

the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Spring 2025



Ant Candy

**Our Wonderful
(and Rare) Bumblebees**

Spring Calendar



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

from the president



DuPage forest preserves are coming to life with wild blooms from bloodroot to Virginia bluebells. The trees are starting to show their new leaves, and everything feels fresh and full of promise. This new growth not only gives forest preserve visitors a burst of color but also provides vital resources for some of our ecosystems' smallest inhabitants. You can read about a few of them in this issue's two feature articles on pages 6 and 20.

You can help efforts to support these busy workers by adding native flowers to your own backyard. To make upcoming gardening projects easier, the Forest Preserve District is again hosting a two-day Native Plant Sale, this year on May 16 and 17, and is offering native landscaping programs as part of its spring calendar lineup. You can get details on pages 14 and 15 and online at dupageforest.org/native-plant-sale.

With the warmer weather, I recently spent time biking along some of the forest preserves' 175 miles of scenic trails. It made me think of how proud I am as a county resident that officers from our Law Enforcement department are taking the initiative to lead a multiagency bike safety and education campaign. The goal is to promote responsible riding and ensure public safety not only on DuPage trails but also along those in adjacent counties. The effort will also cover a range of safety topics, including speed limits, yielding to other trail users, and understanding e-bike classifications and regulations. You can read more about it by following us on social media throughout May.

Spring is such a wonderful time to enjoy the outdoors, whether on foot or by bike. I hope you get to experience the beauty of the forest preserves soon!

Daniel Hebreard

President, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

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For schedules and agendas or to watch live or recorded meetings, visit dupageforest.org.



THE CONSERVATIONIST

Spring 2025, Vol. 62, No. 2



FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE COUNTY

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dupageforest.org

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contents

Vol. 62, No. 2 | Spring 2025



4

4 **News & Notes**



6

6 **Ant Candy**

8 **Spring Calendar**

20 **Our Wonderful (and Rare) Bumblebees**

22 **Directory**

23 **Map**

On the cover: Bloodroot Brian Woolman/stock.adobe.com



8

OUR Mission

To acquire and hold lands for the purpose of preserving the flora, fauna and scenic beauty for the education, pleasure and recreation of DuPage County citizens



20

news & notes

THANK YOU *for Being a Friend*

The Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County gratefully acknowledges those who donated \$500 or more during the fourth quarter of 2024 and others whose cumulative gifts through monthly giving exceeded \$500 for the year. The Friends engages the community in philanthropy to advance the District's mission and master plan for the benefit of wildlife and wild areas and to increase sustainability in the forest preserves.

Gift of \$1 Million or More

Estate of Charles Johnson

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Learn more or donate at dupageforest.org/friends or mail your gift to the Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County at 35580 Naperville Road in Wheaton, 60189. To discuss your giving plans or learn about Friends' board service opportunities, please contact Partnership & Philanthropy at 630-871-6400 or fundraising@dupageforest.org.

OUR AWESOME VOLUNTEERS

In recognition of National Volunteer Week, April 20 – 26, the Forest Preserve District applauds its 737 long-term volunteers, 250 one-time natural resources volunteers, and 95 volunteer groups. Last year, these dedicated individuals donated more than 58,500 hours with an in-kind value of nearly \$2 million!

With a variety of one-time, seasonal, and yearlong opportunities across 12 programs, the District is sure to have something to fit your schedule, pique your interest, and ignite your passion. For details visit dupageforest.org and click on "Get Involved" and "Volunteer," or contact us at 630-933-7233 or volunteer@dupageforest.org.



DISTRICT EARNS S&P AAA ONCE AGAIN

The Forest Preserve District has earned a AAA rating from S&P Global Ratings for its series 2025 general obligation limited-tax bonds, ensuring funding for certified master plan projects without raising debt-servicing costs or increasing taxes.

S&P also affirmed its AAA rating on the District’s existing general obligation debt – the highest rating assigned by the credit-rating agency. The District has maintained this top-tier rating since 1997, consistently demonstrating strong financial stewardship and leadership.

The rating reflects several key factors, including the District’s outstanding financial management practices and the strength of DuPage County’s diverse and thriving economy. The recent passage of a voter-supported referendum to increase the District’s operational levy also underscores continued public trust and investment in natural resource preservation.

The S&P report cited the District’s proactive leadership, healthy reserves, operational flexibility, and substantial landfill fund resources as key factors in maintaining its strong credit profile.

For more information, including the full ratings report, visit the Forest Preserve District’s “Budgets and Financial Reports” page on its website.



35 ACRES ADDED to Danada

In November the Forest Preserve District finalized the purchase of 35 acres on the east side of Danada Forest Preserve in Wheaton, expanding a critical corridor to nearly 2,500 acres of protected open space in one of the county’s most developed areas.

The \$12 million purchase includes 33.3 acres of open space, 1.7 acres of 100-year floodplain, and 0.8 acre of wetlands. It’s bordered on three sides by Danada and The Morton Arboretum, creating vital wildlife corridors that allow animals to move freely and find food, shelter, and mates. These connections also enhance ecosystem health, improve biodiversity, and provide scenic green spaces for residents to enjoy.

Parson’s Grove, located in the southeast corner of Danada, showcases native wildflowers each spring, including wild geraniums, trout lilies, and trilliums. The new property will help protect this rich ecosystem and expand opportunities for residents to experience nature.



DISTRICT WINS MULTIPLE RIBBONS AT IPRA CONFERENCE

The Forest Preserve District took home multiple awards at January’s Illinois Park and Recreation Association Conference, the largest state conference of its kind in the nation.

The District took first place for its “Preserved for You” social media campaign, its dupageforest.org website, and the long-form video *Mussel Matters*, a documentary created in partnership with The Conservation Foundation and North Central College. It took second place in large-format marketing for the design of its ranger adventure trailer (shown above), third place in short-form video for “Life Cycle of a 17-Year Cicada,” and third place in agency showcase for its tabletop display.

You can see many of its award-winning shorts at youtube.com/dupageforest and by joining us on Facebook and Instagram.

FLIP TO PAGE 19 FOR MORE NEWS & NOTES.

◀ Ants forage the seed of a bloodroot plant.

