heartfelt and uplifting songs.

(RP) Fri., May 15 | 7:30 - 9:30PM
For adults | \$20 (Nonmembers: \$25)

Plein Air "Paint Out" Day

In preparation for their October-December show, plein air artists will set up their easels and paint in the neighborhood. You will find them at Three Bridges Park, on the Hank Aaron State Trail, along the Menomonee River and on the streets near the Center. Come and ask questions!

(MV) Sats., May 16 & Jun. 6 | 9AM - 5PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Native Plant Sales

Turn your yard into a sanctuary for native plants! Prairie Future Seed Company will be selling over 60 different species of prairie, savanna and woodland perennials native to Southeast Wisconsin. A portion of the profits will go to the Center.

(RP) Sat., May 23 | 9AM - 1PM
(MV) Sat., May 30 | 9AM - 1PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Family Mystery Dinner:

Clancy Shrew and the Picnic Panic

Our second annual Family Mystery Dinner features Clancy Shrew and his friends solving several mysteries that arise during their picnic. The evening will include a pasta dinner, a performance by costumed characters, outdoor activities and songs around the campfire. Recommended for kids ages 4-8 years old.

(RP) Sat., May 30 | 5 - 8PM
For families | Families of 2-3: \$40 (Nonmembers: \$50) Families of 4-5: \$65 (Nonmembers: \$70) Families of 6+ \$80 (Nonmembers: \$100) Registration is required by May 25th at 5pm

Community Planting Day

Join us in the Menomonee Valley to plant native vegetation in Three Bridges Park. Dress for the weather and bring gloves/trowels if you can. Meet at the Center and we'll head out to the planting site together.

(MV) Sat., Jun. 6 | 9:30 - 11:30AM
For adults and accompanied children ages 6 and up | Free - donations appreciated

Summit Players Present "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in Three Bridges Park

Enjoy The Summit Players adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* designed for performances in parks. Full of character switches, mayhem and hilarity, this free performance will take place near the canoe launch.

(MV) Fri., Jun. 19 | 7 - 8:30PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Paddle Under the Summer Sun

Celebrate the coming of summer with some afternoon fun in the sun! Enjoy canoeing, a campfire and other daylight celebrating activities.

(WP) Sat., Jun. 27 | 1 - 4PM
For adults and accompanied children | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Orientation

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

(RP) Fri., May 1 | 3 - 4PM
(RP) Sat., May 16 | 10:30AM - noon
(RP) Wed., May 27 | 5:30 - 7PM
(RP) Sat., Jun. 6 | 10:30AM - noon
(RP) Wed., Jun. 17 | 10:30AM - noon
(RP) Fri., Jun. 26 | 3 - 4PM

(WP) Sat., May 2 | 1 - 2PM

(WP) Fri., May 22 | 5 - 6PM

(WP) Tue., Jun. 16 | 4:30 - 5PM

(WP) Tue., Jun. 30 | 5 - 6PM

(MV) Tue., May 5 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Tue., May 19 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Tue., Jun. 9 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Thu., Jun. 25 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Volunteer Belayer Training

Are you interested in helping with our rock climbing programs? Attend our volunteer belayer training to learn climbing wall procedure and safety.

(RP) Sun., May 3 | 11AM - 2PM
(RP) Mon., May 18 | 5 - 8PM
(RP) Wed., May 27 | 5 - 8PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding

Join ornithologists and citizen scientists for an early morning of migrating songbird research. This event is highly weather dependent. Please RSVP with Jennifer Callaghan at jcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org before attending.

(WP) Fri., May 1 | 5:15AM - NOON
(MV) Tue., May 5 | 5:15AM - NOON
(RP) Thu., May 14 | 5:15AM - NOON
(WP) Wed., May 20 | 5AM - NOON
(MV) Tue., May 26 | 5AM - NOON
(RP) Thu., May 28 | 5AM - NOON
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Herptile Monitoring Workshop

Discover how you can help our current reptile and amphibian monitoring programs.

(RP) Wed., May 6 | 5 - 6PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Acoustic Bat Monitoring Workshop

Learn bat biology, acoustics and monitoring and then head outside for a survey. Volunteers interested in conducting surveys throughout the year should attend.

