

ELKHART COUNTY PARKS

SPRING / SUMMER '25

COMPASS

GUIDE



**RIVER
PRESERVE**

**BOOT
LAKE**

**OX
BOW**

**COBUS
CREEK**

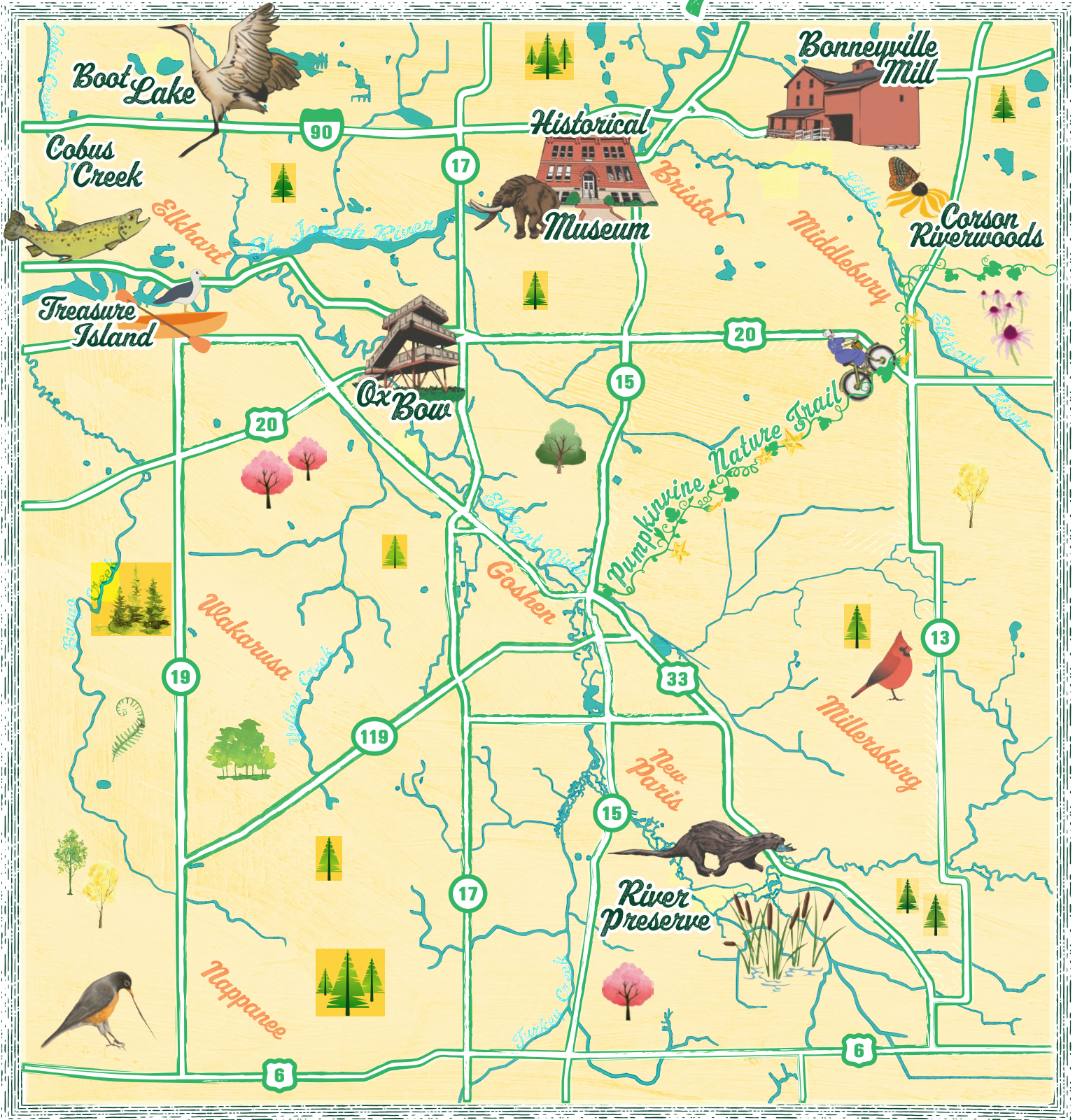
**CORSON
RIVERWOODS**

**BONNEYVILLE
MILL**

**PUMPKINVINE
NATURE TRAIL**

**HISTORICAL
MUSEUM**

EXPLORE THE *Elkhart County Parks*





Boot Lake

51430 C.R. 3 • ELKHART, IN
ACRES: 300



Bonneyville Mill

53373 C.R. 131 • BRISTOL, IN
ACRES: 222



Cobus Creek

30680 C.R. 8 • ELKHART, IN
ACRES: 84



Corson Riverwoods

12773 C.R. 12 • MIDDLEBURY, IN
ACRES: 82



Elkhart County Historical Museum

304 W. VISTULA ST. • BRISTOL, IN
🕒 TUES-SAT • 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.



Ox Bow

23033 C.R. 45 • GOSHEN, IN
ACRES: 200



Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

COUNTY-WIDE • SEE WEBSITE FOR ACCESS POINTS
MILES: 16.5



River Preserve

17477 C.R. 46 • NEW PARIS, IN
ACRES: 358



Treasure Island

56226 ARMOUR AVE. • ELKHART, IN
ACRES: 4



PLAN
YOUR
VISIT

🕒 HOURS

[SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE]

NOTE: BOOT LAKE NATURE PRESERVE
CLOSES 1 HR BEFORE ALL OTHER PARKS

JAN / FEB / NOV / DEC

9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

MAR / OCT

9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

APR / SEP

9 a.m. – 8 p.m.

MAY / JUN / JUL / AUG

9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

🏠 OFFICE

[CLOSED WEEKENDS + COUNTY HOLIDAYS]

🕒 **MON-FRI**
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

🏠 **LOCATION**
211 W. Lincoln Avenue
Goshen, IN 46526-3280

📞 **PHONE**
574-535-6458

📍 TRAIL INFO

ELKHART
COUNTY
PARKS
.ORG



Our Mission

INSPIRING CONNECTIONS with CULTURE and NATURE

ELKHART COUNTY PARKS

211 W. Lincoln Ave.
Goshen, IN 46526-3280

PHONE / 574-535-6458

FAX / 574-535-6616

TDD / 574-535-6420

WEBSITE / elkhartcountyparks.org

EMAIL / parksinfo@elkhartcounty.com

DIRECTOR / Ronda DeCaire

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PARK

OPERATIONS / Bernard J. Cunningham IV

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INTERPRETIVE SERVICES / Donny Aleo

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SECRETARY / Robert Kelly

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Worth Showing

kyle.thomas.photo
Baintertown Dam

These falls are pure gold...
We're glad Kyle Thomas was at the right place at the right time! ❤️

Don't forget to tag
#elkhartcountyparks
for a chance to be featured!

#ELKHARTCOUNTYPARKS

CONNECT WITH US!

elkhartcountyparks.org

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PRODUCTION TEAM

EDITORS / Donny Aleo, Annie Aguirre, Krista Daniels, Marlene Lantzer, Julie Parke

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS / Ronda DeCaire, Courtney Franke, Vince Gresham, James Holtzclaw, Andy Langdon, Jenifer Blouin Policelli

CREATIVE DESIGN / Annie Aguirre

THE COMPASS NEWSLETTER IS A BIENNIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ELKHART COUNTY PARKS.