Ant Candy

© Alex Wild

by **SCOTT MEISTER**, NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGER

This time of year, some of the earliest plants to emerge and bloom in DuPage woodlands are spring “ephemerals,” showy but short-lived flowers that often die back by the time the trees above fully leaf out. By summer, some ephemerals will have completely disappeared from the landscape but not before producing seeds to ensure new plants sprout over the coming years. A host of seeds scatter via wind or water, but some spring wildflowers depend on a special dispersal method: ants.

Wildflowers that rely on ants produce seeds with oily appendages called “elaiosomes,” which are rich in fats, protein, and carbohydrates. Elaiosomes come in different shapes and colors, but they all produce oleic acid, an important pheromone ants are quite familiar with.

When an ant dies inside a colony and starts to rot, it begins to emit oleic acid. The acid serves as a chemical attractant, drawing in live ants and triggering them to carry the dead ant out of the nest. When a seed’s elaiosome is fully developed, ants sense the oleic acid and seek out the ripe seed. In this case, though, the ants carry the seed into the colony, where they strip away the nutritious elaiosome to feed to their growing larvae, leaving the hard, inedible seed untouched and in an ideal growing space.

Woodland ant nests are often in damp environments such as soil or spongy, decaying wood, and each has a waste chamber

called a “midden.” This moist, nutrient-rich chamber provides ideal conditions for germination. It’s also a protected space. Once a seed is buried within, it’s unavailable to seed-eating wildlife living above ground. The new plant can grow until it breaks through the soil surface the following spring.

This ant-assisted seed dispersal is known as “myrmecochory” and is an example of mutualism, a relationship where two organisms benefit from each other. In this case, the ant gets a nutritious meal – and an early one. Since spring wildflowers bloom before most other native plants, they also produce seeds relatively early in the season at a time when other seeds and sources of food for wildlife are still scarce.

The seed gets not only a rich, protected environment but also a place to grow away from the competition. Woodland ants may only carry a seed 6 feet from where it dropped – a seemingly short distance within an expansive forest – but that’s enough space for a new plant to avoid having to share resources with its predecessor.

To be fair, ants are likely not the only insects elaiosomes attract. Some research has documented yellowjacket wasps foraging for and carrying away seeds with elaiosomes. From a plant’s perspective, attracting a greater diversity of insects to help disperse seeds is beneficial. Flying insects especially can transport seeds farther away from the source plant, potentially allowing plants to mix genes or colonize new habitats.



© Bill Duncan



© Brian Gravick

◀ An ant carries the seed of a bloodroot, shown at the right, to its nest.



But this doesn't explain why some spring wildflowers grow across so many regions. For example, since the last glacier receded about 10,000 years ago, wild ginger has spread over a thousand miles across eastern North America, from Canada through states along the Gulf of Mexico. If it relied solely on ants and flying insects, wild ginger likely could not have spread so far. Some scientists believe white-tailed deer and other mammals may have helped. Deer in particular love munching on tender spring plants, unintentionally consuming the seeds and then excreting them as they travel.

Still, an estimated 11,000 plant species worldwide depend on ants. A few of them grow here in DuPage. Common woodland spring ephemerals in the forest preserves that produce elaiosomes include bloodroot, wild ginger, red trillium, celandine poppy, and Dutchman's breeches.

This form of seed dispersal highlights the role ants play in the ecosystem and their effect on woodlands. For example, wild ginger is a host plant for the pipevine swallowtail butterfly. (This means the butterfly's caterpillars eat wild ginger as they grow.) Dutchman's breeches provide pollen to bumblebees, and mammals such as white-tailed deer and eastern cottontails eat the supple shoots of red trillium. All of these relationships along the food web exist thanks to ants.

Ants are often unseen and may not be as charismatic as bees or butterflies, but it's still worth taking time to appreciate their handiwork as you hike a forest preserve woodland trail this spring. Their ability to help create a spring tapestry of wildflowers and maintain a healthy forest cannot be denied. After all, ensuring an abundant and diverse wildflower population has benefits beyond pretty views. •



Dutchman's breeches would not bob over the floors of DuPage forest preserve woodlands without ants to spread their seeds. ▶



© Martha Rosetta



© Bill Duncan



© Bill Duncan



© wetaidian



◀ An ant moves a seed that, if conditions are right, will grow into a celandine poppy.

spring calendar



Plants & Wildlife Page 10
 Ways to Play Page 11
 Health & Well-Being Page 14

Living Green Page 14
 Heritage Page 15
 Nature Art & Culture Page 17
 Volunteer Page 18

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April

- 1** Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
- 2** Evening Hike Club
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 3** Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 4** Fresh Air Friday
Peabody's Pages Book Club Three-Part Program Begins
- 5** Fishing: Spring Trout Season Opener
Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 6** Salt Creek Restoration Hike
Sheep Shearing
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 7** Forest Hike
- 8** Earth Month: Preserve Litter Pick-Up
Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 9** Evening Hike Club
Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 10** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 12** Archery: All Ages
Earth Month: Preserve Litter Pick-Up
Fullersburg Family Hike
Nature Study Explorers
Planning a Kitchen Garden
Sandhill Crane Count
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 13** Spinning for Beginners
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 14** Forest Hike
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 15** Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
- 16** Earth Month: Roadside Litter Pick-Up
Evening Hike Club
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 17** The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 18** Bird Walk
- 19** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 20** Archery: Adults
- 21** Forest Hike
- 22** Earth Day Stroll
Earth Month: Roadside Litter Pick-Up
Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 23** Evening Hike Club
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 24** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 25** Bird Walk
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 26** Archery: Games
Earth Month: Roadside Litter Pick-Up
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 27** Haiku Workshop and Walk
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 28** Forest Hike
- 29** Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan
- 30** Evening Hike Club
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wednesday Wilderness Walk

How to Register Online

1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down, and click on "Find a Program."
2. Click the link to search by activity number.
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.



