



Our Piece of the Puzzle

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

Have you ever tried to put a puzzle together without looking at the picture on the box? You spend a lot of time trying to figure out if the blue piece is sky or water. Without seeing the whole picture you don't understand how that piece fits in.

I was reminded of this idea during a recent conversation with an inquisitive young man who was trying to understand what the Center was all about. "Why on earth are you in the city?" he asked. "I mean, what kind of nature can you find there?" It seemed strange to him that we work in the most densely populated part of Wisconsin instead of the north woods. For him "nature" is out there, far away, and an ecology center should be out there as well. He was only seeing one part of the picture.

We are so grateful for the centers that teach in "out there" places. In fact, some of us began our environmental careers in pristine woods. But, as I explained to him, we claim a different piece of the puzzle — a part of the whole that we gratefully and enthusiastically embrace!

Our piece of the puzzle works with the other pieces to expand the definition of "nature center" to include "community center," "safe place," and "living room." Where others see brownfields, vacant lots and concrete, we see potential and life — and lots of it! We design our indoor and outdoor spaces to be welcoming, safe places for people and animals alike. Kids and teens stop by after school just to hang out. Animals have returned to our restored lands. We want everyone to think of us as home.

I love visiting all of our branches. Each is a beehive of activity, with volunteers of all ages and stripes happily engaged in stewarding their shared greenspace. By having our branches embedded in the community in which we live, we develop long-lasting partnerships

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Milwaukee County Parks Exploration Complete!

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

Have you ever been a tourist in your own town? Taking a staycation or planning day trips can be a great way to gain an even deeper appreciation for the jewels we have. My suggestion? Spend some time in Milwaukee County's vast park system. You can start at our Riverside or Washington Park branches by going on a guided tour (look in the program section for details).



My husband and I recently completed a year-long local "tourist" adventure of learning, exploration and fun. It began as a unique birthday gift — a beautiful print of the Milwaukee County Parks with the promise we'd explore all 142 parks together before my next birthday. Our goal was to understand the "essence" of each park we visited — sometimes while hiking for hours across a variety of habitats and sometimes while taking a 15-minute stroll along a sidewalk. No matter the size, every single one was active. Even in the freezing cold days of winter people were walking dogs, playing on playgrounds, gathering with friends, practicing sports and getting exercise. There is no question in my mind that parks are at the heart of our city's neighborhoods, where people come together to enjoy each other's company.

Here are a few highlights of our experiences. For the full story, please visit the Urban Ecology Center's blog.

Our favorite natural encounters included hiking the bluffs and forests of Grant and Warnimont Parks and the Seven Bridges Trail

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Branch Highlights



RIVERSIDE PARK

The Urban Ecology Center in Riverside Park will be closed on Monday, May 30th for the Memorial Day holiday. Also, we will be closing at noon on June 18th in preparation of our Summer Solstice Soirée. Riverside Park itself and the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum will be open. Sorry for any inconvenience.



WASHINGTON PARK

It is time to take to the water! Come see our Visitor Services Specialist Terrance Davis and learn how members who have taken a water safety class can check out a canoe or kayak. Never canoed before? Come to a Beginning Canoeing class on May 21st, 25 or June 29 and get started. Great times are waiting out on the water!



MENOMONEE VALLEY

Please join us for Community Planting Day in the Valley on June 11! This day has been a community tradition since before Three Bridges Park even existed — help us carry it on! We'll spend the morning planting native vegetation in the park and then celebrate with some tasty treats from a local bakery!



Join the Conversation!

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

This article is in two languages to ensure that our English and Spanish speaking communities receive our invitation to participate in our Community Forums. Both forums will be facilitated bilingually. We have many bilingual employees at our Menomonee Valley branch who can assist visitors who speak Spanish.

Several times a week, I get to hear new ideas — from members, visitors or Young Scientists. Each person who participates at the Urban Ecology Center has experiences, knowledge and ideas to share, and one of my favorite parts of my job is getting the chance to hear the ideas from our community.

As you can imagine, some of my favorite events at the Center are our Community Forums—meetings that are open to the public, whose intent is to give our whole

community the opportunity to share their opinions and ideas, and for our staff to have the chance to connect with community members and listen to these opinions and ideas.

This spring at our Menomonee Valley branch, we will have two opportunities to participate in a **Community Forum: Monday, May 9th from 11:30am-noon, and Tuesday May 10th from 6 -7:30pm.** You can register on our website if you would like, but it is not necessary to register in advance. At each forum, we want to hear about your experiences and ideas about our programs. We will also share a meal together as we get to know one another. Each forum will also be followed by a brief, optional tour of the building and the park.

We hope to see you at one of the Community Forums — come join the conversation! 🌱

¡Únase a la conversación!

by Glenna Holstein, Gerente del centro Menomonee Valley

Queríamos incluir este artículo en ambos idiomas, inglés y español, para asegurar que nuestras comunidades angloparlantes y hispanohablantes pueden recibir nuestra invitación de participar en los Foros Comunitarios. Los dos foros se facilitarán de manera bilingüe. Todavía no tenemos el espacio para incluir artículos bilingües en cada boletín, pero queremos continuar aumentando nuestro uso del español. Mientras tanto, contamos con muchos empleados bilingües en nuestro edificio de Menomonee Valley que pueden ayudar a los visitantes que hablan español.