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ON THE COVER / "PATIENCE" / PHOTO BY ELI MARTIN

Greetings
from the

ELKHART COUNTY PARKS

Before



Patience can be found everywhere in nature. Whether it is a Great Blue Heron silently stalking its prey, or a Common Snapping Turtle taking forever to dig its nest, the pace of nature can teach us how to wait for the things that happen next.



Staff and visitors in the Elkhart County Parks have shown a great amount of patience over the past year with the construction of new restrooms in almost every park. It disrupted schedules, programs, and rentals, but the end result has created a more pleasant visit to your green spaces. We thank everyone for their patience during this process.

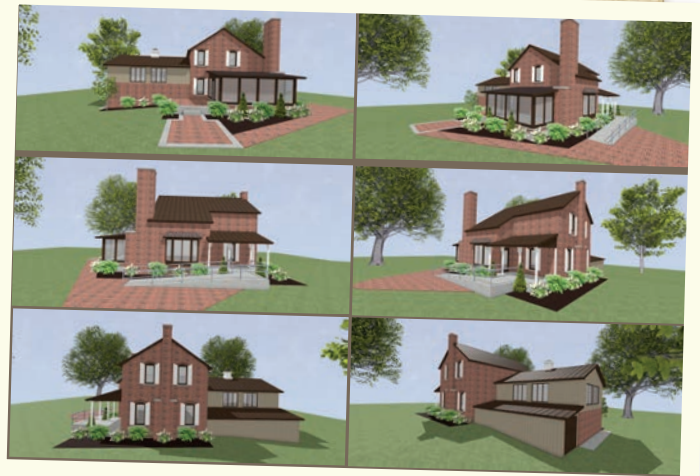


After

Homestead Improvements at DeFries Gardens

We have been patiently waiting for over a decade to transform the 1881 homestead at the DeFries Gardens in River Preserve County Park. Funds have been set aside each year from the endowment left by Elisabeth DeFries, and were recently matched by a grant from the Community Foundation of Elkhart County as well as non-reverting funds from park user fees. Construction is now underway to transform the home into a public facility for programs, small events, and meetings.

Postcard



We hope you look for signs of patience in nature next time you are in a park. Good things come to those who wait!

Sincerely, *Ronda*
RONDA DECAIRE
DIRECTOR OF PARKS

45,000 FT

CUMULONIMBUS

THE KING OF CLOUDS, TOWERING OVER ALL WHO DARE OPPOSE IT. DON'T TRY. THIS THUNDERHEAD CAN BREW STORMS OF EPIC PROPORTIONS. FROM A SAFE DISTANCE, THIS CLOUD LOOKS LIKE A TOWERING ANVIL. 100 MILES CLOSER, IT'S A BLACK SKY FULL OF LIGHTNING, RAIN, WIND, HAIL, AND EVEN TORNADOES!

CIRRUS

WOAH, THIS CLOUD IS REALLY, REALLY HIGH. LOOK FOR WISPY, FEATHERY TUFTS (SOMETIMES CALLED "MARES' TAILS").

CIRROCUMULUS

TEXTURE RESEMBLES RIPPLED SAND. AS A HIGH-FLYER WITH FINE DETAIL, THIS CLOUD IS TRICKY TO SEE FOR THOSE WITH POOR EYESIGHT.

CLOUD WATCHER'S GUIDE

How well have you studied our skies? Use this cloud chart to help learn how to spot a few of our most common clouds.

20,000 FT

ALTOSTRATUS

LIGHT SHINES EASILY THROUGH THESE SHEET-LIKE CLOUDS.

ALTOCUMULUS

HANGS MID-HIGH IN SKY SHOWING LARGE ROWS OF CLUMPS. SOMETIMES CALLED "MACKEREL SKY."

STRATOCUMULUS

OUR MOST COMMON & GLOOMY CLOUD. ALWAYS DRESSES IN GRAY CLUMPY LAYERS TO MATCH ITS DRIZZLY MOOD. OFTEN HANGS WITH CUMULUS, PROVING "OPPOSITES ATTRACT."

6,500 FT

IF YOU START DAYDREAMING AND SEEING INTERESTING SHAPES IN THE SKY, THIS BUBBLY CLOUD IS TO BLAME. STILL NOT SURE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE? JUST GOOGLE "CLOUD."

CUMULUS

NIMBOSTRATUS

THIS CLOUD'S A REAL DOWNER. IT ONLY WEARS GRAY, BLOCKS OUT THE SUN FOR DAYS, AND RAINS NON-STOP. IT MIGHT NEED THERAPY.

STRATUS

FOGGY, VAGUE & NONCOMMITTAL. NEVER RAINS, JUST HANGS.

APRIL

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

6
GEOLOGIST DAY
 GEOLOGISTS ARE TIME TRAVELERS, DECODING THE STORIES WRITTEN IN STONE.

7
WORLD BEAVER DAY
 THE WORLD'S LARGEST BEAVER DAM IN ALBERTA, CANADA IS OVER A 1/2-MILE LONG (2,790 FT) AND CAN BE SEEN FROM SPACE.

8
NATURE JOURNALING

9
FIRST SPRING LEAVES APPEAR
 WATCH FOR THE GREEN MIST FROM SHRUBS AND TREES BEGINNING TO LEAF OUT IN OUR FORESTS.

10
BASEBALL IN ELK CO. HISTORY

11
BOOKS & 800TS
VINTAGE BASEBALL MINI-CAMP
SETTING THE MILLSTONES

12
FULL MOON
 PINK MOON - NAMED IN HONOR OF THE BRIGHT PINK WILDFLOWERS THAT COLOR OUR WOODS.

13
GEOLOGIST DAY
 GEOLOGISTS ARE TIME TRAVELERS, DECODING THE STORIES WRITTEN IN STONE.

14
PARK BOARD MEETING

15
NATURE JOURNALING

16
FIRST SPRING LEAVES APPEAR
 WATCH FOR THE GREEN MIST FROM SHRUBS AND TREES BEGINNING TO LEAF OUT IN OUR FORESTS.

17
BAT APPRECIATION DAY
 WANNA GO BAT-WATCHING WITH US? DON'T MISS "THE NIGHT" ON JULY 31ST!

18

19
FOREST BATHING

20

21
TRAIL TREKKERS: SALAMANDERS

22
EARTH DAY
 "THE EARTH IS WHAT WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON."
 - WENDELL BERRY
 MILL OPENS FOR THE SEASON

23

24
CREATURES OF THE NIGHT AQUATIC INSECTS

25
POLLWOGS IN A BOG
NIGHT HIKE

26
PANCAKE BREAKFAST
GARDEN CLEANUP
WILDFLOWER WALK
TROUT DAY

27
NEW MOON
 [BEGINS 2:31 P.M.]
 SCAN THE NIGHT SKIES FOR DEEP SKY OBJECTS, LIKE STAR CLUSTERS, GALAXIES, AND NEBULAE, NORMALLY HIDDEN BY MOONLIGHT.

