

New
Saturday
Programming

Retzer Nature Center's "School" of the Land

Join us every Saturday for programs and activities that will be wide-ranging, with a general focus on the natural world and sustainability offered by Waukesha County's Retzer Nature Center Naturalists, Recycling, and Land Resources Staff and Waukesha School District's Planetarium Staff. Most Saturday programs are family-friendly and geared towards all ages.

Walk-ins welcome - Registration is recommended to assure a spot. Groups of 10 or more are required to preregister. All programs are \$5.00 per person for advanced registration, or \$6.00 per person at the door, unless otherwise noted.

Naturalist Activity: Nature related information and hands-on activity occurring before and after the scheduled programs. No need to register, just stop in and enjoy.

March 3

OUR FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS

Adults and Families

Why do birds fly and why can't I? Why do some have long beaks and some have bills? Discover the answers by meeting our ring-necked dove, Gracie, and take an investigative look at bird features and adaptations.

Naturalist Activity: Bird adaptations demonstrated through a fun, puzzling activity.

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, February 27

March 10

ECOSCAPING— NATURAL LANDSCAPING FOR YOUR YARD

Adults

A beginning program on how to design a variety of landscape types using native plants. Addressing such questions as soil and plant compatibility, sun vs. shade, planting a garden vs. a natural community, what results can I expect, and how much will it cost to name a few.

Naturalist Activity: Natural Landscaping Q and A, with literature display and ideas.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, March 5

ORGANIC LAWN CARE

FREE Sponsored by Waukesha County Recycling

Adult Program

The traditional approach to maintaining our lawns has been to treat weeds and insects with herbicides and pesticides and support grass growth with synthetic fertilizers. Along with potential health concerns for our families and pets, we now know the damage that has been inflicted on our most basic life-support system: soil. Find out the latest trends and steps to a green and healthy lawn through organic practices that feed the soil that supports the grass we've grown to love-along with supporting our entire civilization!

TIME: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Friday, March 9

March 17

VOLES, MICE & LEMMINGS - WI SMALLEST MAMMALS

Adults and Families

We will discuss the major role these mammals play in nature and how they benefit our health and economy.

Naturalist Activity: Introduction to animal field survey techniques; live traps, pitfalls, ear-tagging, and field survey methods.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, March 12

March 24

MISSION SPACE

Families

Retzer and the Planetarium combine forces in this program highlighting activities involving space. Build a rocket to launch as you get ready for explorations and beyond. Later blast off for a Planetarium program called "Secret of the Cardboard Rocket". **Retzer participants will get a reduced planetarium show rate of \$3.00 each, payable at the door.**

Naturalist Activity: Afternoon: House for Sale—birdhouse construction out of recycled materials.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m., with the option to see the Planetarium Program at 11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, March 19

March 31

ID OF TREES & SHRUBS IN A LEAFLESS CONDITION

Adult Program

Explore the peaceful early spring woods of Retzer Nature Center as you learn to identify common trees and shrubs. Focus on leafless twig identification!

TIME: 9:00 -11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, March 26

ALDO LEOPOLD – READING THE LANDSCAPE

FREE

Adults/Children 12 and over who are interested in Leopold

Aldo Leopold is well known as a scientific ecologist/conservationist, environmental teacher/philosopher, land essayist/poet, author of *A Sand County Almanac*, and originator of the celebrated Land Ethic. We will explore (with Leopold) the business, and pleasure, of Reading the Landscape. Join the Retzer Naturalist for a 2-hour outdoor Leopold-style exploration, in which we'll discover the secrets of the early spring land. An indoor discussion (approx. 1 hour), with hot chocolate, will follow.

Naturalist Activity: Nature journaling with Leopold.

TIME: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Friday, March 30

April 7

RIBBIT, RIBBIT: SPRING SERENADE

Families

Come and learn about why frogs ribbit, about their habitat and which species call Retzer Nature Center their home. Get familiar with their unique calls and leave prepared to identify our slimy friends!

Naturalist Activity: Create your own frog with origami!

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, April 2

April 14

REMOTE CAMPING

Adults and Families

An introduction to remote camping—What, no shower? This program is designed for those looking for a little more solitude, a little more wildlife, and a little more adventure. What do you really want out of the trip? We'll discuss all aspects of camping – planning, food, water, shelter, gear, clothing, cooking and importantly, the need to discuss our plans with others.

Naturalist Activity: Natural Landscaping Q and A, with literature display and ideas.

TIME: 9:00 -11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, April 9

COMPOST WORKSHOP

FREE - Sponsored by Waukesha County Recycling

Adult Program

Learn how to create your own compost, how to use it, and different bin styles to build or buy. Find out the “Top 10 Reasons” to compost! Discover the secrets of healthy soil for beautiful lawns and gardens, and the role compost plays.

TIME: 10-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Friday, April 13

April 28

EARTH WEEK FINALE

See Earth Week Brochure for more details.

TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

RECYCLING OUTREACH BOOTH - Have nagging questions about recycling? Kids get a pencil from recycled one dollar bills.

May 5

FINDING SPRING BIRDS AND WILDFLOWERS

Adults and Families

Woods come alive with warblers and wildflowers in springtime. Join Naturalist, Larry Kascht, as you identify, smell, photograph, and appreciate the flowers, and learn about their life and ecology. We will identify as many of the warblers as we can as we learn about their migration. Bring your field guide, camera, and binoculars!