Varias veces a la semana, escucho nuevas ideas de miembros del Centro, visitantes, y de jóvenes científicos. Cada persona que participa en el Urban Ecology Center tiene experiencias, conocimiento e ideas que compartir, y una de las partes favoritas de mi trabajo es tener la oportunidad de escuchar las ideas de nuestra comunidad.

Como pueden imaginarse unos de mis eventos preferidos son los Foros Comunitarios. Los cuales son reuniones que están abiertas al público, donde la intención es brindar la oportunidad a toda la comunidad de compartir sus opiniones e ideas, y para que también nuestros empleados puedan conectar más con la comunidad y conocer sus intereses.

Durante esta primavera, en Menomonee Valley, tendremos dos oportunidades para participar en el **Foro Comunitario: el lunes, 9 de Mayo desde las 11:30 a.m. a la 1 p.m., y también el martes, 10 de Mayo desde las 6 a las 7:30 p.m.** Puede registrarse en nuestra página web si lo desea, pero no es necesario. En cada foro, queremos escuchar sus experiencias e ideas sobre nuestros programas, y mientras conversamos compartiremos una comida. Cada foro se acompañará de un breve paseo por el edificio y por el parque. ¡Esperamos verlo y que se una a la conversación! 🌱



DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

- New this year! **Stand up paddle boards** will be available through the equipment lending benefit, **thanks to Bel Air Cantina's Powered by Tacos program.** Stay tuned for details this summer!



- **Bike to Work Week is June 4-10!** Try commuting by bike this June. We'll have special commuter stations at our Riverside Park and Menomonee Valley branches. Stop by for a treat and a coffee to start your day!
- **Explore the Caribbean Island of Grenada with Urban Ecology Center!** Travel with us to the "Land of Spice"! Grenada is the largest island in the Grenadines chain of 32 islands and cays.

This fall eco-excursion will journey through beautiful beaches, notable coral reefs, pristine lakes and waterfalls! We will also spend time doing field research with scientists from the Milwaukee County Zoo who have been working there for more than a decade studying endangered tree boas and tree frogs. We will visit the inspiring Mt. Hartman Grenada Dove Sanctuary and enjoy the local culture as we explore a local rum distillery, St. George's markets and La Sagesse tropical gardens. We'll cap off the adventure with a festive Gouyave Fish Fry as local musicians and merchants add to the lively ambiance.

A portion of the trip's cost will support local conservation efforts. Keep an eye on the Urban Ecology Center Eco-Travel webpage for more details coming in June!

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

Getting out and active on an **URBAN ADVENTURE!**

It's time to explore! Our Urban Adventures programs will have you paddling, pedaling and climbing all summer long. Get into nature, there's so much life!

Thanks to your support, kids and adults in the city can canoe, bike or climb — often for the first time. What a great way to be introduced to nature!

From the Oak Leaf Trail to the Hank Aaron State Trail, over **1,000** people biked with us last fiscal year!



Over **3,700** participants canoed with us last fiscal year.



We've scaled **Mount Everest** without leaving Milwaukee!

Last fiscal year **1,563** participants climbed our 40-foot climbing wall. That's **62,520 feet** in total — over two times the height of Mount Everest!



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

Parks Exploration

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on December 30th. On this somewhat mild winter day we saw crystal icicles hanging from trees, striking views of Lake Michigan, a sky rich with colors of a low-hanging sun, rounded multicolored stones emerging from snow and ice along the shore — natural features that highlight Milwaukee’s beautiful location along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

On the west side, at Servite Park Preserve, we found a little natural oasis. Bird song reverberated through a little wetland, fox scat indicated the presence of some wildlife, and the looping trail took only about 15 minutes to walk.

Snapshots:

- A chorus of frogs painted a springtime soundscape in Bender Park in early April.
- We heard the echoing calls of a Great-Horned Owl at sunset in Wilson Park.

Our Piece of the Puzzle

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with residents, businesses and nonprofits. Together we are addressing issues that directly affect our neighborhoods. So much life from our neighbors in action!

And like the “out there” ecology centers, we’re having an impact on the land. Plants and animals no one expects to find in the city are returning. We are seeing salamanders where we’ve never seen them before. Birds which have by passed the city in the past are stopping to nest. Beavers are back in force on our reclaimed rivers. Nature is confirming our work.

There is something about being amidst so much life, the life that nature provides, which soothes our soul. Research shows over and over again the positive change that occurs when people are exposed to the natural environment on a regular basis. A recent study in Japan

- In Algonquin Park we had close views of a Cooper’s Hawk and Hairy Woodpecker.
- We hiked around Mallard Lake in Whitnall Park and found the trail lined with beautiful Jack-in-the-Pulpit wildflowers.
- In Kohl Park we explored beautiful hiking trails traversing a variety of terrain, then crossed over to Mequon Nature Preserve and its lookout tower.