(RP) Thu., May 7 | 7 - 9PM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated

Youth Project Squad

Work on equipment repair, plant and animal care, building maintenance and groundskeeping with our staff.

(MV) Sat., May 9 & Jun. 6 | Noon - 2PM
(MV) Thu., May 21 & Jun. 18 | 4 - 6PM
For families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Odonate (Dragonflies and Damselflies) Monitoring Workshop

Discover odonate biology and monitoring techniques and how you can help. Dress for the weather.

(RP) Sat., May 23 | 1 - 2:30pm
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey

Join the Research & Citizen Science team for the 2nd annual North Milwaukee County Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey. We'll start our survey at Schlitz Audubon Nature Center and make our way back to Riverside Park. Plan on a two-hour survey. Bring a flashlight and brush up on your frog calls.

(RP) Tue., May 26 | 7:45 - 10:15PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Mammal Monitoring Workshop

Volunteer for one of the Center's longest running Citizen Science Projects: mammal monitoring! Dress for the weather.

(RP) Wed., Jun. 3 | 5:30 - 6:30pm
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Weekly volunteer opportunities

Find these weekly events on our website

ROOT

Volunteer Papermaking

Volunteer Park Ranger Crew

All Urban Ecology Center branches will be closed on Monday, May 25th. Our Menomonee Valley branch will have shorter open hours (4 - 7pm) on Wednesday, May 13th. Our Riverside Park branch will close at noon on June 20th.

Quick Guide

Family Overnight Camping Trip

Come on an overnight camping trip at Blue Heron Wildlife Preserve. Trip includes a hike, naturalist program and campfire. Transportation available upon request. Tents and some meals provided. Bring your own bedding.

(RP) Sat., Jun. 20, NOON

- Sun., Jun. 21, 11AM

For families |

Families of 2-3: \$60

(Nonmembers: \$70); Families

of 4-5: \$80 (Nonmembers: \$90);

Families of 6 or more: \$100

(Nonmembers \$110)

Registration required by

June 13th at 5pm

Saturday Preschool Series: Spring Discovery

Enjoy exploring nature together. Please dress for playing outdoors. Our theme for May is "Spring Discovery!"

(RP) Sat., May 9 | 10 - 11:30AM

For children ages 3-5 accompanied by

an adult | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers:

\$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Girl Scouts: Animal Tracker

Explore the unique qualities of birds and how they interact in nature.

(MV) Sat., May 9 | 9AM - NOON

For Juniors, grades 4-5 | To register,

please visit www.gswise.org

Taking Board Games to the Next Level

Tired of playing Monopoly? Learn how to play new games that will take your board gaming to the next level!

(RP) Thus., May 14 & 28 | 3:30 - 5PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

Busy Bees

Become a bee detective and practice your bee identifications skills. Learn about our busy pollinators, their life cycle, anatomy and place in our urban environment.

(MV) Sat., May 16 &

Jun. 27 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults and children | \$5

(Nonmembers: \$10)

Snakes of the World

Join us for a fun, hands-on snake presentation. Caregivers of different species of snakes, lizards and other reptiles will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

(MV) Sat., May 16 | 2 - 3PM

For all ages | Free - donation

appreciated

E.B. Garner's Annual Fishing Day

Learn the art of fishing: from water safety to baiting the hook to reeling it in. Some equipment available.

No license required! For questions, contact E.B. Garner at (414) 342-3929.

(WP) Sat., Jun. 6 | 8AM - 4PM

For families | Free -

donations appreciated

Girl Scouts: Introduction to Canoeing

Paddle and steer your canoe under bridges, around an island and across the lagoon. Basic safety and canoeing skills will be taught and practiced.

(WP) Sat., Jun. 27 | 9AM - noon

For Juniors, grades 4-5 | To register,

please visit www.gswise.org

Nature Rangers

Investigate animals and plants, learn about science, create research projects and more! Sign up for either the Monday or Tuesday session.

