



Bur Oak Tribune



Wildwood Nature Center

Park Ridge Park District

July 2011

Inside This Month's Issue:

- Geocaching Trip (p 2)
- Wildwood Tales Class (p 2)
- Cricket Thermometer (p 3)
- Light Pollution (p 3)
- Red, White and Blue Nature (p 5)
- Tadpoles (p 6)

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, and activities. Visit the Nook to learn about farm animals!

June 7 - August 27, the Nature Nook will be open Saturdays only. The animal room will be open regular visiting hours.

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

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

Web: www.prparks.org

Visiting Hours:
Tuesday -Thursday 10am-6pm
Saturday 10am-4pm

Admission : FREE

**Wildwood Nature Center Bur Oak
Editor:** Hillary Wells-Pranga

Nature Feature

This month's feature is the crayfish. Like its larger cousin the lobster, crayfish belong to the family of animals called crustaceans. The crustacean family also includes shrimp, krill, barnacles and crabs. Most crustaceans live in salt water, but crayfish live in freshwater habitats such as ponds, lakes and rivers. Crayfish also belong to a very large group of animals called arthropods. All arthropods (including crayfish) have an exoskeleton (shell-like covering protecting their body), jointed legs and do not have back bones. Crayfish have ten walking legs, two of which are large claws used for grabbing. They also have two eyes, multiple antennae and a large abdomen ending in a tail called a telson. Crayfish can swim backwards but most of the time you will see them walking along the bottom of the pond. In the



Maine Park ponds, the crayfish dine on algae, snails, insects, worms, tadpoles and even dead animals. Mature crayfish hide under rocks and logs during the day and then become active at dusk, this is called crepuscular. Female crayfish can be found "in berry" (carrying eggs) around May and June, carrying anywhere from 10-100 eggs. When they hatch the young hang on to their mother until they have molted a couple times. Molting is when they shed their old exoskeleton and have a new one underneath, similar to how snake shed their skin. Sometimes young crayfish will even eat their molt if they are in need of calcium to help harden the new exoskeleton.

Upcoming Events & Classes



Geocaching Trip* (Ages 7 & Up): *Jul 16, 9am—11:30am ~* Using a GPS we will explore on this international treasure hunt. Decipher the clues and search high and low to find the geocache and discover its secrets.

Fee: \$10 resident/nonresident, Class #19708

Earth Wind and Fire* (Ages 9-11): *Fridays, Jul 15—Aug 5, 4pm—5pm ~* Discover the elements through experiments, games and activities. Build a solar oven, a campfire, and even a miniature hot air balloon!

Fee: \$31 residents/\$50 nonresidents, Class # 20161

Mud Day* (Ages 2 & Up): *Jul 16, 1:00pm—3:00pm ~* Join us for some messy fun for the whole family! Create mud pies, mud people, and enjoy mud-inspired events and competitions. We'll have sprinklers, hoses and towels for you to clean up. Please wear something old and bring a change of clothes.

Fee: \$8 residents/\$12 nonresidents, Class #19727

Wildwood Tales* (Ages 2-3 with Adult): *Tuesdays, Jul 26—Aug 16, 4:00pm—4:45pm ~* See, feel, listen and learn all about the animals living at the Nature Center. Enjoy an animal visit, story, a craft, a nature walk and a trip to the animal room.

Fee: \$31 resident/\$50 nonresident, Class #19731

Country Farm Fair (Families): *Jul 30, Noon—3pm ~* Join us for games crafts, pony rides, petting zoo and more. See attached flyer for more details.



Make Your Own Rain Barrel* (Ages 12 & Up): *Jul 20, 6pm—7pm ~* During an average rain storm 700 gallons of water rushes off your roof. Water your grass and garden without increasing your water bill! All you need is a downspout; we'll provide the rest, including home delivery for residents if needed. Fee is per barrel.

Fee: \$49 resident/nonresident, Class# 19685

***Preregistration 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

Wildwood would like to wish a Happy Birthday to Animal Care Volunteer Matt!!



Family Fun Corner

Cricket Thermometer

Summer evenings are serenaded by our friend the cricket. But did you know this little bug can be a helpful tool? Here is an experiment to help you find out how.

Materials: Cricket (purchasable at your local pet store or you can catch your own), quart jar or 2L bottle, old nylon stocking, rubber band, stopwatch, piece of paper & pen



1. Put the cricket in the jar or bottle. Cover the opening with the nylon and put a rubber band around it to hold it in place.
2. In the morning when it is cooler find a place outside in the shade to put the jar. Leave it for 20 minutes and then come back with your stop watch, paper and pen.
3. Start the stopwatch and count how many time the cricket chirps in one minute. Subtract 40 from this number. Divide the result by 4 then add 50. This is the temper ature. Compare your results with a man-made thermometer (in degrees F), was it close?
4. During the hottest part of the day put the jar again in the shade. Leave it for 20 minutes and repeat the counting and the math you did in step three. Which had more chirps hotter or cooler?

Note: A physicist named Amos Dolbear figured out the a cricket's chirps rise in frequency with the temperature, this is because insects are cold blooded so the temperature raises their metabolism. He studied the chirps in relation to the temperature and in 1897 published an article with the formula listed above.

Earth Stewards

You can be an earth steward by reducing light pollution. Bad lighting design has caused a lot of light to flood up into the sky where it is not needed.