Have you had an adventure in the parks? If not, why not start at one of our Urban Ecology Center branches, then venture out from there. Hopefully, together we will inspire more people to get out, get exercise and get energized by this beautiful green city. 🌿

showed repeatedly that a walk in nature demonstrably reduces stress more than an equally distanced walk in a highly urbanized setting. A study in Finland produced the same results. Another shows that time in nature results in people being more generous and kind. Early analyses of EEG readings done by David Strayer of the University of Utah support the theory that hiking in nature seems to rest people’s attention and “lets the prefrontal cortex recover.” The result? “Bursts in creativity, problem-solving, and feelings of well-being.”

This is what an Urban Ecology Center offers and this is why our piece of the puzzle is so essential. We’re offering opportunities to steward, learn from and experience nature “near-by” — in the very neighborhoods in which we live. And the result: A stress-free, happy, attentive, creative, kind, generous, life-filled city! 🌿



New Summer Camps!

by Alex LaBonte, Environmental Educator

Our day-long and overnight Summer Camps can truly be a special time for kids to explore. This year I’m especially excited to announce two new camps: Outdoor Adventures for teens and Pathfinders for kids with special needs.

Outdoor Adventures is a week-long camp for youth who have completed the 9th grade, focused on developing outdoor skills, self-awareness and environmental stewardship. In addition, there will be a significant portion of the camp focused on team building and reflection time that will benefit their growth as individuals. The camp will run from August 8-12th and includes a three-night camping trip to Governor Dodge State Park in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. We will spend the first day of camp learning essential outdoor skills in preparation for the trip. We’ll spend the next three days camping, paddling, hiking, swimming and more! The cost is \$350 for Center members and \$400 for nonmembers.

Pathfinders is an adventure-based camp for 5th-8th graders who have mild to moderate intellectual and physical disabilities and minimal mobility issues. We will be exploring along the Milwaukee River and the shores of Lake Michigan through activities such as hiking, paddling, rock climbing and more! Working with special education professionals from one of our partnering schools, we will be able to spend more one-on-one time with campers than in our traditional camps for a safe, positive outdoor experience. Pathfinders will run from July 11th-15th, and costs \$235 for Center members and \$285 for nonmembers.

Thanks to our generous donors, we are able to offer need-based scholarships for children to attend camp. Plus, scholarships include a one-year family membership!

To register visit urbanecologycenter.org/summercamp. If you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to contact Kirstin Anglea at kanglea@urbanecologycenter.org. 🌿

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS



Create a team and spend a morning with the birds!

Saturday, May 14
Teams start at 6:30am or 8:30am

The Green Birding Challenge is a team bird count to benefit the Urban Ecology Center's Research programs

For more info or to register visit:
urbanecologycenter.org/greenbirdingchallenge.



Summer Solstice Soirée
the Urban Ecology Center's 9th annual event

Explore & Celebrate
Milwaukee's Hidden Gem

Proceeds directly benefit the students, families and parks in which we carry out our mission.

**Saturday,
June 18**

6:00 pm
Riverside Park
Tickets: \$150

Check our website or contact
Amy LaMacchia at (414)
964-8505 for more info.

Native Landscaping Open House

Talk to local landscaping and native plant professionals and get started with native landscaping, then purchase native plants best suited for your yard! Be sure to attend a presentation to learn practical know-how.

Sat., May 21 | 10AM - 1PM

For adults | Free - donations appreciated

Native Plant Sale - Riverside Park

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 from the sale will benefit the Center.

Sat., Jun. 11 | 9AM - 1PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Mystery Dinner:

*The Case of the
Mosquito Madness*

Why there are so many mosquitos? Clancy Shrew and his friends will find out! Enjoy a pasta dinner, a short performance by costumed characters, outdoor activities and songs around a campfire. Register by May 30th at 5pm.

Sat., Jun. 4 | 5 - 8PM

For families with kids ages 4-8 years old | Adults: \$12 (Nonmembers: \$15)
Children: \$8 (Nonmembers: \$10)
Kids under 2 years old are free

Saturday Preschool Series

Bring your youngsters and enjoy exploring nature together. Each session will include a mix of indoor and outdoor play, songs and stories.

Birds: Sat., May 14 | 10:30 - 11:30AM

Wildlife in Your Backyard:

Sat., Jun. 11 | 10:30 - 11:30AM
For children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Springtime Encounters with Nature

We'll look for emerging wildflowers, returning migratory birds or just have fun with water and more! Suited for kids ages 5-8.

Sat., May 7 | 10AM - NOON

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

Nature Rangers

Sign up for either the Monday or Tuesday session.

Every Mon. except May 30 or every Tue. | 4 - 5:30PM
For children ages 5 and older | \$10 (Nonmember: \$15)

Animal Feeding

Every Sat. except June 18 | 1PM
For everyone | Free

ADULT PROGRAMS

Spring Naturalist Workshop

Through indoor and outdoor activities, we'll explore spring wildflowers, bird watching, phenology, water movement and more.

Tue., May 3 | 5 - 7:30PM

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

Big Green Birding Bike Ride!

Join this eco-friendly bird count. Bring a lunch, a bike and binoculars. Don't have a bike or binoculars? Borrow ours!