28

29

30
 HOW MANY WILDFLOWERS CAN YOU FIND?
 CHECK OUT THE INDIANA DUNES FLOWER QUEST:
 TINYURL.COM/YHYBBKRH

31

32

33

34

35

36



REGISTER ONLINE



MAY

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

MAY UPDATES:

PARKS CLOSE AT 9 PM
(MAY-AUG)

SUNRISE: 6:37 AM
SUNSET: 8:42 PM



**REGISTER
ONLINE**



1

**FORAGING
SEASON BEGINS**
ENJOY NATURE'S TASTY
TREASURES, BUT
REMEMBER TO FORAGE
SUSTAINABLY AND
SHARE THE TRAILS.

2



**BOOKS &
BOOTS**

3

**GUIDED GALLERY
EXPERIENCE**

4



**STARWARS
WILDFLOWER WALK**

5



**A WALK IN
THE PARK**

6



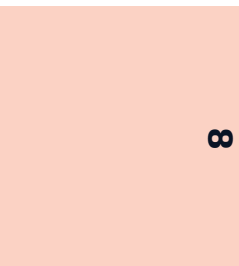
**NATURE NUTS:
BLUEBIRDS**

7



**WED. BIRD
WALK**
**NATURE
NUTS**

8



11



**WILD
EDIBLES**

12



**PARKBOARD
MEETING**

13



14



15

**PEAK SPRING
MIGRATION**
WAKE UP EARLY TO
HEAR THE DAWN
CHORUS AND SEE
COLORFUL WARBLEDERS
ON THEIR WAY NORTH.

16



**FIGHTING IRISH
FOOTBALL BOOK TALK**

17



**HOOSIER
RIVERWATCH
WORKSHOP**
**FEATURE
GRANDDAY**

18



19



**TRAILTREKKERS:
WILDFLOWERS**

20



**HIKING
CLUB**

21



**CURIOSITY CLUB:
SPORTS**

22



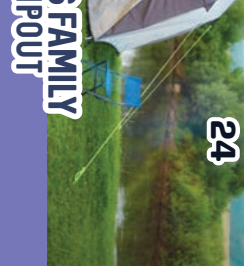
**OPEN HOUSE AT THE
SCHOOLHOUSE**

23



**COBUS FAMILY
CAMPOUT**

24



**BISON
RANCH**

25

**MEMORIAL DAY
WEEKEND**
[MAY 24-26]

26

**N E W
M O O N**
[BEGINS 10:02 P.M.]
SCAN THE NIGHT SKIES
FOR DEEP SKY OBJECTS, LIKE
STAR CLUSTERS, GALAXIES,
AND NEBULAE, NORMALLY
HIDDEN BY MOONLIGHT.

27



**NATURE
JOURNALING**

28



29



**YOGA
IN THE PARK**
**CREATURES OF THE NIGHT:
THE TWILIGHT ZONE**

30

**ELKHART COUNTY
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
FOUNDING DAY**
[MAY 30, 1968]
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO THE MUSEUM!

31



**BISON
RANCH**

JUNE

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

1

ANIMAL MEET & GREET

2

3

A WALK IN THE PARK
NATURE NUTS

4

WED. BIRD WALK
NATURE NUTS

5
WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY
 "IF YOU CAN'T BE IN AWE OF MOTHER NATURE, THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU."
 — ALEX TREBEK

6

7

GUIDED GALLERY EXPERIENCE

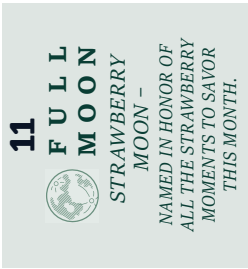
8
TURTLES ACTIVE LAYING EGGS
 IF HELPING A TURTLE CROSS THE ROAD, ALWAYS MAKE SURE TO MOVE IT THE SAME DIRECTION IT'S TRYING TO GO!

9

PARK BOARD MEETING
FLOUR PAINT

10

FORESTRY CAMP

11

FULL MOON STRAWBERRY MOON — NAMED IN HONOR OF ALL THE STRAWBERRY MOMENTS TO SAVOR THIS MONTH.

12

13

BOOKS & 800TS
SWEET CYCLERIDE

14

FOREST BATHING
FEATURE GRAIN DAY

15
FATHER'S DAY
 WHEN DOES A JOKE BECOME A DAD JOKE? WHEN IT'S FULLY GROAN.

16

NATURE JOURNALING
TRAIL TREKKERS: BIRD WALK

17

FLYING WILD EDUCATOR WORKSHOP
HIKING CLUB

18

19

YOGA IN THE PARK
OPEN HOUSE AT THE SCHOOLHOUSE
GUIDED PAINTING CLASS

20
SUMMER SOLSTICE
 DID YOU KNOW DEFRIES GARDEN HAS PAVILIONS TO MARK THE START OF EACH SEASON?

21

ELKHART COUNTY STAND DOWN

22

23

24

NATURE EXPLORER DAYCAMP
NIGHT HIKE

25
NEW MOON
 [BEGINS 5:31 A.M.]
 SCAN THE NIGHT SKIES FOR DEEP SKY OBJECTS, LIKE STAR CLUSTERS, GALAXIES, AND NEBULAE, NORMALLY HIDDEN BY MOONLIGHT.

26

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT: R.O.U.S.'S

27

THE NORTH AMERICAN BEAVER

28

29
NATIONAL CAMERA DAY
 SAY "CHEESE!"

30

JUNE UPDATES:
 PARKS CLOSE AT 9 PM (MAY-AUG)

 SUNRISE: 6:09 AM
 SUNSET: 9:12 PM



REGISTER ONLINE



JULY

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

JULY UPDATES:
 PARKS CLOSE AT 9 PM
 (MAY-AUG)

 SUNRISE: 6:11 AM
 SUNSET: 9:22 PM

6
FIREFLIES BEGIN TO EMERGE
 TAKE A NIGHTTIME STROLL IN MEADOWS AND WOODS TO CATCH THE LIGHT SHOW.



13



20
NATIONAL ICE CREAM DAY
 CELEBRATE THIS SATURDAY WITH US ON A "SWEET CYCLE RIDE" ALONG THE PUMPKINVINE!



27
NATIONAL TREE DAY
 ♪ WHEN ~ THE ~ MOON HITS YOUR KNEES, AND YOU MISPRONOUNCE TREES... SYCAMORE-! ♪



8



22

29
N E W M O O N
 [BEGINS 2:11 P.M.]
 SCAN THE NIGHT SKIES FOR DEEP SKY OBJECTS, LIKE STAR CLUSTERS, GALAXIES, AND NEBULAE, NORMALLY HIDDEN BY MOONLIGHT.