May

- 1** Archery: All Ages
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 2** Bird Walk
- 3** Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Kokedama
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 4** Salt Creek Restoration Hike
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Warbler Walk
- 5** Forest Hike
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 6** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 7** Evening Hike Club
Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 8** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 9** Bird Walk
Fresh Air Friday
- 10** Fullersburg Family Hike
Raw to Roving
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 11** Fishing: With Mom
Spinning for Beginners
Warbler Walk
- 12** Forest Hike
- 13** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 14** Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 15** The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 16** Bird Walk
Native Plant Sale
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 17** Fishing: Adult Beginners
Native Plant Sale
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 19** Forest Hike
- 21** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Waycar Wednesday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 22** Kayaking: Basics
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 23** Bird Walk
- 24** Archery: All Ages
Build a Wattle Fence
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 25** Kayaking: Paddle With a Ranger
- 28** Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 29** Archery: Adults
Combating Climate Change With
Native Plants
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 30** Bird Walk
- 31** Native Plant Nursery Open House
Volunteer Restoration Workday

June

- 1** Fishing: All Beginners
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 3** Kayaking: Just for Kids
- 5** Archery: Just for Kids
- 6** Bird Walk
Fresh Air Friday
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 7** Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Identifying Invasives
Mayslake Hall Family-Friendly Tour
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 8** Fishing: Just for Kids Fishing Derby
Salt Creek Restoration Hike
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 11** Fullersburg Wildflower Walk
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 12** The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wildflower Hike
- 13** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 14** The Art of St. James Farm
Fullersburg Family Hike
Native Landscaping: Family
Container Gardening
Nature Study Explorers
Second Saturday Family Program
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 15** Fishing: With Dad
Spinning for Beginners
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 16** A Year in Practice: Summer
Seven-Part Class Begins
- 18** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 19** These Walls Talk: Nature Symbols
in Mayslake's Architecture
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 20** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 21** Mayslake Hall Family Friendly-Tour
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 22** Marvelous Monarchs
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 23** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 25** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 26** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 27** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 28** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery



Plants & Wildlife

Bird Walk 26438

Enjoy birding camaraderie, and learn ID tips and tricks while looking for migrating birds on a casual 2-mile guided walk. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 18	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Danada
April 25	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	St. James Farm
May 2	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	McDowell Grove
May 9	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Meacham Grove
May 16	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 23	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	W. DuPage Woods
May 30	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Waterfall Glen
June 6	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Dunham

Fullersburg Family Hike 26455

Bring your family on an enriching 1-mile hike where you'll explore and learn about the diverse animals, plants, and habitats that make up Fullersburg Woods. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

April 12	1 – 2 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 10	1 – 2 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
June 14	1 – 2 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Fullersburg Wildflower Walk 26440

Meet a plant expert for a leisurely walk through Fullersburg Woods to enjoy the first blooms of spring. You'll learn about spring flowers, how to identify them, and what varieties you can grow in your own space at home. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

April 5 & 9	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 3 & 7	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
June 7 & 11	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Identifying Invasives 26754

Enjoy a short hike through scenic Fullersburg Woods and learn from experts how to identify invasive species out in the wild and avoid planting them at home. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

June 7	1 – 2 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Marvelous Monarchs 26494

Learn about our beautiful native monarchs and how you can help butterflies and other pollinators. Then join a leisurely 20-minute stroll to find monarchs in their various stages of life. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 22	10:30 a.m. – Noon	St. James Farm
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Native Plant Nursery Open House 26466

On this 1-mile behind-the-scenes tour, learn about the native plant nursery, where the District grows flowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs for the county's forest preserves. Then, try your hand at garden tasks. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 31	9, 10 & 11 a.m.	Blackwell
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Salt Creek Restoration Hike 26459

Take a 2-mile hike along Salt Creek to learn about river restoration and other habitat restoration projects happening in the preserve. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 6	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 4	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
June 8	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Sandhill Crane Count 26467

Every spring, thousands of sandhill cranes migrate over the forest preserves. Take part in a community science event as we count cranes from the scenic overlook. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 12	10 a.m. – Noon	Greene Valley
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How to Register Online

1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down, and click on "Find a Program."
2. Click the link to search by activity number.
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.

Warbler Walk 26852

Join a wildlife interpreter on a search for the bright colorful feathers of neotropical migrants. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online, at 630-942-6200, or at the walk.

May 4	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 11	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	W. DuPage Woods

Wednesday Wilderness Walk 26855

Take a guided nature hike, observing the seasons, flora, and fauna in the lesser-known but greatly diverse Lincoln Marsh. Join us for a cup of coffee or tea as we discuss some of nature's wonders before we start the walk. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online, at 630-942-6200, or at the walk.

April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30	8 – 10 a.m.	Lincoln Marsh
May 7, 14, 21 & 28	8 – 10 a.m.	Lincoln Marsh

Wildflower Hike 26845

On this slow-paced botanical hike, learn about the fascinating world of spring wildflowers, how to identify them, and what role they play in local ecosystems. Plants change quickly this time of year, so there will be something new to see at every program! Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-942-6200.

April 3 & 17	2 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center
May 1, 15 & 29	2 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center
June 12	2 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center

Ways to Play

Archery

Adults 26543

Whether you're new to the sport or looking for a refresher, join us to learn safety tips, proper shooting techniques, and basic skills in a setting with other active adults. Equipment provided. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 20	11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Blackwell
May 29	11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Blackwell

All Ages 26539

Whether you're new to the sport or looking for a refresher, join us to learn safety tips, proper shooting techniques, and basic skills. Equipment provided. Ages 9 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 12	Noon – 1:30 p.m.	Blackwell
May 1	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Blackwell
May 24	11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Churchill Woods

Games 26546

Compete with other participants in different archery games designed to be enjoyable for all skill levels. Equipment provided. Ages 9 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 26	10 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell
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Just for Kids 26547

Learn the basics in a kid-friendly setting. Equipment provided. Ages 7 – 12 with an adult, who must be present for the duration of the program. \$5 per child. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 5	5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Blackwell
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Fore!

*The Preserve at Oak Meadows
Maple Meadows • Green Meadows*

A round at a DuPage forest preserve course is a great way to enjoy the outdoors! We have outings and leagues for all abilities. For tee times and specials visit DuPageGolf.com.

spring calendar



More Ways to Play

KAYAK, CANOE, PADDLEBOAT, AND BOAT RENTALS

Rentals end one hour before closing and are \$16 per hour for single kayaks or rowboats; \$20 for canoes or two-person kayaks; and \$22 for paddleboats. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Blackwell

May

Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Memorial Day – Aug. 15

Daily 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Aug. 16 – Sept. 28

Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Herrick Lake

May 24 – Sept. 1

**Saturdays & Sundays (plus May 26, July 4 & Sept. 1)
11 a.m. – 6 p.m.**

SCENIC OVERLOOK

Greene Valley

Get a bird's-eye view of Greene Valley — and the Chicago skyline — from 190 feet above the landscape. Weather or IEPA work may affect hours without notice. Free. Questions? Call 630-792-2100.