Thu., May 12 | 8AM - 5PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

How Parasites Affect Plumage in Migratory Birds

Many male birds use their plumage to attract a mate. But certain parasites can negatively affect their ability to develop elaborate plumage. This is usually common in migrating birds. Learn how Rebecca Schneider, UWM Biological Science Department, compared blood parasite infection of Wisconsin and Florida Common Yellowthroats and found surprising results. Is there hope for infected male birds after all?

Tue., May 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

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

Milwaukee County Big Bird Day

Help us count as many birds as we can find in a single day! Binoculars provided. Bring a lunch.

Tue., May 17 | 5AM - 3PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Walk and Talk Series

Explore our building and parks on a guided tour. Registration required by 5pm the day prior to each tour.

Sats., May 28 & Jun. 25 | 10 - 11AM

For everyone | Free with New Member Certificate! \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Emerald Ash Borer Workshop

Discover the impacts of the Emerald Ash Borer on Wisconsin forests and learn to identify infested trees.

Sat., Jun. 11 | 10AM - NOON

For adults | Free

Early Morning Birdwalks

Every Thu. | 8AM

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

1 ONLINE:
www.urbanecologycenter.org

2 BY PHONE:
(414) 964-8505

3 IN PERSON:
Just stop by! 1500 E. Park Pl.

URBAN ADVENTURES

Introduction to Fly Fishing - Four part series

Learn recreational fly-fishing from Southeastern Wisconsin's Trout Unlimited. Register by June 12th.

Weds., June 15, 22 & 29 | 6 - 8PM
and Sat., June 25 | 10AM - NOON
For adults and teens | \$30
(Nonmembers: \$35) for the four class series

Biking

Bike Maintenance and Repair Series

For beginner to intermediate skill levels. Bring a bike, or use one of ours.

Derailleurs, Headsets and Handlebars

Register by April 26th.

Sun., May 1 | 12:30 - 3PM
For adults and teens | \$20
(Nonmembers: \$25)

Bottom Bracket, Seatpost and Saddles, Bike Cleaning

Register by May 10th.

Sun., May 15 | 12:30 - 3PM
For adults and teens | \$20
(Nonmembers: \$25)

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Orientation

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

Fri., May 6 | 3 - 4:30PM
Sat., May 21 | 10:30AM - NOON
Wed., May 25 | 5:30 - 7PM
Wed., Jun. 8 | 5:30 - 7PM
Tue., Jun. 21 | 10:30AM - NOON
Sat., Jun. 25 | 10:30AM - NOON

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding (Riverside Park)

Join us as we study migratory birds. Highly weather dependent. Please RSVP with Jennifer Callaghan at jcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org before attending.

Thu., May 5 | 5:15AM - 1PM
Thu., May 19 | 5AM - 1PM
For adults, teens and accompanied children | Free - donations appreciated

Downtown Excursion Canoe and Kayak Shuttle

Enjoy paddling without the hassle of hauling equipment. Launch from and return to the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse or launch from the Boathouse and we will pick you up at the harbor. Equipment included. Nonrefundable registration and completion of Water Safety required.

Every Sat. starting Jun. 11 and Every Fri. starting Jun. 24
For Urban Ecology Center members only | \$15 per boat

Water Safety Course

Borrow our canoes and kayaks for free! Become a contributing member, then take this 45-minute, on-land course.

Every Sun. | 1 - 1:45PM
Every Mon. except May 30 | 6 - 6:45PM

For adults | Free - donations appreciated | Membership required to borrow boats

Canoeing/Kayaking

Full Moon Canoe

Canoe the Milwaukee River under the full moon. Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse. Registration and non-refundable payment required by June 19th at 5pm.

Mon., Jun. 20 | 7:30 - 10PM
For adults and teens | \$20
(Nonmembers: \$25)

Lumberjack Paddle and Brunch

Paddle the river then pull off for brunch at the rustic Hubbard Park Lodge. Meet in the Lodge's lot. Breakfast included. Non-refundable payment required by June 25th at 5pm.

Sun., Jun. 26 | 9AM - 1PM
For adults and teens | \$35
(Nonmembers: \$40)

River Rhythms Paddle

Canoe to the River Rhythms music series. Equipment provided. Meet at the Rowing Club Boathouse. Registration required by June 28th. To register non-paddling kids, contact Lesley at (414) 964-8505.

Wed., Jun. 29 | 6:30 - 10PM
For adults and families | Adults: \$10
(Nonmembers: \$15) Paddling kids: \$5
(Nonmembers: \$7) Non-paddling kids under 10: Free - donations appreciated

Climbing

Free Open Climb

You will receive one free climb, more if time allows. First come, first served.

Sun., May 1 & Jun. 5 | 2 - 4PM
For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

Open Climb

Every Sun. | 2 - 4PM
For adults, teens, and families | Adults: \$10 (Nonmembers: \$12) Children: \$8 (Nonmembers: \$10) Climbing passes available for in-person purchase

Climbing Games Night

No experience necessary. Equipment is provided.

Tue., Jun. 14 | 5:30 - 7:30PM
For ages 8 and above | Game night discount! Adults: \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

Open Climb for Women

No experience necessary. Equipment is provided.