9
BLUEBERRIES READY FOR PICKING
 VISIT BOGS OR SANDY WOODLAND MEADOWS FOR A TASTE OF SUMMER.



23
PEAK MUSHROOM SEASON
 AFTER RAINY DAYS, SEARCH FOR THE BRIGHT ORANGE CHICKEN OF THE WOODS MUSHROOMS.

30

3

10
F U L L M O O N
 BUCK MOON - SEARCH THE FOREST FLOORS FOR ANTLERS SHED BY BUCKS (MALE DEER).



18
ELKHART COUNTY 4-H FAIR
 [RUNS JUL 18-26]
 COME SAY HI AT OUR FAIR BOOTH!

25



12

19



REGISTER ONLINE

AUGUST

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

AUGUST UPDATES:
PARKS CLOSE AT 9 PM
(MAY-AUG)

 **SUNRISE:** 6:36 AM
 **SUNSET:** 9:02 PM



**REGISTER
ONLINE**



3

10

**NATIONAL
S'MORES DAY**
♪ WHEN ~ THE ~
MOON HITS YOUR
EYE, LIKE A BIG
MARSHMALLOW PIE
THAT'S...A S'MORE~! ♪♪

4

**PRAIRIES IN
FULL BLOOM**
VISIT BOOT LAKE
NATURE PRESERVE
TO SEE COLORFUL
WILDFLOWERS AND
BUTTERFLIES.

11



**PARKBOARD
MEETING**

17

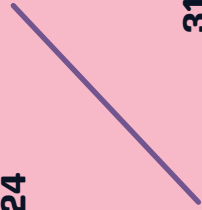
**NATIONAL
POLLINATOR WEEK**
STEP OUT FOR A
SUMMER STROLL AT
OUR POLLINATOR
PLAYPATH AT CORSON
RIVERWOODS.

18



**TRAILTREKKERS:
TREE I.D. HIKE**

24



31

5



**NATURE NUTS:
SNAKES**

12

**WETLAND BIRDS
ON THE MOVE**
KEEP AN EYE ON
WETLAND "FLOODLES"
AS SHOREBIRDS,
GULLS, HERONS, AND
CRANES DROP IN.

19



**HIKING
CLUB**

26

**PEAK MOTH
ACTIVITY**
SCAN YOUR PORCH AND
WINDOWS AT NIGHT
FOR THESE BEAUTIFUL,
DELICATE CREATURES.

6



**WED.
BIRD
WALK**

**NATURE
NUTS**

13

20

**LISTEN FOR
FOR SINGING
INSECTS**
LEARN HOW TO PICK
OUT THESE EVENING
SERENADERS AT
SONGSOFINSECTS.COM

27

7



14



**TREE
I.D. HIKE**

21



**OPEN HOUSE AT THE
SCHOOLHOUSE**

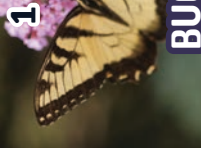
**YOGA
IN THE
PARK**

28



**OAK RIDGE
WALKING TOUR**

**CREATURES OF THE
NIGHT: MOTH RAVE**



1

**BUG
NIGHT**

8



**BOOKS
& BOOTS**

**PERSEIDS
PARTY**

15



**SUMMER
ASTRONOMY**

22



**HOOP,
EMBROIDERY & TEA**

29



**SUMMER
FAMILY CAMPOUT**



2

**GUIDED GALLERY
EXPERIENCE**

9



**FOREST
BATHING**

**DISC GOLF
PARTY**

**SWEET
CYCLERIDE**

16

23



**CAST IRON COOKOUT
& SWAP MEET**

30



SEPTEMBER

sun

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

SEPTEMBER UPDATES:
PARKS CLOSE AT 8 PM
.....
SUNRISE: 7:08 AM
SUNSET: 8:17 PM

1

LABOR DAY
ENJOY SOME TIME OFF IN NATURE. YOU'VE EARNED IT!

2

NATURE NUTS: TREE/ANIMALS

3



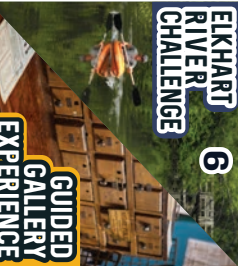
4

PINECONE WREATH WORKSHOP

5



6



7
FULL MOON

STURGEON MOON - NAMED IN HONOR OF THE MIGHTY FISH FOUND IN OUR DEEPEST LAKES.

8



PARKBOARD MEETING

9

PAW PAWS READY TO HARVEST
GIVE INDIANA'S BANANA TREE A SHAKE. RIPE FRUIT WILL READILY FALL. LEARN MORE AT OUR PAW PAW PROGRAM ON SEPT. 19th!

10



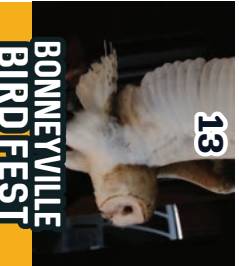
VOLUNTEER DAY OXBOW

12



BOOKS & BOOTS

13



BONNEYVILLE BIRD FEST

14



TRAIL TREKKERS: POLLINATORS

15



HIKING CLUB

17



CURIOSITY CLUB: ART

18



OPEN HOUSE AT THE SCHOOLHOUSE
YOGA IN THE PARK

19



THE INDIANA BANANA

20



FEATURE GRAIN DAY
BUILD YOUR STARS

21

NEWMOON
[BEGINS 2:11 P.M.]
SCAN THE NIGHT SKIES FOR DEEP SKY OBJECTS, LIKE STAR CLUSTERS, GALAXIES, AND NEBULAE, NORMALLY HIDDEN BY MOONLIGHT.

22



FALL NIGHTHIKE

23

TREES BEGIN TO SHOW FALL COLORS
WATCH FOR THE SUBTLE SHIFT OF GREENS TO GOLDS IN OUR FORESTS.

24



25



CREATURES OF THE NIGHT: SPIDERS

26



27



BIKE RIDE TO MIDDLEBURY

28

WORLD RIVERS DAY
JUST STICK TO THE RIVERS AND THE LAKES THAT YOU'RE USED TO.

29



30



REGISTER ONLINE





ASK A NATURALIST (WILD WONDERINGS)

• BY ANDY LANGDON, INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST •

Q Are there poisonous snakes in Indiana?

A NO! Poison is a toxin that is absorbed into the body's tissues through touch, ingestion or inhalation. Venom is a toxin injected into the tissue and can be found in the following within Elkhart County: stinging nettle plants, spiders, bees, wasps, and one snake...the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. They are state-endangered and federally threatened, so are very uncommon to see. The entire state of Indiana, however, is home to four venomous snake species: Timber Rattlesnake, Northern Copperhead, Eastern Cottonmouth, and the Eastern Massasauga. The first three are only found in the southern half of Indiana. FYI...the Keelback Snake is one of the only snakes in the world that is actually poisonous, and we definitely don't have them here.

Q What should I do if I find an abandoned baby bunny?

A First of all, is it actually abandoned? In most cases, it is not. The strategy of a mother rabbit is to only visit the babies in the ground nest a couple times a day or night and often just long enough to feed them. So when we come across them, they appear alone or "abandoned." Wildlife Rehabilitators get calls every spring from well-meaning wildlife supporters, but most often it is best to leave them alone and keep pets and lawn mowers away from the area until they are grown. If there is blood, or you are sure the mother has been killed, it is best to reach out to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for intervention. To find a rehabilitator in your area, visit in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/wildlife-resources/orphaned-and-injured-animals/wildlife-rehabilitators Other animals also use this strategy, so remember, the animal mothers and fathers know best and probably have it under control without our "help."