May – October Saturdays & Sundays

One hour after sunrise until 6 p.m.

FAMILY CAMPGROUND

Blackwell

Enjoy nature under the stars at one of 60 sites. For weekend reservations visit dupageforest.org and click "Get a Permit." For additional nights around holidays, call 630-933-7248.

**May 2 – Oct. 12 Friday & Saturday Nights
Plus Select Additional Holiday Nights**

The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game

Challenge your friends and neighbors and show off your knowledge at this friendly quiz game that tests your familiarity with music, animals, geography, history, and more! Bring your team of up to eight or have us help you find one. Each player needs a smart phone or similar device to play. Ages 18 and up. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

April 17, May 15 & 7 – 8:30 p.m.
June 12

Oak Meadows

Fishing

Adult Beginners 26557

Don't rely on luck to catch fish! Learn basic skills to improve your angling confidence and knowledge. Skills covered include equipment, knots, where and how to find fish, and what to do when you catch them. All equipment and bait provided but participants are welcome to bring their own. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 17

10 – 11:30 a.m.

Pratt's Wayne

All Beginners 26558

Don't rely on luck to catch fish! Learn basic skills to improve your angling confidence and knowledge. Skills covered include equipment, knots, where and how to find fish, and what to do when you catch them. All equipment and bait provided but participants are welcome to bring their own. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 1

10 – 11:30 a.m.

Wood Dale Grove

Just for Kids Fishing Derby 26559

Bring the family to this friendly fishing competition just for kids 15 and younger with raffles and prizes for the biggest catches. Ages 15 and under with an adult. Free. Register online, at 630-933-7248, or at the event.

June 8

8 – 11 a.m.

Blackwell

Spring Trout Season Opener

Try your luck on Silver, Pickerel, or Grove lakes. Anglers 16 and older must carry valid Illinois fishing licenses with inland trout stamps. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7668.

April 5

6 a.m.

Blackwell
Pratt's Wayne
Wood Dale Grove



How to Register Online

1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down, and click on "Find a Program."
2. Click the link to search by activity number.
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.

With Dad 26554

Spend the morning by the lake with the dads and other paternal figures in your life, creating memories and learning skills to increase your fishing successes. All equipment and bait provided but participants are welcome to bring their own. All ages. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 15 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Pratt's Wayne

With Mom 26553

Spend the morning by the lake with the moms and other maternal figures in your life, creating memories and learning skills to increase your fishing successes. All equipment and bait are provided, but participants are welcome to bring their own. All ages. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 11 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Herrick Lake

Paddle With a Ranger 26561

Take a guided paddle through a forest preserve. Bring your own canoe or kayak to this free program, or rent one for \$20 per person. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 25 9 – 11 a.m. Mallard Lake

Mayslake Hall Family-Friendly Tour

Take a special, zippy tour through most of Mr. Peabody's house. Families will be on the lookout for symbols, decorations, and 1920s technology. This program includes stairs. Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

June 7 & 21 10 – 10:45 a.m. Mayslake

Second Saturday Family Program

Join us for a fun family program, exploring state symbols and making crafts for home related to the state bird, tree, and flower. Second Saturdays will continue in July and August, so mark your calendars! Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

June 14 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. Mayslake



Kayaking

Basics 26560

Learn the equipment, strokes, and safety for paddling a kayak from an American Canoe Association kayaking instructor. Equipment provided. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$20 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 22 5 – 7 p.m. Herrick Lake

Just for Kids 26562

Learn the basics in a kid-friendly setting. Equipment provided. Ages 7 – 12 with an adult, who must be present on shore for the duration of the program. \$10 per child. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 3 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Herrick Lake



Riding Lessons 26605

Danada Equestrian Center

Learn valuable horsemanship and riding skills in a friendly group setting, or receive one-on-one instruction and progress at your own pace with individual lessons or individual four-pack lessons. Ages 12 and up. \$44 – \$320 per DuPage County resident; \$56 – \$380 per nonresident. Register online or at 630-668-6012.



spring calendar



Health & Well-Being

Evening Hike Club 26469

Boost your outdoor wellness in a friendly group setting on a quick-paced 3-to-5-mile guided hike. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 2	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Oldfield Oaks
April 9	6 – 7:30 p.m.	West Branch
April 16	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Oak Meadows
April 23	6 – 7:30 p.m.	McDowell Grove
April 30	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Greene Valley
May 7	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Mallard Lake

Forest Hike 26486

Join a nature expert on a quick-paced hike through a popular preserve. Gear up to enjoy healthy exercise as you walk 3 – 5 miles while enjoying the wonders of your surroundings. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 7	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Greene Valley
April 14	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Meacham Grove
April 21	8:30 – 10 a.m.	St. James Farm
April 28	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Springbrook
May 5	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
May 12	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Philip State Park
May 19	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Waterfall Glen

Fresh Air Friday 26477

Enjoy a relaxing hour of mindful walking and immersive nature-based ways to tune in to the present on a 1-mile walk on crushed limestone and grass trails. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 4	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
May 9	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
June 6	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm

Living Green

Combating Climate Change With Native Plants 26448

Learn about native wildflowers, how to identify them, and how to grow them at home. Sip a signature cocktail made with native plant ingredients, and pot up your own container of natives to take home. Supplies and plants provided. Ages 21 and up. \$40 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

May 29	6:30 – 8:30 p.m.	Oak Meadows
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Earth Day Stroll 26475

Learn about ways you can help the planet on a leisurely 1-mile stroll through the woods. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 22	10 – 11:15 a.m.	St. James Farm
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NATIVE PLANT SALE

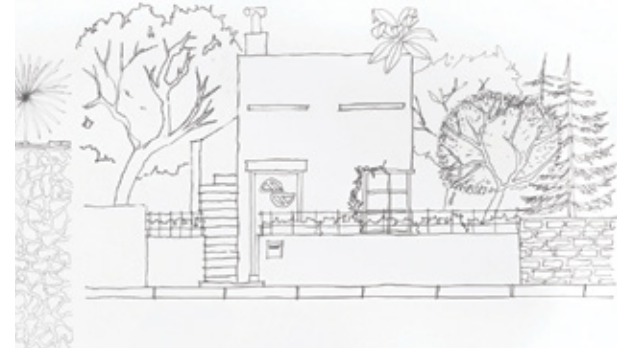
Mayslake Peabody Estate

Shop in person for native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees! For a list of plants, visit dupageforest.org/native-plant-sale. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

May 16
10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

May 17
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Get ready for this year's sale by signing up for one of our Native Landscaping programs on the next page.



