



Bur Oak Tribune



Wildwood Nature Center

Park Ridge Park District

June 2010

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And more...

General Information

During your visit to Wildwood Nature Center you will find an **Animal Exhibit Room** with a turtle pond, snakes, prairie dogs, snapping turtles, and much, much more. Wildwood also offers an activity room called the **Nature Nook** complete with books, puzzles, puppets, games, and activities. Visit the Nook this month to learn about pond life!

Wildwood Nature Center is located at:
529 Forestview Ave.
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Contact Info:
847-692-3570
jclauson@prparks.org

Web: www.prparks.org

Visiting Hours:
Tuesday -Thursday 10am-6pm
Saturday 10am-4pm
(Nature Nook is open on Saturdays only until Aug 23rd)

Admission : FREE

Wildwood Nature Center Bur Oak
Editor: Hillary Wells-Pranga

Nature Feature

This month's feature is the milkweed plant. The milkweed plant got its common name from its characteristic milk-colored sap. This sap contains something called cardenolides, some species of milkweed have high concentrations of these, making them toxic to animals. Milkweed plants also protect themselves by having hairy leaves (plant hairs are called trichomes) and latex fluids. These defenses do nothing to discourage the caterpillars of the Monarch butterfly. The Monarch even helps pollinate the milkweed flowers while it is feasting on the nectar. Because the Monarch feeds on the plant as a larvae, as an adult they are toxic to other animals. Milkweeds produce large pink balls of flowers. Each flower is pollinated using something called pollinia, which are pollen sacs (instead of just individual



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pollen grains). These pollinia stick to the legs of insects such as bees and monarchs. These sacs detach on another flower when they get stuck in a groove. In the fall the milkweed produces large pear-shaped seed pods.

When these dry out they pop open to disperse seeds with fuzzy umbrellas to help them fly in the wind.

News Bulletins

- June 26th is National Wildlife Federation's annual Great American Backyard Campout. For more info go to www.backyardcampout.org.
- From June 1st to August 23rd the Nature Nook playroom will be open only on Saturdays due to summer camp programs. The animal room will be open during regular visiting hours (see front page).



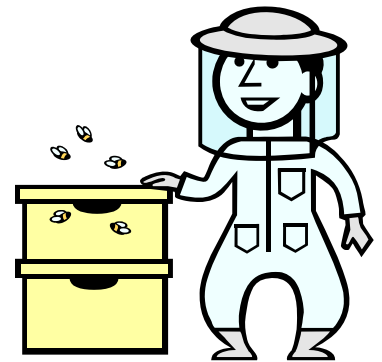
Upcoming Events

Family Campfire*: *July 9, 7:00pm-9:00pm~* The entire family will enjoy the peaceful night air while sitting around a warm fire listening to stories, singing songs, going for a night hike, and making everyone's favorite - S'mores! Flashlights are not needed but feel free to bring a blanket or chair to sit on.

Fee: \$15 resident/nonresident families, Class # 15188

All a Buzz Over Bees (Families)*: *Jul 15, 6:00 pm-7:30 pm~* Fly over to Wildwood to see what the buzz is all about. Meet a bee expert as we explore the busy life of bees through games, crafts and activities.

Fee: \$15 resident, \$20 nonresident families, Class # 15269



Playdate with Nature (Families)*: *Jul 24, 10:30am-11:30am~* Join us for an hour of fun educational nature activities based around the special theme of the day.

Fee: FREE, Class # 15266



Winged Hunters* (Ages 4 & up, under 12 must be with an adult): *Aug 5, 6:00pm-7:00pm~* Join the Northern Illinois Raptor Center's birds of prey for a fun program about some of Illinois' winged hunters. Learn about the habitats, diets, hunting styles and features of a Red-Tailed Hawk, Barred Owl, American Kestrel and Great Horned Owl.

Fee: \$10 resident, \$15 nonresident, Class # 15270

* Registration is required for all classes, for more information call 847-692-3570 or Discover the Fun on the Park District website at www.prparks.org



Volunteer News

Happy Birthday to animal volunteer Alex D! Congratulations on your snack parties Tuesday and Wednesday volunteers!