Q Should I clean out my bluebird box after the babies are gone?

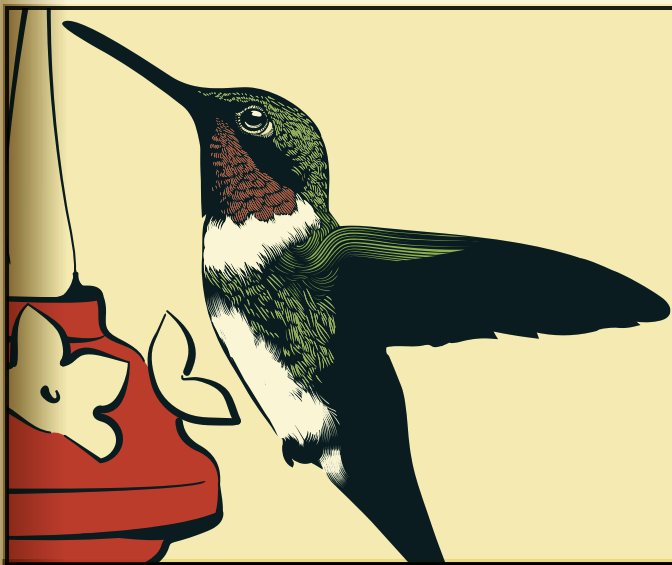
A Bluebirds may re-line or build another nest over an existing one, so removing the nest after bluebirds have fledged and before the next brood is not necessary. In fact, Cornell University did a study that showed some bluebirds preferred a clean box while others seemed to prefer the nest left in the box. That study can be found at nestwatch.org/blog/to-clean-or-not-to-clean-your-nest-box. Regardless, before spring, it is best to remove old nests that may contain blowfly larva, mites, and lice that are problem-causing parasites to the new young. A good scrub with a soapy solution is not a bad idea, either...especially if you had mice as winter-time residents.

Q I found a dead deer. Should I be concerned?

A Deer, like all animals, can die from many causes. Vehicle collisions, hunting, and predation are fairly obvious when coming across a carcass. Sometimes, the cause is not as apparent and can be a mystery without further examination. One example might be a deer with no apparent outward injuries found dead near water. This could indicate that it died from EHD, Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease. EHD is naturally-occurring, and is caused by the bite of a midge fly (Genus Culicoides). The disease causes high fevers which draw deer to cool water, where they sometimes perish. EHD kills a small number of deer annually and is not transmittable to humans. Just remember, don't touch a dead animal without knowing the cause first.



HAVE A NATURE QUESTION?
SHOOT US AN EMAIL AT
PARKSINFO@ELKHARTCOUNTY.COM



✿ APRIL ✿

Be sure to hang your hummingbird feeders by mid-April as **RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS** will be returning from their migration to Mexico and Central America. Providing food for these tiny travelers will support them after a long, hard journey.



~ MAY ~

In May, look for **PAWPAW TREES** blooming in our parks. The blooms are striking purplish-maroon and trumpet-shaped. Though their scent resembles rotting flesh, it serves to attract flies, the tree's main pollinators.



~ JUNE ~

By June, visitors to the parks will begin to hear the unmistakable sound of summer - the steady, shrill hum of **CICADAS**. Their songs fill the air, marking the arrival of warm days and the peak of the season.

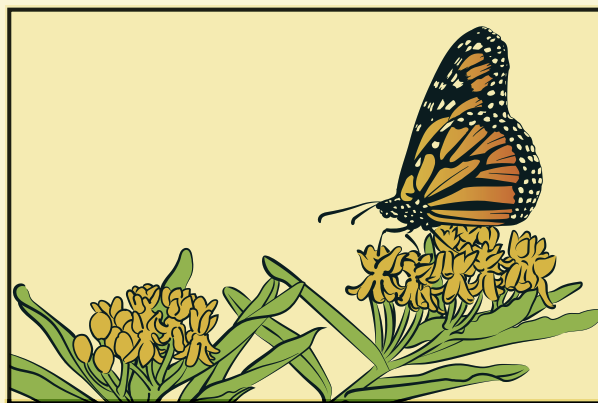


~ JULY ~

As you explore the Parks' wetlands in July, be sure to admire the **BUTTONBUSH** adorned with striking, white, rounded flowers. These fragrant blossoms entice a delightful array of local pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

✿ AUGUST ✿

Stay up late on the night of August 12 to witness the peak of one of Mother Nature's most dazzling light shows. Gaze toward the northern night sky to catch the breathtaking display of the **PERSEIDS METEOR SHOWER**. You can also join us at a Perseids Party on August 8 for a little dark sky viewing fun.



~ SEPTEMBER ~

As summer fades and fall approaches, keep an eye out for the magnificent **MONARCH BUTTERFLIES** as they feast on nature's wildflowers. These beautiful insects are bolstering their food intake in preparation for their incredible journey to Mexico.



PARKS —FROM A— DOG'S PERSPECTIVE

• BY PAWFINDER, GUEST WOOFER •

As a dog, the park is like a giant wonderland! It's a huge place full of interesting smells, sights, and sounds to make my tail wag non-stop. Let's sniff out how to make the most out of a dog's day in the park.

EXPLORING NATURE'S PLAYGROUND

Did you know I'm allowed in ALL of the parks?! Bow-wow, that's a lot of options! When sniffing out new trails to visit, my human and I are fond of ones with access to water and those wonderfully-scented trash cans. I always see him tossing bags of my "presents" in them after walks...weird, right? Sometimes he gets the thumbs up from parks staff when he does it. They must really love finding my gifts in trash cans!

My human also grabs these flappy-foldy-paper-things with lines and words all over them that seem to help him get around. I love long walks, so my human always stares at those paper things before deciding where to start to make sure we're both getting plenty of exercise.



NEED A MAP? Visit elkhartcountyparks.org/ destinations to download a park map, or swing by an info kiosk for a printed version.

MEETING NEW FRIENDS

One of the best things about going to the park is the chance to cross paths with other dogs! There's always a fun mix of fuzzy pals to meet, from playful puppies to wise seniors who've seen it all. I love being social with everyone, but not everyone's wagging their tail to see me, so my human gives them plenty of space and keeps me on a leash under 6 ft (it's a park rule...no ifs, ands, or ruffs!)

PRACTICE GOOD PET-IQUETTE when sharing the trail.



Not everyone's comfortable around dogs, and some dogs might not be socialized. To avoid starting a doggy debate over territory, ask the owner if it's okay before approaching.

MAKING EVERY SEASON PAWSITIVE

GUESS WHAT?? Today was the BEST DAY of my life! I mean, for me, that's EVERY DAY, but hey! Maybe it's because my human is such an amazing trail buddy. He's always looking out for me...