How to Register Online

1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down, and click on "Find a Program."
2. Click the link to search by activity number.
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.

Native Landscaping: Creating Your Garden Plan

Bring drawings or photos of your garden space, and then get customized recommendations at a meeting with a plant expert who will help you select native plants to match your garden goals and growing conditions. Ages 18 and up. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

In Person 26524

60 minutes. \$20 per session.

April 3	5, 6 & 7 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Online 26208

45 minutes. \$30 per session.

April 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29	3 & 6 p.m.	Online
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Native Landscaping: Family Container Gardening 26449

Bring a bit of nature to your backyard. Learn about common native wildflowers, how to identify them, and why they are important to wildlife. Then pot up your own container to take home. Supplies and plants provided. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$25 per family. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 14	10 – 11:30 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Planning a Kitchen Garden 26752

Kitchen gardens were popular in the 1850s for food, but did you know they could be beautiful as well as functional? Discuss growing your own vegetables and herbs, including edible native species, and go home with a plan to create a kitchen garden of your own! Ages 12 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

April 12	11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
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Heritage

The Art of St. James Farm 26495

Take a guided walking tour of the preserve's seven outdoor pieces of artwork. Learn about the inspiration for each piece, the artists and their creative processes, and the reasons the pieces are at St. James Farm. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

June 14	2 – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Build a Wattle Fence 26784

Learn how to weave your own old-school fencing using scraps from your yard as you help the mill set up the final stage of its demonstration grain garden: a wattle fence! Ages 12 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

May 24	11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
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Nature Study Explorers

Step back in time and learn from the nature-study movement of the late Victorian era. Create memories with your friends or family as we explore nature through an 1890s lens with craft projects or science experiments. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

April 12	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
June 14	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm

Raw to Roving 26756

Learn how raw sheep fleece goes from being a stinky, matted mess into soft, beautiful roving ready for spinning. If you're interested in spinning from wool that you've prepared yourself or are just curious how the process of making wool yarn begins, this program is for you! Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

May 10	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Graue Mill
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spring calendar



1890s Living

Kline Creek Farm

Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. Registration not required for these programs, which are for all ages (under 18 with an adult). Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

CHORES ON A DAIRY FARM

Try your hand at different activities and learn about the importance of dairy farms in the 1890s and how their legacy is still around today.

June 2 – 30

Mondays & Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

HOUSE TOUR: DAIRY MONTH

Join us for a guided tour of the 1890s farmhouse with discussions on dairy farming, heritage breed cows, butter making, and more.

June 1 – 30

Thursday – Monday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the hour

HOUSE TOUR: SPRINGTIME ON THE FARM

Take a guided tour of the 1890s farmhouse focusing on the busy spring season when the farm comes to life. Newborn lambs and calves arrive as the draft horses prepare the fields for planting. Learn about the work that went into the kitchen garden and the crop fields, and see us freshen up the house after a long winter.

April 3 – May 30 (except May 26)

Thursday – Monday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the hour

MILKING DEMONSTRATIONS

See the farm's Heritage Shorthorn cows hand-milked the 1890s way.

June 1 – 29

Saturdays & Sundays 9:30 – 10 a.m.

STORY TIME

Bring the family and rest under the shade of a tree while a costumed interpreter shares lessons from the world of stories with different historic tales each week.

June 2 – Aug. 25

Mondays 10 a.m. – Noon

Sheep Shearing

Watch farmers hand shear our heritage Cotswold sheep and learn about the role of sheep on an 1890s farm. Fleeces will be available for sale. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

April 6	10 – 11: 30 a.m. & 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Spinning for Beginners ²⁶⁷⁵⁷

Learn the basics of spinning wool yarn on an old-fashioned spinning wheel. Join us in the Graue House to learn how the ancient craft of spinning wool helped clothe a nation, and then try it for yourself. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

April 13	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
May 11	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
June 15	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill

These Walls Talk: Nature Symbols in Mayslake's Architecture ²⁶⁷⁸⁹

What might the roses and other nature symbols built into the architecture of Mayslake have meant to F.S. Peabody in 1920? Join us for an exploration of the history and meaning behind the Tudor rose and Peabody coat of arms. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

June 19	6:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Mayslake
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Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride

Enjoy a 30-minute ride while learning about the forest preserve's heritage and natural areas. Rides begin at 1, 1:45, and 2:30 p.m. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

June 6, 13, 20 & 27	1 – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Waycar Wednesday

Walk through our 1906 waycar (also called a caboose), and hear how it was first used on the rails and then by Brooks McCormick after its retirement. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

May 21	11 a.m. – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
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How to Register Online

1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down, and click on "Find a Program."
2. Click the link to search by activity number.
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.

Nature Art & Culture

Haiku Workshop and Walk 26488

Celebrate National Poetry Month as you learn about haiku (a poetic form that originated in Japan) on a leisurely walk. Then, create your own haiku inspired by your fresh experiences. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 27 10:30 a.m. – Noon St. James Farm

Kokedama 26770

Learn from a local organic flower farmer the history and techniques of Kokedama, the ancient art of Japanese string gardening. Make something special for your mom, or take the class together. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$60 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

May 3 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Mayslake

Peabody's Pages Book Club

Three-Part Program 26771

Sign up for these enriching meet-ups where you'll discuss great reads with fellow book fans! In April we'll discuss *The Art Thief* by Michael Finkel; in May, *James* by Percival Everett; and in June, *A Man of Salt and Trees* by James Ballowe. Titles subject to change. Ages 18 and up. \$10 per person for all three discussions. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