Tue., Jun. 28 | 6 - 7:30PM
For women | Ladies night discount! \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Volunteer Belayer Training

Learn climbing wall procedure and safety to help our participants enjoy the experience of climbing.

Sun., May 8 | 11:30AM - 2PM
Wed., May 11 | 6 - 8:30PM
Wed., Jun. 8 | 6 - 8:30PM
Sun., Jun. 12 | 11:30AM - 2PM
For adults and teens | Free

Help-wanted: Introduction to our Citizen Science Programs

Learn what studies we have and how you can get involved.

Mon., May 16 | 5:30 - 7PM
For adults | Free

ROOT Riverside Park

Every Tue. | 9 - 11AM & 2 - 4PM
Every Fri. May 21 | 2 - 4PM
Every 1st and 3rd Sat. except June 10 | 9:30 - 11AM
For adults, families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

INTEREST GROUPS

Ojibwe Language Study Group

Every Mon. except May 30 | 6 - 8PM

Community Vegan Potluck

Tues., May 3 & Jun. 7 | 6:30 - 8PM

Urban Echo Poets

Thurs., May 5 & Jun. 9 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers

Thurs., May 12 & Jun. 9 | 7 - 8:30PM

Photo Club

Thurs., May 12 & Jun. 9 | 6:30 - 9PM

350.org General Meeting

Tues. May 10 & Jun. 14 | 7 - 8:30PM

Faith and Ecology

Tues., May 17 & Jun. 21 | 7 - 8:30PM

Friends of Real Food: Potluck Dinner and Program

Thu., May 19 | 6 - 8PM

Friends of Real Food Book Club: Discussion and Potluck

Thu., Jun. 16 | 7 - 8PM

Riverside Park branch will be closed on May 30 and June 10. The branch will be closing at noon on June 18.



MENOMONEE VALLEY

Programs and Events

MAY & JUNE

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS

E.B. Garner's Annual Fishing Day

Learn the art of fishing at this yearly extravaganza. Some equipment available. For questions, please contact E.B. Garner at (414) 342-3929.

Sat., Jun. 4 | 9AM - 3PM
For families | Free - donations appreciated

Paddle Under the Summer Sun

Celebrate the coming of summer with some afternoon fun in the sun! Enjoy guided canoeing and family fun on our island.

Sat., Jun. 25 | 1 - 4PM
For adults and accompanied children | Adults: \$6
(Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Wednesday Fishing Club

Catch the big one with fishing lessons from expert E.B. Garner or our DNR Angler Educator. Equipment provided! Licenses required for ages 16 and up.

Weds., Jun. 15, 22 & 29 | 4 - 5:30PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Young Scientists Club

Do you know a child who is interested in science and nature? Send them to Washington Park!

Every Tue. - Fri. | 4 - 6PM
and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM
For kids ages 7-12 | \$10 annual membership

Exploring Nature Through Literature

Join us for an afternoon of fun and discovery with the Washington Park Library! We'll start with a science and nature lesson at the library, then head over to Washington Park and use what we've learned to explore. For children of all ages, parents welcome!

Wed., Jun. 22 | 1 - 3PM
For all ages | Free - donations appreciated

Animal Feeding

Help feed our resident animals!
Every Sat. | 1PM
For everyone | Free

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Macroinvertebrates

Wrap up the school year by exploring Macroinvertebrate species in the Menomonee River and the Washington Park lagoon. Join us as we compare the differences and what it means about our water.

Class Schedule:

Menomonee Valley
Tue., May 3 | 1-3pm
Washington Park
Tuesday, May 17 | 1-3pm
For children ages 5 and older | \$7 (Nonmember: \$10)

VOLUNTEERS

Washington Park Volunteer Orientation

Want to spend more time outside? Looking to work alongside ecologically-minded people? Interested in sharing your gifts with the community? Come find out how you can contribute your time and talents to the Urban Ecology Center.

Wed., May 11 | 5:30 - 6:30PM
Sat., May 21 | 10:30 - 11:30PM
Sat., Jun. 11 | 10:30PM - 11:30PM
Wed., Jun. 15 | 5:30 - 6:30PM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding

Join the Center's Citizen Science bird banding team as they study migratory birds on their way north for the summer and experience the rush of holding a wild bird in your hands. This event is highly weather dependent. Please RSVP with Jennifer Callaghan at jjcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org before attending.

Wed., May 4 | 5:15AM - 1PM
Wed., May 11 | 5AM - 1PM
For adults, teens and accompanied children | Free - donations appreciated

ROOT Washington Park

Join us as we work to improve natural habitat for native plants and wildlife.

Every Wed. in May | 9 - 11AM
Every Thu. starting
Jun. 2 | 3:30 - 5:30PM
Every Fri. starting Jun. 3 | 9 - 11AM
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Fixin' Facilities

Come help maintain our building, vehicles, park and playground!
Every Thu. | 10AM - NOON
Every 1st and 4th Sat. | 1 - 3PM
For everyone, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult | Free - donations appreciated

Park Ranger Crew

Dress for the weather and join other volunteers as we walk through the park picking up trash and noting any maintenance needs.
Every Sat. | 10AM - NOON
For everyone, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult | Free - donations appreciated



Washington Park branch will be closed on June 10.