In spring and fall, there are SO MANY smells! I love running through the flowers and leaves, tracking down scents. Sometimes, I brush up against things and get hitchhikers on my back, like spiky burs or clingy bugs. My human gets "ticked off" when they come home with us, so he always checks for them after our hikes.



KEEP THE EIGHT-LEGGED CRITTERS AT BAY.

Use a pet-friendly insect repellent and avoid brushing against foliage.

On hot summer days, my fluffy coat makes me pant a lot, so my human brings plenty of water for both of us. He picks routes shaded by lots of trees, and lets me splash in the streams to cool off!



COOL YOUR SUN DOG. Dogs need an ounce of water per pound each day. Bring extra when it's hot and pick shorter routes out of full sun to help them beat the heat.

In winter, I get to chase these tiny fluffy white things! They never taste very good, but it's fun to catch them. They take a lot of energy to chase and cling to my paws, tail, and fur. All these things make me feel sluggish and cold the longer we're out, so my owner picks shorter walks for us to go on and has me wear a toasty fleece, like his.



AVOID CHILLY DOGS. Every dog is different with their tolerance of the cold. Bring a warm layer for them to wear and keep hikes on the short side as the temperatures drop.



RECIPE

PUMPKIN DOG TREATS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Cup Puréed Pumpkin (Fresh or Canned)
- 2 Cups Whole Wheat Flour (Bonneyville Flour is a Solid Choice)
- 1 Egg, Beaten

[DIRECTIONS]

- ▶ Preheat the oven to 350° and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
- ▶ Mix pumpkin and egg, then add flour. Mix well and add to a non-stick surface.
- ▶ Knead dough with your hands until well mixed.
- ▶ Cut the dough into desired shapes and place onto cookie sheet.
- ▶ Bake for 30 min or until golden brown. Let cool completely before feeding to your pet.



Store in a sealed container:

- ❁ at room temperature for up to 5 days
- ❁ in refrigerator for up to 2 weeks
- ❁ in freezer for up to 3 months

STRAWBERRY YOGURT DOG TREATS

INGREDIENTS

- 8-12 Frozen Strawberries
- 1/2 Cup Plain Yogurt
- 1/2 Cup Water

[DIRECTIONS]

- ▶ Place all ingredients into a blender and mix (Consistency is up to you).
- ▶ Pour puréed mix into silicone molds and set in a freezer until fully frozen.



Pop out of mold and store in a sealed container in the freezer for up to 3 months.



DOGAPALOOZA
MAY 10 AT OX BOW COUNTY PARK

**HEMP
DOGBANE**
(*APOCYNUM
CANNABINUM*)

PICKY EATING ISN'T JUST FOR MONARCHS

• BY VINCE GRESHAM, NATURAL RESOURCES COORDINATOR •

THE Monarch Butterfly is one of the most well-known insects in our region. It is known for its bold color and its long, fall migration to Mexico. Those who have studied monarchs as a class project in school, or tried to attract them to the garden, know that monarch caterpillars are picky eaters. They only feed on species in the *Asclepias* genus, which includes several kinds of milkweed. When discussing what animals eat, biologists often

separate them into either specialists or generalists. Monarchs are specialists because of their specific food requirements, while animals that eat a wide range of food are considered generalists. Specialist diets in the insect world are very common. In fact, the majority of insects that eat plants are specialists.

Here are some other local insect and plant connections you can find in the Elkhart County Parks or in your own backyard.



**DOGBANE
LEAF BEETLE**

(*CHRYSOCHUS AURATUS*)

With its metallic multicolored appearance, the Dogbane Leaf Beetle is one of the most attractive beetles we might find in our parks.

Look for it on Dogbane leaves in old fields and prairies. While Dogbane is toxic to other wildlife, the Dogbane Leaf Beetle is adapted to overcome the plant's toxins.



**GOLDENROD
GALL FLY**

(*EUROSTA SOLIDAGINIS*)

Insect galls are abnormal growths on a plant, caused by the presence of certain insects. Gall-producing insects, like the Goldenrod Gall Fly, are protected within the gall. Though the insects themselves are not often seen, the galls can be found in our fields and prairies on the stems of several goldenrod species.

GOLDENRODS
(*SOLIDAGO SPP.*)

PHOTO CREDITS: GILLES AYOTTE (HEMP DOGBANE), GABRIELLE BERRY (DOG BANE LEAF BEETLE), BEATRIZ MOISSET (GOLDENROD GALL FLY) PATRICK COIN (TULIP-TREE SILK MOTH).

TULIP TREE
(*LIRIODENDRON TULIIFERA*)



TULIP-TREE SILKMOTH

(*CALLOSAMIA ANGULIFERA*)

The large caterpillars of the Tulip Tree Silk Moth feed primarily on Tulip Trees. Like other moths in the *Saturniidae* family, they do not have functional mouths when they are adults, so they don't eat, living for just a week or two.

GIANT SWALLOWTAIL

(*PAPILIO CRESPHONTES*)

As caterpillars, Giant Swallowtails only feed on plants in the citrus (*Rutaceae*) family. Only a few species of that family are native to Indiana, including a shrub known as Common Hoptree. Elkhart County Parks staff are working to replace invasive shrubs with hop tree in several locations.

COMMON HOPTREE

(*PTELEA TRIFOLIATA*)



The caterpillars of this moth feed on Meadow-Rues, which grows at wood edges and wet meadows. Other moths in the *Calyptra* genus have been observed drinking blood, which has earned them the name vampire moths.

CANADIAN OWLET MOTH

(*CALYPTRA CANADENSIS*)



MEADOW-RUES
(*THALICTRUM SPP.*)



GREAT SPANGLED FRITILLARY

(*SPEYERIA CYBELE*)

Distinguishing the many species of fritillary can be a fun challenge. As larva, Great Spangled Fritillaries feed only on various species of Violet. As adults, they can be found in open areas feeding on Milkweed, Joe-pye Weed, Verbena, and other native wildflowers.



VIOLETS
(*VIOLETA SPP.*)

HIT A HOME RUN WITH THE HISTORY

BY JENIFER BLOUIN POLICELLI, CURATOR OF EDUCATION

America's pastime has played a huge role in the history of Elkhart County. Residents have participated at every level of play, from toddler tee-ball to the big leagues. Across decades and generations, baseball has offered a path for people in Elkhart County to find community, power, and entertainment.



At its core, baseball is a way to have fun. One of the best examples of this from Elkhart County history is the prominence of business leagues in the first half of the 20th century. Squads from local factories such as CG Conn, Martin Band Instrument Company, and Buescher Band Instrument Company all took the field as teammates as well as colleagues. These games served the dual purpose of providing recreation and boosting morale among employees, all in

hopes of inspiring loyalty to their companies. Baseball has also provided a way for some groups to break barriers. For example, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (1943-1954) allowed women access into this traditionally male-dominated sport. Though players were expected to maintain a traditionally feminine appearance with their uniforms, mannerisms, and language, they also gained access to things previously unattainable to them. Several women from

Elkhart County played for the AAGPBL. Nancy DeShone of Elkhart and Shirley Salisbury of Goshen both played for the South Bend Blue Sox, and Elkhart's Doris Marsh played for the Fort Wayne Daisies. These women were able to find community among their teammates, gain power by breaking the mold of gender expectations, and provide entertainment for fans whose clubs weren't fielding teams during World War II.