Naturalist Activity: Sharpening your eye—what to look for in Spring.

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, April 30

May 12

SPRING PLANT SALE

Naturalist Activity: Answer questions about plants. Bring your plant questions/samples.

May 19

FINDING SPRING BIRDS AND WILDFLOWERS

Adults and Families

Woods come alive with warblers and wildflowers in springtime. Join Naturalist, Larry Kascht, as you identify, smell, photograph, and appreciate the flowers, and learn about their life and ecology. We will identify as many of the warblers as we can as we learn about their migration. Bring your field guide, camera, and binoculars!

Naturalist Activity: Drawing birds.

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, May 14

June 2

PLANT TOUR & NATURAL COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION

Adults and Families

A hike of the Retzer grounds, looking at anything and everything – especially identifying plants in bloom. During the hike, we will feature different flora in bloom for this time period. We will talk about the different natural communities as we walk the trails, occasionally chasing an interesting flower or insect.

Naturalist Activity: Vegetative Ecology of the Season, and associated literature.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Tuesday, May 29

DISCOVER COMPOSTING

FREE - sponsored by Waukesha County Recycling

Adults and Families

Visit the outdoor Discovery Tour and Field Lab at Retzer Nature Center and find out how to turn kitchen vegetable scraps and yard debris into compost – “the living soil”. Find some cool “decomposer” bugs. Plant and take home a vegetable seed and get a start on your garden. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

TIME: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Friday, June 1

June 9

GETTING STARTED WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Adults and Families

How to grow native plants from seed, root division and cuttings. Understanding soil conditions, planning for continuous blooms, and short and long term management.

Naturalist Activity: Native plant propagation—resources, tools, methods, and ecological benefits.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, June 4

June 16

WADE THROUGH THE WETLANDS

Adults and Families

Hike through the fen on a scavenger hunt as we explore the makings of this fascinating habitat. Moderate hiking involving hills and uneven terrain.

Naturalist Activity: Pond Fun—the pond brought up to Nature Center patio for public to explore.

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, June 11

June 23

ID AND ECOLOGY OF SE WI FOREST TREES

Adults

This program will cover identification, basic biology and ecology of SE Wisconsin trees found at Retzer Nature Center. Forest succession and other topics in forest ecology will also be discussed

Naturalist Activity: Tree ID contest, using tree keys (families with children 7 years and up)

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, June 18

RECYCLING OUTREACH BOOTH - Have nagging questions about recycling? Kids get a pencil from recycled one dollar bills.

June 30

USING A COMPASS-GETTING AROUND LIKE THE LEGENDARY EXPLORERS DID

Adults and Families

The method of using a map and compass to find your way is almost obsolete nowadays with GPS and Smart phones. But what about when you need to rough it? Your batteries are dead or your devices were washed down the river when you flipped your canoe. What do you do now? Join Naturalist, Nikita, to learn how to orienteer yourself through a contest course.

Naturalist Activity: Make your own compass.

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, June 25

July 14

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE BEES TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE FOOD WE GROW

Adult and Families

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, July 9

Discuss recent changes in bee populations and why bees need our help.

Naturalist Activity: How to build native bee nesting structures, and how to use them for home gardens.

July 21

PLANT TOUR & NATURAL COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION

Adults and Families

TIME: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, July 16

A hike of the Retzer grounds, looking at anything and everything – especially identifying plants in bloom. During the hike we will feature different flora in bloom for this time period. We will talk about the different natural communities as we walk the trails, occasionally chasing an interesting flower or insect.

Naturalist Activity: Vegetative Ecology of the Season, and associated literature.

July 28

DRAGONFLIES, GRASSHOPPERS, CATERPILLARS & BUTTERFLIES

- THE WONDER OF OUR SUMMER INSECTS

Adults and Families

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, July 23

Using our powers of observation, along with nets and bug boxes, we will capture and bring back a treasure-trove of native insects. We will figure out how they live and enjoy their incredible variety. At days end, we will release them back to their natural habitat.

Naturalist Activity: See insects up close, in an aquarium, and then release them.

August 4

READING THE WOODS

Adults and Families

TIME: 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

REGISTER BY: Monday, July 30

Ever wonder why some trees look sick or how come the forest looks different throughout the years? And what are all these mushrooms I see? Come join Naturalist Nikita on a nature hike and further explore what's going on in our woods here at Retzer Nature Center.

Naturalist Activity: Tree and leaf identification.

August 11

FAMILY TRAIL RALLY

FREE

Adults and Families

TIME: Throughout the day 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Registration not required.

Come explore Retzer as you and your family follows clues that will navigate you around our trail system. Your adventure begins at our indoor Naturalist table where you'll pickup your first clue.

Naturalist Activity: Solar power—use the sun for art projects.

August 25

SAVE WATER, SAVE MONEY

WITH RAIN GARDENS & RAIN BARRELS

FREE - Sponsored by Waukesha County Land Resources

Adults and Families

TIME: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

REGISTER BY: Friday, August 24

When it rains – where does the rainwater go? In this program, you will learn about two great ways to capture your runoff – rain gardens and rain barrels. You will learn the basic design principles to design and install your own rain garden and rain barrel.

RECYCLING OUTREACH BOOTH - Have nagging questions about recycling? Kids get a pencil from recycled one dollar bills.