April 4, May 2 & 10 – 11:15 a.m. Mayslake
June 6

A Year in Practice: Summer

Seven-Part Class 26338

Explore self-expression with the creative arts using *A Year In Practice* by Jacqueline Suskin as a discussion guide to prompt inspiration. Investigate seasonal patterns and awakening cycles of creative expression with nature walks (weather permitting), art journaling, poem writing, and collage as you study the rhythms of summer. Ages 18 and up. \$170 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

June 16 – July 28 9:30 a.m. – Noon Mayslake
Mondays



Art and More at Mayslake

Mayslake Peabody Estate

AT HOME WITH NATURE HOUSE TOUR

Learn some of the surprising history of Mayslake Hall, the 1921 home of F.S. Peabody and a landmark and architectural gem that has been surrounded by an oasis of nature for over 100 years. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$8 per person. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

April 1 – June 30 (except May 26)

Monday – Friday 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Saturdays 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

BOTANICAL ART: NATIVE PLANTS AND MORE

Celebrate the beauty and diversity of native plants at this exhibit by the Reed-Turner Botanical Artists Circle. On April 23 at 6 p.m. meet the artists, and enjoy signature mocktails at a special reception. All ages; under 13 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

April 15 – May 31 (except May 26)

Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

MIDWEST NATURE: ITS BEAUTY AND ITS PERIL

Explore our relationship to the beauty and resiliency of nature through the work of the Chicago Women's Caucus for Art. On June 18 at 6 p.m. meet the artists, and enjoy signature mocktails at a special reception. All ages; under 13 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

June 9 – July 26 (except July 4)

Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

spring calendar



Volunteer

Earth Month: Preserve Litter Pick-Up ²⁶⁴³⁰

Support wildlife and beautify the preserves by picking up litter along trails and waterways. Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 8	4 – 6 p.m.	Wood Dale Grove
April 12	10 a.m. – Noon	Pratt's Wayne

Earth Month: Roadside Litter Pick-Up

²⁶⁴³³

Support wildlife and beautify the preserves by picking up litter along roadsides. Ages 18 and up. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

April 16	4 – 6 p.m.	Greene Valley
April 22	4 – 6 p.m.	Springbrook
April 26	10 a.m. – Noon	Waterfall Glen

Volunteer Restoration Workday ²⁶⁷⁶⁹

Help improve a forest preserve prairie or woodland by collecting seeds or removing nonnative plants. Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-206-9630 at least five days in advance (10 days by phone for groups of five or more).

Big Woods

April 8 & 22	2:50 – 4:30 p.m.	Big Woods
May 6 & 13	2:50 – 4:30 p.m.	Big Woods

Churchill Woods

April 5, 6, 12, 13, 26 & 27	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
May 3, 4 & 31	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
June 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21 & 22	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods

Churchill Woods Glacial Ridge

April 12, 22 & 26	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Glacial
May 10 & 24	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Glacial
June 7 & 21	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Glacial

Maple Grove

April 12 & 26	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove
May 10 & 24	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove

Oldfield Oaks

April 9 & 30	8 – 10 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks
May 14 & 28	8 – 10 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks
June 11 & 25	8 – 10 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks

Springbrook Prairie

April 5, 9, 13 & 23	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
May 7	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook

St. James Farm

April 26	9 a.m. – Noon	St. James Farm
May 17	9 a.m. – Noon	St. James Farm

Wayne Grove

April 5 & 26	9 a.m. – Noon	Wayne Grove
May 10 & 24	9 a.m. – Noon	Wayne Grove

West DuPage Woods Elsen's Hill

April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17 & 24	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage Elsen's
May 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage Elsen's
June 12, 19 & 26	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage Elsen's



Volunteer Workday at the Nursery ²⁶⁵³¹

Lend a hand weeding, watering, or collecting and cleaning seeds from native grasses and flowers. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-206-9630 at least five days in advance (10 days ahead for groups of five or more).

April 14, 19, 25 & 30	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell
May 5, 10, 16, 21 & 28	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell
June 7, 13, 18, 23 & 28	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell

news & notes

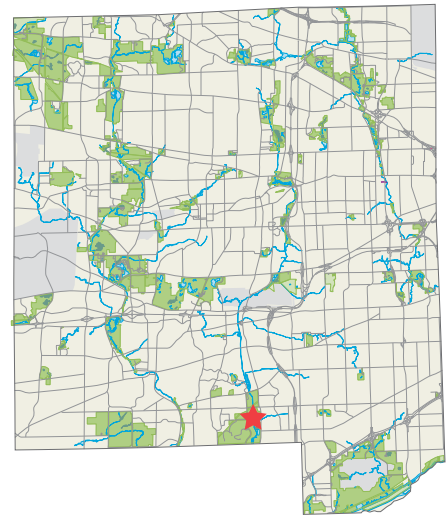
GREENE VALLEY TO BENEFIT FROM ILLINOIS GRANTS

The state of Illinois has awarded the Forest Preserve District a \$600,000 Open Space Land Acquisition and Development grant to fund significant improvements at Greene Valley Forest Preserve in Naperville.

Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources announced the grant in December. It was part of a statewide initiative supporting 100 local parks projects.

Established in 1986 by the Illinois General Assembly, OSLAD is a cost-sharing program that helps communities acquire and develop land for parks and outdoor recreation. One of Illinois' most popular grant programs, OSLAD has provided \$640 million in funding since its inception.

The OSLAD grant will help fund several key projects outlined in the Greene Valley master plan, which the Forest Preserve District adopted in April 2023. These projects include relocating the entrance drive, enhancing picnic shelters, adding a canoe and kayak launch, installing flush restrooms to replace latrines, and realigning trails. A highlight will be a new patio near the historic Greene Barn, which will provide an enhanced visitor experience at the historic site.



COLLECTIONS *Corner*

Imagine the soundscape of a forest of chutes and quick-moving belts. The cranking of gears, the whisper of grain sliding across wood, the slow beat of rotating pulleys. These were the sounds of Graue Mill when bucket elevators, such as the one shown to the right, moved grain throughout the building.

When a farmer brought product to the mill, the miller would weigh it and pour it through a chute in the floor, where it would collect in a bin. Buckets attached to a belt or chain driven by a pulley system would scoop up the grain and carry it to the upper levels of the mill, where it spilled into wooden chutes. These chutes directed the grain into grinding millstones, kicking off the first step in the flour-making process.