[TOP IMAGE]

ALL-AMERICAN GIRLS PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE PLAYER MARG CALLAHAN SLIDING INTO HOME PLATE AS UMPIRE NORRIS WARD WATCHES, OPA-LOCKA, FLORIDA.



DOTTIE SCHROEDER, CATCHER FOR FORT WAYNE DAISIES, 1948.

All of this and more is important to Elkhart County's history with baseball. As baseball returns this spring, you're invited to learn more with Museum staff as we explore topics such as Elkhart County's contribution to the Negro Leagues, Babe Ruth's connection to CG Conn, the role of semi-pro and collegiate teams, and more!

SOUTH BEND BLUE SOX LOGO PATCH.



• **THURSDAY, APRIL 3 (7 PM)** •
Step up to the plate with us for **Batter Up: Baseball in Elkhart County History.**

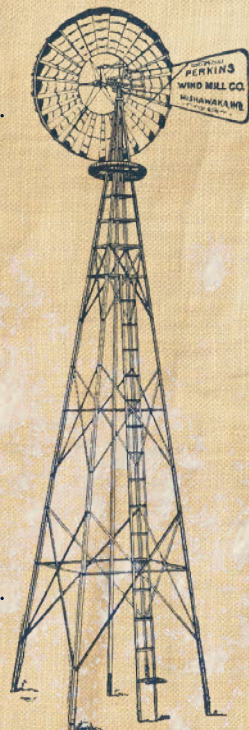
• **FRIDAY, APRIL 11 (10 AM)** •
Students ages 8-12 are invited to our **Vintage Baseball Mini-Camp**, a partnership with the Elkhart County Railroaders vintage baseball team.



SOUTH BEND BLUE SOX CAP, 1943.



CG CONN'S CORPORATE BASEBALL TEAM, 1915.

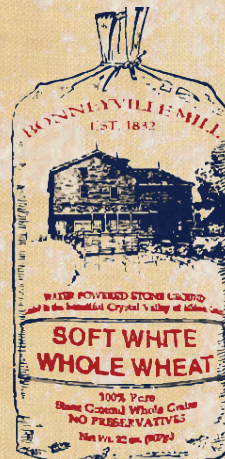


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GETTING STARTED WITH NATIVE PLANTS



• BY VINCE GRESHAM, NATURAL RESOURCES COORDINATOR •



As more people recognize the value of native plants, home owners are swapping their non-native shrubs, flowers, and ornamental grasses for attractive native species that enhance the ecological value of the landscape.

WHAT IS A NATIVE PLANT?

Plants are generally considered to be native if they existed in our area before Europeans settled here. Most plants that are sold in home and garden stores are non-native, having originated in other parts of the world. While non-native plants are not all bad, they have less value for wildlife. Many are invasive, aggressively crowding out native plants in the landscape.

WHY GO NATIVE?

Native landscapes support more butterflies, birds, and other wildlife than landscapes filled with non-native plants. Native plants put on a colorful show throughout the growing season, and produce seeds that feed wildlife in the fall and winter. Native plants do not need to be pampered like many non-native ornamental species because they are adapted to survive in our local climate.

WHERE MISTAKES HAPPEN

Despite the appeal of native landscapes, there are some challenges to overcome before a homeowner can successfully incorporate native plants. Popular home and garden stores typically have few, if any, native plants and may not have staff with the knowledge to provide sufficient guidance on how and where to plant them. Many proponents of native plants prefer a more natural look to their landscape, but achieving that look without it becoming weedy and messy requires a careful application of some important landscape design principles. Fortunately, there are many resources now available to help.



NATIVE PLANT RESOURCES

Wild Ones – A national organization that promotes native landscapes and the wildlife that depend on them. The South Bend chapter website includes a list of nurseries, special event plant sales, mail order options, and other resources.

Website:
southbend.wildones.org/learn/nurseries-and-landscapers

The Indiana Native Plant Society (INPS) – A great source of information on native plants. They have a list of native plant nurseries and an interactive map of where to find them in Indiana.

Website:
indiananativeplants.org/landscaping/where-to-buy

TIP: BEWARE OF “WILDFLOWER” SEED PACKETS

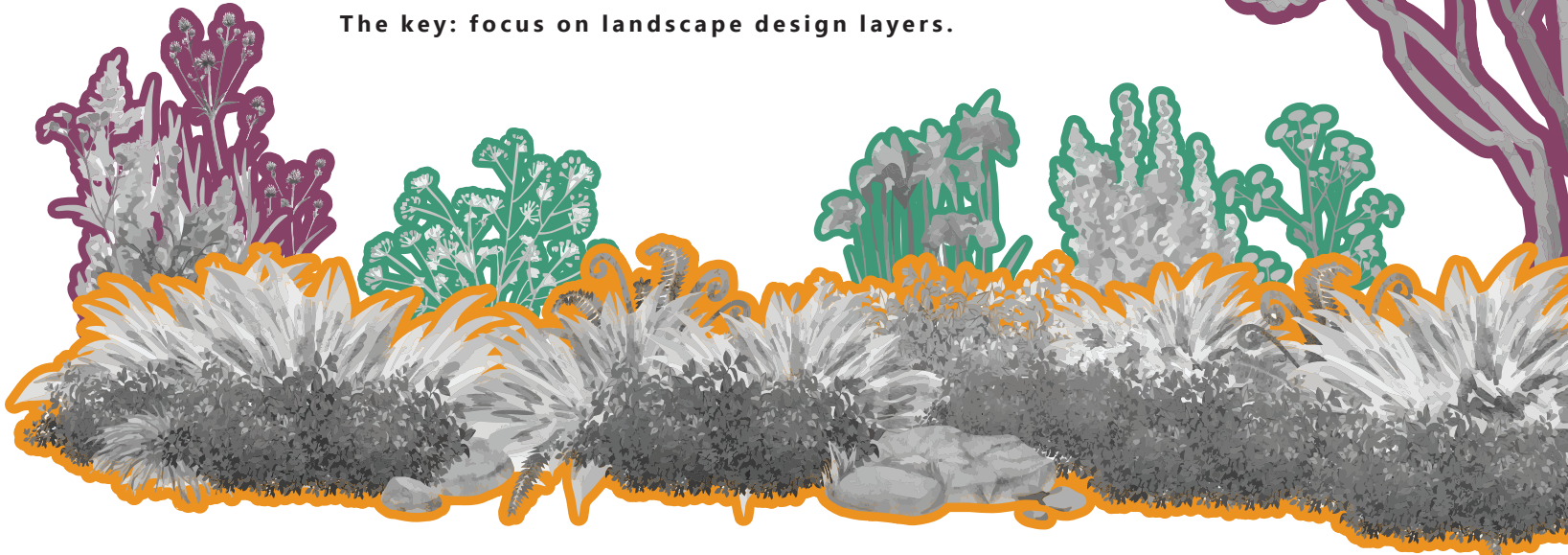


The word “wildflower” does not mean native. While there are nurseries out there that offer high-quality native seed packets, many companies sell seed packets marketed as “wildflowers” that contain non-native plants. Some of them may even contain invasive species. They may be advertised as a “midwest wildflower” mix, but it doesn’t necessarily mean they are native to the midwest. It may just mean that they can grow in the midwest.