(RP) Every Mon. or every Tue. |

4 - 5:30PM

For children ages 5 and older |

\$10 (Nonmember: \$15)

Young Scientists Club

From hiking to gardening to helping with research to caring for our animals, every day is a new adventure.

(WP) Every Tue. - Fri. | 4 - 6PM

and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM

For kids ages 7-12 | \$10

annual membership

(MV) Every Tue. & Thu. | 4 - 6PM

and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM

For ages 5-12 | \$10 annual membership

Friday Fishing Club

Come catch the big one in the Menomonee River! Guided fishing lessons for kids and families available from our DNR Angler Educator. All equipment is provided! Fishing licenses required for ages 16 and up.

(MV) Every Fri. starting

Jun. 5 | 4 - 5:30PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

Wednesday Fishing Club

Come catch the big one with guided fishing lessons from either expert E.B. Garner or our DNR Angler Educator. Equipment provided. Fishing licenses required for ages 16 and up.

(WP) Every Wed. starting

Jun. 10 | 4 - 5:30PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

Kids Gardening Club

Learn how to grow a vegetable garden by planting, nurturing and harvesting the Center's garden plot. Whole summer and drop-in rates available.

(RP) Every Thu. starting

May 28 | 4 - 5PM

For kids ages 6-12 | Whole

summer: \$15 (Nonmembers: \$25)

Drop-in rate is \$2 per visit

Animal Feeding

Help feed the Center's resident critters!

(WP) & (MV) Every Sat. | 1PM

(RP) Every Sat. except June 20 | 1PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Come try these self-led activities.

(RP) Self-led, drop-in program

available Every Sat. except

June 20 | 10AM - 4PM

and Every Sun. | 1 - 4PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

What's Inside an Animal?

What allows a rabbit to jump or a bird to fly? How does an owl see so well at night and why do animals eat different food? We will learn about four major systems working in animal bodies and how that relates to ours.

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

Muscular System

(MV) Tue., May 12 | 1 - 3PM

Skeletal System

(WP) Tue., May 26 | 1 - 3PM

Digestive System

(RP) Tue., Jun. 9 | 1 - 3PM

Nervous System

(MV) Tue., Jun. 23 | 1 - 3PM

Some programs fill quickly!
Register today to save your spot!



Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website

www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

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

Birding Programs

Milwaukee County Big Bird Day

Help us count all the birds we can find during this fun monitoring challenge. We'll visit birding hot spots until we drop. Binoculars provided. Bring a lunch.

(RP) Thu., May 7 | 8AM - 5PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Big Biking Bird Day

Get exercise, enjoy fresh air and find a wide array of urban birds. Bring a lunch, a bike and binoculars. If you don't have a bike or binoculars, borrow ours!

(RP) Thu., May 21 | 8AM - 5PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Birding the Milwaukee River

Join us for a paddle on the upper Milwaukee River and look for late spring migrant birds as well as early nesters. Bring a lunch. Canoes and PFD's provided.

(RP) Sat., Jun. 6 | 8AM - 3PM
For adults | \$45 (Nonmembers: \$50)

From Beak to Tail: *All About the Life of Birds* ♿

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

(MV) Tue., Jun. 23 | 6 - 7PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Exploring Spring Wildflowers

Ephemeral spring wildflowers only bloom for a short time. Join us to learn more about these native flowers and help us hunt for them in nearby Jacobus Park! Transportation provided.

(WP) Sat., May 2 | 10AM - NOON
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Learning Garden Series

Edible Garden Planning ♿

We'll give you tips and hands-on experience in the Washington Park Learning Gardens to help you start your own backyard garden.

(WP) Wed., May 6 | 6 - 7:30PM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Edible Garden Maintenance ♿

We'll teach you simple, practical techniques for keeping your garden weeded, mulched, watered and trained to produce lots of good food. Then practice the techniques in our gardens.

(WP) Wed., Jun. 10 | 6 - 7:30PM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Power Bites and Energy Bars ♿

In this demonstration, you will learn how to make simple but nutritionally dense energy bites for camping, lunchbox snacks or afternoon pick-ups. Sample gluten-free and grain-free bites as well as baked vs. no-bake bars.