Although similar technologies existed even in Roman times, they were only applied to gristmills in the late 18th century by a man named Oliver Evans. It took several years to find a way to make his design of an automatic gristmill work smoothly, but in 1790 he applied for a patent, which George Washington signed and approved on Dec. 18 that same year. The automated gristmill became extraordinarily popular across the United States throughout the 19th century.

Aside from this mechanism, other remnants of the milling system remain at Graue Mill, including square-shaped holes in the ceiling, which were boarded up when the mill transitioned from factory to museum.

You can see these interesting aspects of the mill this season from April 16 through Nov. 16, when the mill will be open Wednesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. For details and upcoming programs, visit dupageforest.org/graue.





◀ A rare rusty-patched bumblebee feeds on native joe pye weed.

© John Zakelj

Our Wonderful (and Rare) Bumblebees

by **JENNY KAMM**, ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETER

As plants and animals wake up from their deep winter slumbers, one familiar and fuzzy insect is part of that revival: the bumblebee. Out of the 12 types of bumblebees in Illinois, 10 live in DuPage forest preserves. These insects, which belong to the genus *Bombus*, have significant ecological value because along with other bees as well as beetles and flies, they're pollinators.

Bumblebees have keen eyesight and can sense odors via their antennae, adaptations that help them find pollen- and nectar-laden blossoms. After latching onto a flower's anther (the part that contains pollen) with its mouthparts (called mandibles), a bumblebee performs what's called "buzz pollination." It vibrates strong muscles in the middle of its

body to shake the pollen off the flower. The fallen pollen clings to the bee's sticky, electrically charged hairs. As the insect grooms itself, it moves the pollen into baskets called "corbicula" on its hind legs.

As the bee continues to forage, it carries pollen from flower to flower, performing the cross-pollination needed for flowers, shrubs, and trees to reproduce.

This time of year, most active bumblebees are likely queens emerging from hibernation, searching for nectar, pollen, and a new nest site to start growing their colonies. A queen flying low to the ground in a zigzag pattern is probably scouting for abandoned rodent holes or similar safe havens to nest in. Other bumblebee nests may be created under leaf litter,



© Wellcome Images / Science Source

▲ A bumblebee's stately hairs help the insect collect pollen.



Emvart/stock-adobe.com

▲ Female worker bumblebees tend to their colony's nest.

logs, or bunched grasses or in any preexisting hole that has protective and temperature-controlling insulation.

Once an adequate nest site has been found, the queen has the delicate and important job of developing the next generation of bumblebees as well as the next queen. She starts by using wax from her abdomen to build cups, which she'll fill with nectar to sustain her as she begins laying eggs. The first round of eggs rest in fused bunches of pollen, called a "brood clump." During this period, the queen is constantly foraging for food for herself, guarding her nest, and maintaining the nest's internal temperature. She warms the nest by vibrating her muscles and cools it by thrumming her wings.

As the weeks progress, the eggs develop into larvae and eventually into adult female workers, who can now be the ones to forage and guard the nest while the queen continues to lay eggs. Some females will be reared to be new queens, who will leave the nest to mate. Not until late summer will the original queen start to lay unfertilized eggs, which then become drones, or male bumblebees. By the end of the season, a colony can have between 30 and 400 bees, but only the new queens will live on to hibernate and start the process over again next spring.

DuPage County's lineup of these fuzzy pollinators is special because it includes the nation's only federally endangered species, the rusty-patched bumblebee. You can identify it by looking on the second abdominal segment for a patch of rusty brown hairs that almost covers the entire segment. The rest of the segment is yellow.

The rusty-patched bumblebee historically covered the eastern United States, the upper Midwest, and southern Canada, but since 2007 its range has dwindled. Although there's no definitive cause for the decline, researchers theorize that habitat loss, pathogens, pesticides, competition with nonnative and managed bees, and the effects of climate change are all contributing stressors.

This bumblebee has been observed in a variety of habitats from woodlands, prairies, and agricultural fields to parks and gardens, the common thread being a site with sufficient nectar and pollen from varied and abundant flowers that bloom from spring to fall near an area suitable for nesting.

Thankfully, there's much we can do to help this vulnerable bumblebee that calls our county home. First, pass on the use of pesticides, which can harm beneficial insect pollinators as well as whatever you're trying to target. Second, landscape with plants that provide enticing food and habitat. According to one study, rusty-patched bumblebees favor several native flowers. Early bloomers such as Dutchman's breeches, spring beauties, shooting star, Virginia waterleaf, and wood betony sustain queen bees emerging from hibernation in early spring. Summer bloomers include St. John's wort, monarda, Culver's root, mountain mint, and spotted joe pye weed. As fall approaches, native field thistle, obedient plant, turtlehead, showy goldenrod, and New England aster provide nutrients until it's time for the new queens to hibernate. Many of these plants will be available at the Forest Preserve District's spring Native Plant Sale on May 16 and 17. Visit dupageforest.org/native-plant-sale for details.

If you think you see a rusty-patched bumblebee, do not try to handle it. Bumblebees are nonaggressive, but they can sting if provoked. The main point, though, is to not disturb them. Instead, take clear, close-up photos, and report the sighting at beespotter.org or iNaturalist.org. The University of Minnesota in particular has an iNaturalist project called Queen Quest, where anyone can upload pictures of queen bumblebees in early spring so ecologists can identify them for research purposes. It's a fun way to contribute to conservation!

Bumblebees are some of the planet's most important pollinators, so if you find a hibernating queen or nest, please leave it be. After all, that queen has a lot of work to do in the season ahead! •

directory



HEADQUARTERS

35580 Naperville Road
Wheaton • 630-933-7200
TTY 800-526-0857
dupageforest.org
forest@dupageforest.org

Visitor Services

630-933-7248
Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Office

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Volunteer Services

630-933-7233

Partnership & Philanthropy Friends of the Forest Preserve District

630-871-6400

Law Enforcement

630-933-7240

FOREST PRESERVE *Hours*

Most forest preserves are open daily from one hour after sunrise until one hour after sunset.