HOW DO I CREATE A NATIVE LANDSCAPE THAT LOOKS NATURAL, BUT NOT MESSY?

Landscaping with native plants in residential areas is different than restoring them on park land. With a much smaller space to work with, homeowners may feel challenged on how to design their land in an attractive, natural-looking way.

The key: focus on landscape design layers.



WHAT ARE "LANDSCAPE DESIGN LAYERS"?

An in-depth explanation of these layers can be found in the book *Planting in a Post-Wild World* by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West. Plants like Purple Coneflower, Milkweed, and Black-eyed Susan, are often the first ones that people encounter as they are introduced to native plants. They are great plants to include in the landscape, but according to Rainer and West, these plants all fill the "design layer" role in the landscape. To create an attractive, natural-looking native landscape it is important to include plants in the

other layers. Many landscape plans fail to consider the "groundcover" layer. Clump-forming grass and sedge species, along with other low, spreading plants should cover 50% of the ground. This layer suppresses weeds and allows the design layer, which should make up about 25-40% of the landscape, to stand-up and stand out visually from the rest of the landscape. The other 10-25% of the landscape should be the structural layer, consisting of shrubs and other taller, sturdy plants whose stems last the winter.

WHAT PLANTS SHOULD I USE?

There are hundreds of native plants that can be added to your home landscape. The starter list to the right offers options for each landscape layer, but finding the right fit for your specific sunlight and soil conditions is key. Find additional options at the links listed under Native Plant Resources on the previous page.



LEARN
MORE

This is only scratching the surface of the native landscaping resources that are available.

For more tips and ideas stay tuned at our blog this spring at elkhartcountyparks.org/blog

GROUNDCOVER — LAYER —

50% OF
LANDSCAPE

- PRAIRIE DROPSEED [*SPOROBOLUS HETEROLEPIS*]
- BLUE MISTFLOWER [*CONOCLINIUM COELESTINUM*]
- WILD GINGER [*ASARUM CANADENSE*]
- EASTERN WOODLAND SEDGE [*CAREX BLANDA*]
- HAIRY WOOD MINT [*BLEPHILIA HIRSUTA*]

DESIGN — LAYER —

25-40% OF
LANDSCAPE

- ROUGH BLAZING STAR [*LIATRIS ASPERA*]
- BUTTERFLY WEED [*ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA*]
- WILD BERGAMOT [*MONARDA FISTULOSA*]
- STIFF GOLDENROD [*OLIGONEURON RIGIDUM*]
- NEW ENGLAND ASTER [*SYMPHOTRICHUM NOVAE-ANGLIAE*]

STRUCTURAL — LAYER —

10-25% OF
LANDSCAPE

- RATTLESNAKE MASTER [*ERYNGIUM YUCCIFOLIUM*]
- BIG BLUESTEM [*ANDROPOGON GERARDII*]
- SPOTTED JOE-PYE WEED [*EUTROCHIUM MACULATUM*]
- ARROWWOOD [*VIBURNUM DENTATUM*]
- NORTHERN SPICEBUSH [*LINDERA BENZOIN*]



◀ **PACK 797'S DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS OFRENDA AT THE ELKHART COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM.**



🕒 **LENDING A HAND AT OX BOW'S 2024 HALLOWEEN CAMPFIRE & HAYRIDES EVENT.**

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

CUB SCOUT PACK 797

• BY KRISTA DANIELS • INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST

We had the pleasure of meeting Cub Scout Pack 797 during the fall of 2023, just after their group began with 10 scouts, ages 5-10. We learned from Cub Master, Annie Alvarado-Guillaumin, about the group's desire to be an active and involved part of the local community. She stated that "Pack 797 is committed to teaching its scouts the value of community service and the beauty of cooperation. The Elkhart community is our home, and we have a shared responsibility to make our home a beautiful place." What a wonderful outlook and one that matches the mission of the Elkhart County Parks.

In the months since that original meeting, we've learned that Pack 797 is the first Hispanic/Latino Cub Scout Pack in Michiana, and they currently have 21 active scouts and 7 adult leaders. They have also attended many educational opportunities with us, like tree ID hike, squirrel program and owl prowl. This small, but mighty group has

completed approximately 100 hours of community service so far...with many more to come.

One example of this service was at our Halloween Campfire event this past October. The cub scouts ran two of our kid's activity stations during the event. "We had a blast helping at the Halloween event, we were able to engage with the community, it was a safe place for families to enjoy time together and enjoy Ox Bow Park at night." said Cub Master Annie.

We are extremely grateful for their help and partnership and look forward to many more opportunities to work together to better our community.

¡Gracias por todo, Pack 797!

For more information on Cub Scouts or Pack 797, visit beascout.org or contact Cub Master Annie at annie-pack797@gmail.com



ENJOYING THE HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS.



⬆️ **BRAVING THE COLD TO HELP PARTICIPANTS MAKE CRAFTS.**

Rental Facilities

Whether it's a family reunion, graduation party, or a company picnic, we've got plenty of options to fit your budget. Pick your date, book your spot, then rest easy.

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OX BOW

	TYPE	CAPACITY	ELECTRIC OUTLETS	DEPOSIT	RATE
*OX BOW HAUS	ENCLOSED	50	✓	\$100	\$165
FISHERMAN'S CAMP	COVERED	75	✓		\$120
COFFEE TREE	COVERED	50			\$75
HONEY LOCUST	COVERED	75			\$95
BLACK MAPLE	COVERED	50			\$75
COTTONWOOD	COVERED	75	✓		\$125
STABLE	COVERED	110			\$125
RED PINES CAMPFIRE	OPEN AIR	50			\$25
HICKORY HILL CHAPEL	OPEN AIR	50			\$75

COBUS CREEK

COBUS SHELTER	PARTIALLY ENCLOSED	100	✓	\$100	\$200
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MUSEUM

AUDITORIUM	ENCLOSED	300	✓	\$250	\$350
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BONNEYVILLE MILL

	TYPE	CAPACITY	ELECTRIC OUTLETS	DEPOSIT	RATE
BALDWIN ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE	ENCLOSED	35	✓	\$100	\$150
*BRIAR PATCH	PARTIALLY ENCLOSED	150	✓	\$100	\$120
FEEDLOT	COVERED	150	✓		\$150
MEADOW	COVERED	50			\$60
LOOKOUT	COVERED	50			\$60
KUM MOL RIE	COVERED	100			\$85

RIVER PRESERVE

BAINTERTOWN	COVERED	50			\$50
BENTON	COVERED	25			\$30
DEFRIES GARDENS [WEDDING CEREMONIES]	OPEN AIR	50		\$250	\$225

* UNAVAILABLE DEC. 1 - MARCH 14
PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR PARK INFORMATION & HOURS, SEE PAGE 3.



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