(RP) Tue., May 5 | 7 - 8PM
For adults | \$12 (Nonmembers: \$18)

De-extinction: *Can and Should We Resurrect Extinct Species?* ♿

Discover the advancing technologies that have made it possible to consider resurrecting extinct species like the Passenger Pigeon. Speaker: Dr. Stanley Temple, Beers-Bascom Professor Emeritus in Conservation, UWM.

(RP) Tue., May 12 | 7 - 8:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Walk and Talk Series

Walk and Talk at Menomonee Valley ♿

Join our branch manager Glenna Holstein and explore both our building and Three Bridges Park — two locations uniquely connected to Milwaukee's past and future.

(MV) Weds., May 6 &
Jun. 3 | NOON - 1PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Walk and Talk at Riverside Park ♿

Explore Riverside Park while getting to know others in the community and learning about the Center, the park, the neighborhood and more.

(RP) Sats., May 9 & Jun. 13 |
10 - 11AM
For everyone | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Registration required by 5pm the day prior to each tour

Photo Phenology ♿

Photograph and draw nature.

(MV) Sats., May 23 & Jun. 27 |
10 - 11:30AM
For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

Making Walking & Bicycling Routine: *Examples from Leading Communities* ♿

Better streets and pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists can attract new workers and tourists and make the community more enjoyable for everyone. Learn strategies U.S. cities have used to increase walking and bicycling. Speaker: Robert J. Schneider, PhD, UWM Department of Urban Planning

(RP) Tue., May 26 | 7 - 8:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Naturalist Series

Fungimentals

Explore Riverside Park to see what fungi we can uncover and witness fungus' important role in the ecosystem. Dress for spending time outdoors.

(RP) Sat., May 2 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Land Stewardship and Docent Volunteers: \$3

Assessing River Health

We'll hop in canoes and test water quality at various spots on the lower Milwaukee River. Learn how to take biotic and abiotic water quality measures and discover how to interpret the results. Dress to get your feet wet.

(RP) Sun., Jun. 28 | 2 - 5PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Land Stewardship and Docent Volunteers: \$3

Green Milwaukee: A History of Our Parks and Open Space ♿

Speaker: John Gurda, Milwaukee Historian. Milwaukee County is blessed with 15,000 acres of public green space — one of the largest holdings in urban America — but it wasn't always that way. Learn the evolution of our stellar park system from the days of tiny public squares and private beer gardens to the abundant challenges of the present.

(MV) Tue., Jun. 9 | 7 - 8:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Hatha Yoga for All Levels

Join Certified Yoga Teacher Lisa Lewis for weekly classical Hatha yoga classes. Drop-in and 8-class pricing options available. Multiple class packages must be purchased by the first day of class.

(RP) Every Thu. | 5:30PM - 6:45PM
For adults and teens | Drop-in class \$15 (Nonmembers \$20); 8-class pass \$80 (Nonmembers \$96)

Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website: urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

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

Archery

Introduction to Basic Target Archery Techniques at Kletzsch Park

Learn archery, get lots of target practice and play some non-competitive games. Attend any session, registration required 48 hours in advance. Equipment provided. Meet at Kletzsch Park archery range.

(RP) Sat., Jun. 06 | 10AM - 1PM

(RP) Thu., Jun. 18 | 4 - 7PM

For adults and children ages 10 and older | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20)

Canoeing

Canoe Camping Adventure

We'll paddle the Milwaukee River, pull off at a campsite overnight, then canoe back to Riverside Park the next morning. Dinner, breakfast and all equipment provided. Registration required by June 6th at 5pm.

(RP) Sat., Jun. 13, 11AM -

Sun., Jun. 14, NOON

For adults and teens accompanied by an adult | \$70 (Nonmembers: \$85)

Full Moon Canoe

With the full moon above and reflected city lights below, we'll paddle down the Milwaukee River. Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse.

(RP) Tue., Jun. 2 | 7:30 - 10PM

For adults and teens | \$20

(Nonmembers: \$25) Registration and non-refundable payment required by 5pm the day before the event

River Rhythms Paddle

Canoe to Pere Marquette Park for the River Rhythms summer music series. Equipment provided. Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse. Registration required 24 hours in advance of each trip. Contact Lesley Sheridan to register non-paddling kids.