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

1 **ONLINE:**
www.urbanecologycenter.org

2 **BY PHONE:**
(414) 344-5460

3 **IN PERSON:**
Just stop by! 1859 N. 40th St.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Fit 4 You Group Fitness Sessions

Hosted by Fit 4 You Traveling Trainer
Experience fitness on a whole new level with dynamic stretching, endurance training, obstacle courses and more! Work at your own pace and learn exercises that you can do at home.

Every Tue. | 6 - 7:30PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated (Nonmembers: \$5)

Mend It, Don't Toss It ♿

Plenty of useful garments get thrown away due to simple damage that's easy to repair. Mending saves money, cuts down on waste and keeps your favorite pants and sweaters in great shape. Join us as we explore simple techniques for sewing and patching common clothing items. If you have a favorite item you'd love to fix, bring it in and we'll show you how to fix it!

Sat., May 14 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and accompanied children |
Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)
Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Walk and Talk Series ♿

Join our Branch Manager, Terry, to explore both our building and Washington Park.

Wed., May 18 & Jun.
15 | 4:30 - 5:30PM
For everyone | Free
donations appreciated

Exploring Spring Wildflowers

Ephemeral spring wildflowers bloom for only a short time. Learn more about these native flowers and help us hunt for them in nearby Jacobus Park! Transportation provided - meet at our Washington Park branch.

Wed., May 11 | 6 - 8PM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Coloring Sustainability ♿

Presented by the Washington Heights Neighborhood Association Green Committee

Ever wonder what this adult coloring craze is all about? Want to find out how the simple act of coloring can support sustainability in our own community? No matter your age or degree of artistic ability or inability, kick back with us for an afternoon of peace-filled coloring. We will have coloring pages and supplies, treats and prizes to celebrate World Fair Trade Day.

Sat., May 14 | 1 - 4PM
For adults and teens | Free -
donations appreciated

Early Morning Birdwalks

Every Wed. | 8AM
For adults | Free

Holistic Wellness Counsel ♿

Wellness is a whole-body, life-long endeavor. This 4-part series will help you explore ways to improve your physical and mental wellness. Join experts for interactive fun sessions for all ages. Learn about healthy eating from a nutrition expert! Get the latest moves from a Zumba instructor! Learn about the power of meditation from a meditation guru! Express yourself through art therapy! Snacks provided.

Wed., May 18 & Tue.,
Jun. 14 | 5 - 7:30PM
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

Pie Making 101: From the Crust Up ♿

Hosted by Community Pie
Community Pie, one of our valued neighborhood partners, is devoted to teaching people of all ages how to prepare delicious desserts using fruit from their own neighborhood. Join us for a hands-on demonstration of simple pie baking skills and leave with a pie to bake at home! Please register by Thursday, May 19th.

Sat., May 21 | 1 - 3PM
For adults and accompanied children |
Adults: \$10 (Nonmembers: \$12)
Children: \$8 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Meditation and Mindfulness ♿

Meditation trains us to be more in the moment, to be aware and involved: whether that's at work, on our own, or at home with our loved ones. Come explore different meditation approaches and everyday mindfulness techniques, to cultivate awareness and maintain mental wellness. We'll use teachings based on compassion, forgiveness, gratitude and contemplative thought to guide us on a journey of self-awareness and discovery.

Wed., Jun. 15 | 7 - 8:30PM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

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

Join us for an in-depth look into the wonders of bird ecology, conservation and behavior. This is an ongoing series you can jump into at any point. The program features a lecture, discussion and a dusk walk. Beginning through advanced birders welcome. Binoculars provided.

Wed., Jun. 15 | 5 - 6:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

URBAN ADVENTURES

Water Safety Course ♿

Did you know that our contributing members can borrow our canoes and kayaks for free? To take advantage of this unique benefit, become a contributing member, then take this 45-minute, on-land, water safety course. This training, or training through one of our scheduled trips, is a requirement of our canoe/kayak lending benefit.

Every Sat. | 10 - 10:45AM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated |
Membership required to borrow boats

Canoeing for Beginners

The Washington Park Lagoon is a beautiful, calm and spacious body of water for learning the basics of paddling! Learn boating safety and paddling technique, then practice with guidance from one of our trained educators. Perfect for those who are new to paddling or just want more practice.

Sat., May 21 | 10:30AM - NOON
Wed., May 25 | 6 - 8PM
Wed., Jun. 29 | 7 - 9PM
For adults and accompanied children age 6 and up | Adults:
\$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

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) 344-5460

3 IN PERSON:
Just stop by! 1859 N. 40th St.





MENOMONEE VALLEY

Programs and Events

MAY & JUNE

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS

Menomonee Valley Community Forums

Join your neighbors and our staff to have a conversation about how the Urban Ecology Center can better respond to both the needs and the assets of our community! In small groups, we will have "cafe style" conversations about what's going on at the center now and what ideas you have for future programming. And, we'll all enjoy a free meal together! All ages welcome!

Mon., May 9 | 11:30AM - 1PM

Tue., May 10 | 6 - 7:30PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

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 to the planting site together.