Why is Light Pollution Bad?

- ~ Negatively affects nocturnal animal behavior such as feeding and reproduction.
- ~ Distracts migrating birds and can cause them to fly off course and even into buildings.
- ~ Prevents us from enjoying the wonders and beauty of the night sky.
- ~ The glare is not helpful for our eyes; it can even prevent us from seeing danger.



What Can You do About Light Pollution?

- ~ Buy or make lamps with hoods/shields so that the light from the bulb is directed downward where it will be most affective.
- ~ If you are using CFLs make sure you are using the correct wattage. You can find out the appropriate wattage at the EnergyStar website.
- ~ Talk to your neighbors about light pollution—spread the word!

For More info go to www.darksky.org



Junior Naturalist Pages

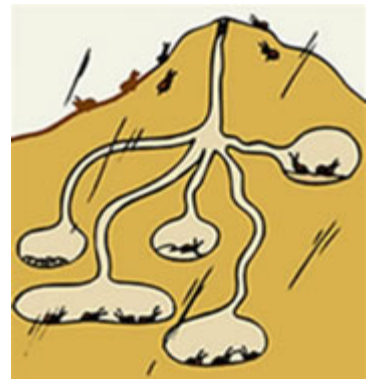
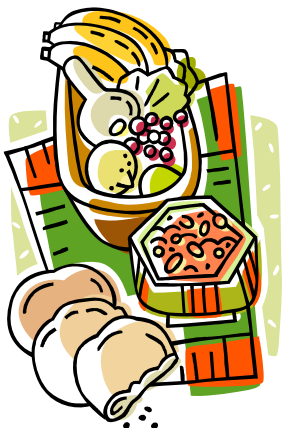


Wild Wonders



Hello there! Thanks for joining me, LeeAnn Ladybug for this month's edition of the Wildwood wildlife news. Summer is in full swing so there is a lot of action around here. I was flying around the woodland path and thought I saw another ladybug so I flew closer to take a look. It was not a ladybug but another red bug with black spots and very long antennae. Do you know who it was? It was Molly Milkweed Beetle laying eggs. I asked her what happens when her eggs hatch and she told me her larvae (babies) dig into the stem and roots of the milkweed plant. Just then we saw this bring white flash that startled us. Luckily we both had time to fly away because it was Michael Mocking Bird looking for a bug snack! Mocking Birds are very tricky, did you know they can copy other bird's songs? He also flashes those bright white spots on his wings which confuses other animals. Molly Milkweed Beetle is not the only insect I have found being busy lately. I was crawling up one of the pillars of the picnic shelter when I saw a black line on the ground that looked like it was moving. So I crawled down to take a close look. It was Albert Ant marching with his worker ant buddies. I asked him where they were going. He said they were following a scent trail a scout ant left after he found food at the picnic shelter. Did you know that ants have two stomachs? Albert said he swallows some food in one stomach for himself and some into another to take back to the anthill. Did you know that things are pretty busy during the night here too? I was talking to Frieda Firefly the other day and she told me last night she saw Sandler Skunk digging for grubs. Well, I have to get busy laying my eggs, so I will see you in August!

LeeAnn's Challenge: Draw a trail of ants marching to and from the picnic food to the anthill.



Junior Naturalist Pages



In honor of Independence Day here is a challenge for you involving our national colors. Can you figure out which color; red, white or blue goes with which thing from nature?



1. The male cardinal's feathers are a bright _____.
2. Asters growing the in Wildwood prairie can be purple or _____.

3. This sunfish that lives in our pond is called a _____ gill.

4. The bullfrog's belly is _____ and speckled.

5. The _____ bell is a spring flower found along the woodland path.

6. This turtle called a _____-eared slider lives in the pond and inside the Nature Center.

7. The black-crown night heron got its name from the black crown on top of his _____ head.



8. Cardinal flower is a prairie plant that has _____ flowers.

9. AJ the corn snake is an albino, that means his skin looks _____ and his eyes are _____.

10. The largest heron you can find around the pond is the great _____ heron.

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 and 3:30pm

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: Saturday s

Time:
10:30am & 3:30pm

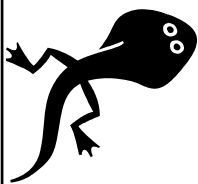
Location:
Nature Nook



Ask the Naturalist

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

Q: How long does it take for a tadpole to turn into a frog?



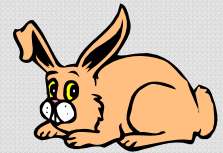
A: This depends on the type of frog. Small frogs can change from tadpole to adult in as little as a couple weeks. Larger frogs like the bullfrog can take a year, burrowing in the mud in the winter to hibernate.

Submit your questions to Wildwood's mailing address (2701 W. Sibley) or email them to: jclauson@prparks.org. We encourage people of all ages to write in with their questions!

Pet Connection

Needs a home:

- ~ Nine inch female red-eared slider (water turtle). Comes with 50 gallon tank.
- ~ Male short-hair guinea pig. Comes with cage and supplies.
- ~ Male short-hair guinea pig, not neutered. Comes with cage, food and accessories.
- ~ Male 5 year old, brown rabbit. Comes with cage and supplies.
- ~ 2 year old red-tailed boa. Comes with cage and heat lamp.



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