PARTNER *Sites*

DANADA HOUSE

Wheaton • 630-668-5392

FISCHER FARM

Bensenville • 630-766-7015

BARTLETT NATURE CENTER

Bartlett • 847-608-3120

LYMAN WOODS NATURE CENTER

Downers Grove • 630-963-9388

EDUCATION *Centers*

DANADA EQUESTRIAN CENTER

35507 Naperville Road
Wheaton • 630-668-6012

Office

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Closed Saturdays & Sundays

Barn

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Saturdays & Sundays 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

DUPAGE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CENTER

525 S. Park Blvd.
Glen Ellyn • 630-942-6200

Animal Admittance and Phone Hours

Thursday – Tuesday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Wednesdays 9 a.m. – Noon

Visitor Center

Thank you for your patience! The center is still under construction but is expected to open in 2025. For updates, visit dupageforest.org.

FULLERSBURG WOODS NATURE EDUCATION CENTER

3609 Spring Road
Oak Brook • 630-850-8110

Monday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed Sundays

GRAUE MILL AND MUSEUM

3800 York Road • Oak Brook
630-850-8112

Open mid-April – mid-November
Wednesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Closed Mondays & Tuesdays

KLING CREEK FARM

1N600 County Farm Road
West Chicago • 630-876-5900

Suggested admission donation \$5 per person ages 3 and up

Thursday – Monday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed Tuesdays & Wednesdays

MAYSLAKE PEABODY ESTATE

1717 W. 31st St.
Oak Brook • 630-206-9566

Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m.
Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Closed Sundays

ST. JAMES FARM

25541 Winfield Road • Warrenville
630-580-7025

Office and Visitor Center

Please call for hours.

GOLF *Courses*

THE PRESERVE AT OAK MEADOWS

900 N. Wood Dale Road
Addison • 630-595-0071

MAPLE MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

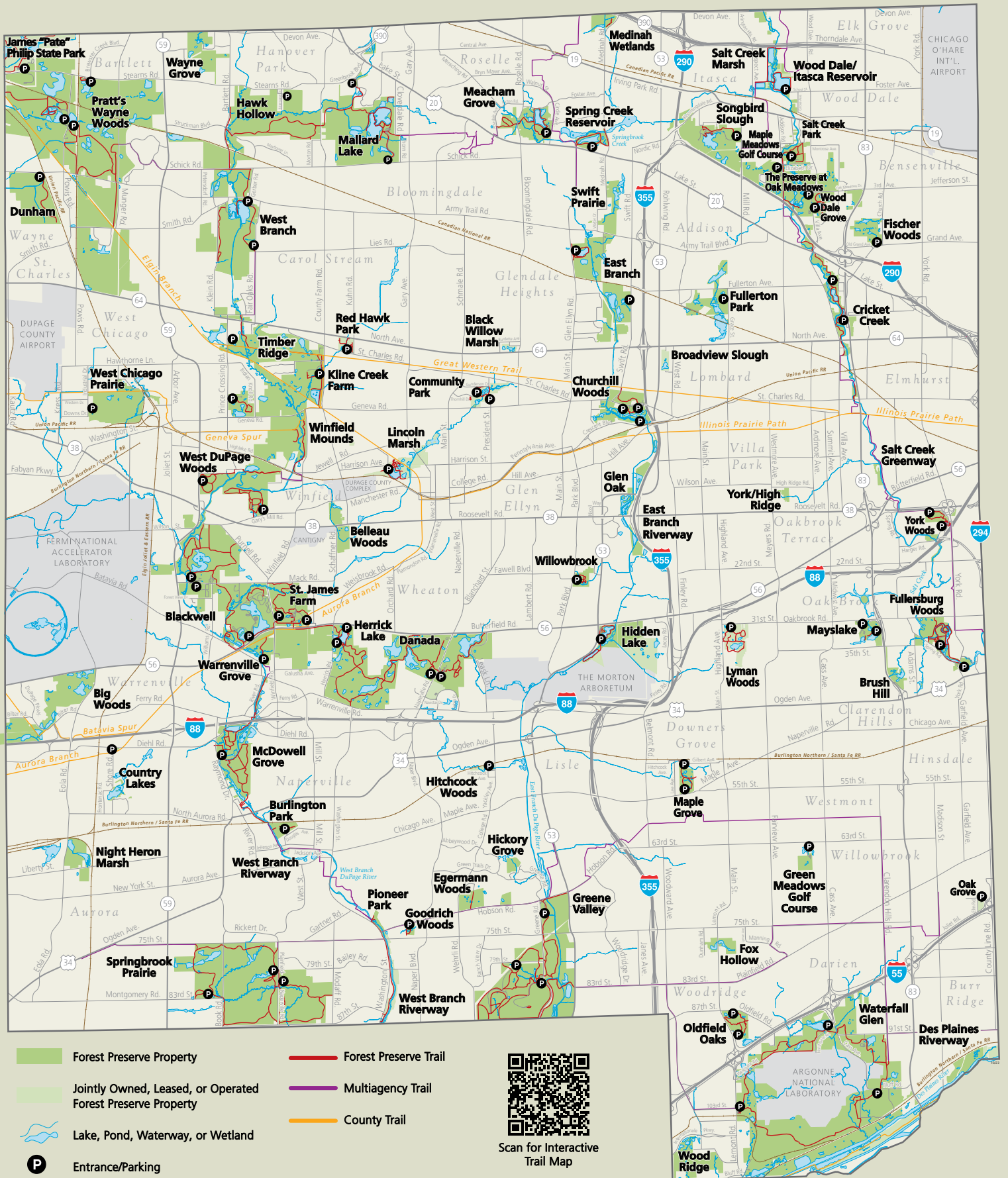
272 S. Addison Road
Wood Dale • 630-616-8424

GREEN MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

18W201 W. 63rd St.
Westmont • 630-810-5330

ACCESSIBILITY

If you have accessibility needs or concerns, please contact our ADA programs and activities coordinator at 630-871-7537 or TTY 800-526-0857 at least 48 hours before your visit or at least two weeks before any registration-based program.





**Forest Preserve District
of DuPage County**

3580 Naperville Road
Wheaton, IL 60189

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Permit No. 96

the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County **Spring 2025**

Native Plant Sale

Mayslake Peabody Estate • Oak Brook

Shop in person for native flowers,
grasses, shrubs, and trees!

For a list of plants, visit
[dupageforest.org/
native-plant-sale](https://dupageforest.org/native-plant-sale).

Questions?
Call 630-933-7248.

**May 16
10 a.m. – 7 p.m.**

**May 17
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