(RP) Wed., Jun. 17 | 6:30 - 10PM

For adults and families | Adults:

\$15 (Nonmembers: \$20) Paddling

kids: \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10) Kids

under 10 who do not paddle:

Free - donations appreciated

Canoeing Basics

Learn canoeing techniques on the still, quiet waters of the Washington Park Lagoon. All skill levels welcome.

(WP) Sat., Jun. 20 | 11AM - 12:30PM

For adults and accompanied children |

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

Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Lumberjack Paddle and Brunch

Paddle a scenic stretch of the Milwaukee River and pull off for a family style brunch. Meet at the Hubbard Park parking lot.

(RP) Sun., Jun. 28 | 9AM - 1PM

For adults and teens | \$35

(Nonmembers: \$40) | Registration

and non-refundable payment

required by June 25th at 5pm

(Cost of breakfast included)

Water Safety Course

Take this on-land course and learn how you can borrow our boats for free.

(MV) Every Fri. | 5 - 5:30PM

(WP) Every Sat. | 10 - 10:30AM

(RP) Every Sun. | 1 - 1:30PM

(RP) Every Mon. except

May 25 | 6 - 6:30PM

For adults | Free - donations

appreciated (Nonmembers: \$5) |

Membership required to borrow boats

Climbing

Open Climb

Enjoy climbing our 3-story rock wall. Equipment provided.

(RP) Every Sun. starting May 10 |

2 - 4PM

(RP) Every Wed starting Jun. 3 |

4:30 - 6:30PM

For adults, teens, and families | Adults:

\$10 (Nonmembers: \$12) Children: \$8

(Nonmembers: \$10) Climbing passes

available for in-person purchase.

Free Open Climb

Curious about rock climbing? Come try it out for free!

(RP) Sun., May 3 | 2 - 4PM

(RP) Sun., Jun. 7 | 2 - 4PM

For adults, teens and families |

Free - donations appreciated

College Open Climb

People ages 18 - 22 years old are invited to this special open climbing session. No experience necessary. Equipment provided.

(RP) Tue., Jun. 2 | 6 - 8PM

For adults age 18-22 years | College

discount! \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Open Climb for Women

It's Ladies Night on our 3-story outdoor climbing wall. No experience necessary. Equipment provided.

(RP) Tue., Jun. 9 | 6 - 8PM

For women | Ladies night discount!

\$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Climbing Games Night

Test your climbing skills with fun games during this special open climbing session. No experience necessary. Equipment provided.

(RP) Tue., Jun. 16 | 6 - 8PM

For ages 10 and above | Game night

discount! Adults: \$7 (Nonmembers:

\$10) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

Introduction to Rock Climbing for Adults

First-time and beginning climbers learn basic techniques and then practice on our climbing wall. Equipment provided. Wear closed-toe shoes.

(RP) Mon., Jun. 22 | 5:30 - 7:30pm

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

Biking

Southside Biking Adventure Club

Each ride will feature stops at a park, a south side restaurant, plus whatever else we find along the way! Begin and end at our Menomonee Valley branch. Bring a bike and helmet or borrow ours. Bring a bag lunch or cash to buy lunch.

(MV) Sat., Jun. 20 | 10:30AM - 1PM

For adults, teens and family

with children ages 8 and up |

Adults: \$10 (Nonmembers: \$12)

Children: \$8 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Throwback Series

Visit our website to see all the programs in our Throwback Series.

Tuesday Night Trivia Triathlon

Have fun with friends at our Trivia Triathlon! Leg one: a 1½ mile walk along the East Bank Trail from Riverside Park to the Milwaukee Rowing Club. Leg two: Canoe to a downtown restaurant. Leg three: Team trivia! Then enjoy a starlit paddle back to the Rowing Club. We will drive you back to the Center. A version of this throwback program was last seen in 2008.

(RP) Tue., May 5 6 - 10PM

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

(Food and drinks not included)

Bike the Branches Loop Tour

This thirty-mile circle tour takes riders through the Center's neighborhoods. We'll stop at each branch for exciting updates and visit with neighborhood business owners. Lunch is provided. A version of this throwback program was last seen in 2010.