Family Fun Corner

Pond Dipping

Materials: net (available at pet stores) or sieve with handle, medium size plastic container, magnifying glass, book “Pond Water Zoo” by Loewer and Jenkins (optional), towel, water-proof shoes

- Take your child over to the Maine Park ponds.
- Help them fill their collecting container halfway with water (a white container works best to see everything).
- Show you child how to scoop up in the weeds or toward the bottom, that is where the most critters are.
- Have your child put their hand under the net and lift it up to see what is inside.
- If there is anything interesting in your net, place it into the container to take a better look and you can see if anything is swimming around.
- If you find a creature you have never seen before you can look it up in the library book suggested above or in one of Wildwood’s guides. You can also checkout page 5 for some common pond creatures.
- Remember to put your creatures back when you are done playing!



Earth Stewards

You can be an earth steward by being a responsible coffee drinker.

How Can we be responsible coffee drinkers?

- ~ Encourage your local coffee house to give discounts for people who bring in their own reusable cup.
- ~ Bring a reusable cup with you in the car in case you go out for coffee.
- ~ Purchase sustainable (organic, shade-grown) coffee, like National Wildlife Blend made by Green Mountain Coffee Roasters. Trader Joes carries sustainable coffee.

Why should we be responsible coffee drinkers?

- ~ It is estimated that 58 billion paper coffee cups are added to America’s waste every year.
- ~ Due to staining from the coffee, paper coffee cups are harder to recycle.
- ~ Styrofoam cups do not break down in a landfill and are expensive to recycle.
- ~ Purchasing shade-grown coffee helps farmers who save trees which are important for songbird habitats.





Junior Naturalist Pages



Wild Wonders

Hello everyone, my name is LeeAnn Ladybug and I'm here to report on the Wildwood Nature Center's wildlife news. It is June and the official start of summer, which means hot days ahead of us. Did you know, just like you, animals have different ways to beat the heat? I was flying around the woodland path looking for plants with tasty aphids when I saw Teddy Toad burrowing under the wet dead leaves beneath the tree. The wet leaves will keep him moist and cool. Even water animals need to keep cool too. I was crawling near the pond a week ago and overheard Carly Catfish telling her fry (baby fish) if tomorrow is a hot day they must follow her to the bottom of the pond. The water down there is not as heated by the sun as the water at the top of the pond. While I was by the pond I also saw a lot of feathers. Do you know who they belong to? It was Gary Goose's feathers. This time of year Canada geese molt their feathers to stay cooler. There is a lovely flower blooming right now that does not have to worry about drying out in the heat. It is the iris flower, it actually is growing in the water along the edge of the pond! Speaking of flowers, the goldenrod over by Sam's Deck already has buds! This month also keep an eye out for the butterfly milkweed starting to bloom, they have bright orange bunches of little flowers. June is also a good time to go beetle hunting. You can find ladybugs like me and also a few days ago I ran into a beetle named after this month: Jillian June bug! Hope to see you in July!



Merry's challenge: Gary Goose is molting his feathers, draw some feathers on the ground around him.





Junior Naturalist Pages



THE ZOO IN THE POND

There are many strange and wonderful creatures that live in pond water. Some live their whole lives swimming around the pond and some transform and explore the world beyond the water. Look at the pictures below and use the code to find out what they are.

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Animal Feeding Times

Watch the Wildwood staff feed some of your favorite animals! Call the Nature Center for more information at 847-692-3570.

This Month:

Saturdays 10:30am

Wednesdays
10:30am and 3:30pm

Location: Animal Room



Critter Connection

Get up close to a Wildwood animal during a short, family friendly presentation. Learn about the featured animal, what makes him special, what he eats, and more. Make sure to pet him before he heads back to the animal room. Visit different animals each month.

Day: Every Saturday

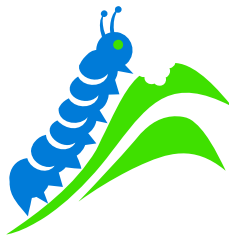
Time: 10:15am-10:30am

Location: Nature Nook

Ask the Naturalist

Wildwood is a great place to find answers about the natural world.

Q: What is a chrysalis made of?



A: When a caterpillar is ready to turn into a pupa (chrysalis) it will hang upside-down and split its skin and underneath is the new harder exoskeleton of the pupa.

You can submit your questions anonymously or with your first name and city to Wildwood's mailing address (2701 W. Sibley Ave.) or email them to: jclauson@prparks.org. We encourage people of all ages to write in with their

Pet Connection

- ~ **Needs a home:** two female, 3 year old lop-eared bunnies.
- ~ **Needs a home:** Six cats, male and female. Cats have been fixed, vaccinated and microchipped.
- ~ **Needs a home:** guinea pig—comes with cage, water bottle and igloo.



To respond to these ads or to post an ad, please contact Wildwood at 847-692-3570.