Sat., Jun. 11 | 9:30 - 11:30AM

For adults and accompanied children ages 6 and up | Free - donations appreciated

Native Plant Sale - Menomonee Valley

Prairie Future Seed Company will be selling over 60 different species of prairie, savanna and woodland perennials. A portion of the profits will benefit the Center.

Sat., Jun. 18 | 9AM - 1PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Hike

Explore the trails with us on a guided hike through Three Bridges Park. This is a perfect way to see the park as seasons change. We'll conclude with story time by the fire.

Tue., May 10 & Thu.,

Jun. 9 | 4:30 - 6PM

For families with children | Free - donations appreciated

Busy Bees

Is that a bumble, honey, sweat, leaf cutter, green metallic or yellow faced bee? 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. Honey sampling included!

Sats., May 21 &

Jun. 18 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults and children |

\$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Photo Phenology

Get your cameras and watch the Valley change over the seasons! No photography experience necessary.

Sat., May 28 & Jun. 25 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults, teens and families |

Free - donations appreciated

Fantastic Frogs

Discover how frogs grow from eggs to tadpoles to full grown fly-snatchers. Then meet some real live frogs in our animal room!

Sat., Jun. 4 | 10 - 11:30AM

For kids aged 5-9 | \$5 per child

(Nonmembers \$7 per child)

Snakes of the World

Join us for a hands-on snake presentation with the Milwaukee Snake Group — caregivers of snakes, lizards and other reptiles.

Sat., Jun. 18 | 2 - 3PM

For everyone | Free -

donation appreciated

Three Bridges Park Scavenger Hunt

There are twelve objects hidden all over Three Bridges Park. Can you find them all? An engaging scavenger hunt for kids and adults!

Wed., Jun. 22 | 4:30 - 5:30PM

For adults and children ages 5 and older | Free - donations appreciated

Beginner Bird Watching

Like spotting birds, but don't know how to identify them? Learn the basic steps to identifying and recording birds that you see. Soon you'll be birding like a pro!

Wed., Jun. 29 | 5 - 6PM

For adults, teens and older children |

Free - donations appreciated

Animal Feeding

Help feed our resident animals!

Every Sat. | 1PM

For everyone | Free

Young Scientists Club

From hiking to gardening to helping with research to caring for our Center's animals, every day in the Young Scientists Club is a new adventure.

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.

Every Fri. starting Jun.

17 | 4 - 5:30PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Little Explorers:

Friday Morning Playgroup

Preschool is the age of discovery and we're here to help your kids learn and explore! Join us on the 2nd Friday of the month for our preschool play group. We have activities (including our secret slide) specifically designed to engage the senses of children ages 4 and under.

Fris., May 13 & Jun. 10 | 11AM - NOON

For children ages 4 and younger

| Free - donations appreciated

Girl Scouts: Animal Tracker

May is a wonderful month to track birds in the Menomonee Valley! Explore the unique qualities of birds in their natural habitat.

Sat., May 14 | 9AM - NOON

For Juniors, grades 4-5 | To register,

please visit www.gswise.org

EcoArt Wednesdays

Every Wed. | 4 - 5:30PM

For families with children age 12 and younger | Free - donations appreciated

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Macroinvertebrates

Wrap up the end of the school year by exploring Macroinvertebrate species in the Menomonee River and the Washington Park lagoon. Join us as we compare the differences and what it means about our water.

Class Schedule:

Menomonee Valley
Tue., May 3 | 1-3pm

Washington Park

Tuesday, May 17 | 1-3pm
For children ages 5 and older |
\$7 (Nonmember: \$10)

Menomonee Valley branch will be closed on June 10.

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

1 ONLINE:
www.urbanecologycenter.org

2 BY PHONE:
(414) 431-2940

3 IN PERSON:
Just stop by! 3700 W. Pierce St.



MENOMONEE VALLEY

Programs and Events

MAY & JUNE

ADULT PROGRAMS

Walk and Talk at Menomonee Valley

Join our branch manager, Glenna, to explore both our building and Three Bridges Park.

Weds., May 11 & Jun. 8 | NOON - 1PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

From Beak to Tail:

All About the Life of Birds

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

Sat., May 21 | 3 - 4:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Geocaching in the Valley

GPS units provided.

Sat., May 28 | 10 - 11:30AM
Thu., Jun. 23 | 5 - 6:30PM
For adults, teens, and children |
Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)
Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Why Do We Hunt?

Dianne Robinson, from the Wisconsin DNR will explore different facts, anecdotes and insights into hunting and initiate a discussion about its benefits and drawbacks.

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

Art Opening Reception:

Symbiotic, Janelle Gramling

In her wall-hung sculptures, Janelle takes inspiration from the patterns in nature. This opening will also feature the sculptural installation *Generation* by Rachel Clark. Refreshments provided. Artists will speak at 6pm.

Thu., Jun. 9 | 5 - 7PM
For everyone | Free
-donations appreciated

Early Morning Birdwalks

Every Tue. | 8 - 10AM
For adults and teens | Free -
donations appreciated

Solar Power Educational Session

In a partnership with the City of Milwaukee and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association

Learn how home and business owners can pool their buying power to secure significant discounts that make solar more affordable than ever through Solar MKE. Visit milwaukeeeshines.org for additional session times.