(RP) Sat., Jun. 27 | 10AM - 3PM

For adults and teens | \$30

(Nonmembers: \$40) Registration

required by June 24th

INTEREST GROUPS

Ojibwe Language Study Group

(RP) Every Mon. except

May 25 | 6 - 8PM

Community Vegan Potluck

(RP) Tues., May 5 &

Jun. 2 | 6:30 - 8PM

Photo Club

(RP) Thus., May 7 &

Jun. 4 | 6:30 - 9PM

350.org General Meeting

(RP) Tues. May 12 &

Jun. 9 | 7 - 8:30PM

Friends of Real Food: Potluck Dinner and Program

(RP) Wed., May 13 | 6 - 8PM

Faith and Ecology

(RP) Tues., May 19 &

Jun. 16 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers

(RP) Thus., May 14 &

Jun. 11 | 7 - 8:30PM

Echo Poets

(RP) Thus., May 14 &

Jun. 11 | 7 - 8:30PM

Transition Milwaukee: All City Hub Meeting

(RP) Mon., Jun. 22 | 6:30 - 8:30PM

Good Food Book Club

(RP) Tue., Jun. 16 | 7 - 8PM

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. | 8am

(WP) Every Wed. | 8am

(RP) Every Thu. | 8am

A Hawk, a Chipmunk and So Much More

continued from page 1

just one year old. It was one of those nestlings! And with this sighting, they were able to update the data on the now mature female hawk and add another chapter to her story.

An amazing thing happened that day. A group of young students were ecstatic to witness something fairly rare, and in doing so, they learned a very important lesson about our natural world. That's the essence of the Urban Ecology Center – moments of amazing experiential education in action, dedicated



Photo credit: Matt Flower

ecological analysis, astute awareness of important detail, inspired learning and curiosity. We might have inspired a few scientists that day!

Just as in the food chain, everything in nature is related and depends upon something else to survive. These special moments are made possible by your generosity and commitment to environmental education. Thank you for inspiring future scientists! 🌿

The Importance of Paying Attention

continued from page 2

But it isn't just the birds and plants we want to pay attention to. It's just as important for us to understand what is happening in our neighborhoods, to notice the needs and changes in the human part of our ecosystems.

I was thrilled back in February at how many people showed up at our Menomonee Valley branch's Community Forums to share their thoughts, ideas and wisdom about the Center

and how we can fit into the fabric of our community. I wish I could share the 15 pages of notes from the forums with you here — it's fascinating and exciting stuff! If you're curious, come ask me, I'm happy to share. Every staff person at the Menomonee Valley branch has a goal for this year to find at least one way to respond to some of the feedback we received during our forums, so you'll be seeing many of the fruits of that effort soon.

So, how can you start to pay attention? I would encourage you to check out the Photo Phenology programs happening May 23rd and June 27th. Not only do you get a lovely walk with one of the most delightful gals you'll ever meet — you get to hone your "paying attention" skills and contribute to a lasting record for the Menomonee Valley. 🌿

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



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.

7th Annual
*Summer
Solstice Soirée*

Celebrate nature in the heart of the city
on a magical summer evening.

Saturday, June 20 | 6:00PM
AT Riverside Park

FSC logo

IN THIS ISSUE

A HAWK, A CHIPMUNK AND SO MUCH MORE

by Ken Leinbach and Cassie Mordini

"Look! Up there, high in the tree, perched on that branch," an environmental educator directed his class of students to where a Cooper's Hawk sat in a tree in Riverside Park.

"SEEING" NATURE

by Kirstin Anglea

To me, a meaningful education is a journey of discovery; exploring the mystery and the magic of the world around us and within us.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAYING ATTENTION

by Glenna Holstein

Being an ecologist, in many ways, is about paying attention.

PARK ADVENTURES

by Beth Heller,

This year, on my 43rd birthday, my husband gave me one of the best gifts I've ever received...he agreed to visit all of the parks with me before my 44th birthday.

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



Our Riverside Park building
is 10 years old!