Wed., Jun. 29 | 6 - 7PM
For adults | Free

URBAN ADVENTURES

Water Safety Course

Borrow our boats for free! Become a contributing member, then take this on land, water safety course.

Every Fri. | 5 - 5:45PM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated | Membership required to borrow boats

Bicycle Riding for Beginners - Small Group Lessons

This 4-part series is the perfect way to ease back into bicycling. We'll start by working on balance and coordination, then get you riding on your own!

Sat., Jun. 25, Jul. 2, 9 & 16 | 9:30 - 11AM
For adults | \$30 (Nonmembers: \$35)

Private Bicycling Lessons

Need a little help getting back to bicycling or are brand new to the sport? We can get you rolling! Work one-on-one with a private instructor and get out on the trails this summer. Contact at Michael at mespinoza@urbanecologycenter.org or (414) 431-2940 to set up an appointment.

Bike Tours

Hidden History on the Hank Aaron State Trail

Trace the Valley's history on a leisurely bike tour from our branch to the lake. Stops include: Milwaukee Soldiers Home, Miller Park, Three Bridges Park, Lakeshore State Park and Purple Door Ice Cream. Bring a bike and helmet or borrow ours.

Sat., May 21 | 9:30AM - NOON
Tue., Jun. 28 | 4 - 6:30PM
For adults | \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Calvary & Forest Home Cemeteries

Take a leisurely bike tour of Calvary and Forest Home cemeteries. We'll stop by the graves of notable Milwaukee families and visit Wild Flour Bakery on our return. Route includes trails and side streets. Bring a bike and helmet or borrow ours.

Fri., May 27 & Jun. 24 |
9:30AM - NOON
For adults | \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Family Ride to Mitchell Park

Bring the family and tour Three Bridges Park to Mitchell Park by the Domes. This leisurely 1.2 mile bike ride is great for families with children of all ages. Bring a bike and helmet or borrow ours (sizes for ages 10+).

Sat., Jun. 18 | 9:30AM - noon
For families | Adults: \$3
(Nonmembers: \$5) Children:
Free - donations appreciated

Mountain Biking Trails of Wauwatosa

Journey with us to Wauwatosa and visit "hidden" mountain biking trails. We'll round out our trip with a stop at Colectivo Coffee. This tour travels through trails and side streets. Bring a bike and helmet or borrow ours.

Thu., Jun. 30 | 12:30 - 3PM
For adults | \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

VOLUNTEERS

Menomonee Valley Volunteer Orientation

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

Tue., May 3 | 5:30 - 7PM
Thu., May 19 | 5:30 - 7PM
Sat., Jun. 4 | 10 - 11:30am
Thu., Jun. 23 | 5 - 6:30pm
For adults and teens | Free -
donations appreciated

Spring Bird Banding

Join our banding team as they study migratory birds. Highly weather dependent, please RSVP with Jennifer Callaghan at jcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org before attending.

Tue., May 24 | 5AM - 1PM
For adults, teens and accompanied children | Free - donations appreciated

ROOT Menomonee Valley

Every Wed. | 9 - 11AM & 2:30 - 4:30PM
Every Thu. | 9 - 11AM
For adults and teens | Free -
donations appreciated

Fixin' Facilities

Every Thu. | 3 - 5PM
For everyone, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult |
Free - donations appreciated

Youth Project Squad

Work on maintenance projects with our staff.

Every Sat. | NOON - 2PM
For families and teens | Free -
donations appreciated

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.

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, Judy Krause, Jeff McAvoy and Pat Mueller.

Contributing writers: Beth Heller, Glenna Holstein, Alex LaBonte and Ken Leinbach.

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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, Twitter and Instagram!

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 Join.



Summer Solstice Soirée

the Urban Ecology Center's 9th annual event

*Explore & Celebrate
Milwaukee's Hidden Gem*

Saturday, June 18

6:00 pm | Riverside Park | 1500 E. Park Pl.

FSC logo

IN THIS ISSUE

OUR PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

by Ken Leinbach

Where others see brownfields, vacant lots and concrete, we see potential and life – and lots of it!

MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARKS EXPLORATION COMPLETE!

by Beth Heller

There is no question in my mind that parks are at the heart of our city's neighborhoods.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

by Glenna Holstein

This spring at our Menomonee Valley branch, we will have two opportunities to participate in a Community Forum: Monday, May 9th from 11:30am-noon, and Tuesday May 10th from 6 -7:30pm.

¡ÚNESE A LA CONVERSACIÓN!

by Glenna Holstein

Durante esta primavera, en Menomonee Valley, tendremos dos oportunidades para participar en el Foro Comunitario: el lunes, 9 de Mayo desde las 11:30 a.m. a la 1 p.m., y también el martes, 10 de Mayo desde las 6 a las 7:30 p.m.

NEW SUMMER CAMPS!

by Alex LaBonte

I'm especially excited to announce two new camps: Outdoor Adventures for teens and Pathfinders for kids with special needs.

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



Over **3,700** participants
canoeed with us last fiscal year!