

the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Fall 2025



Fall Waterfowl

Redefining Tick Season

Fall Calendar



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

from the president



Fall is one of the best times to explore DuPage County's forest preserves. The air is crisp, the colors are vivid, and wildlife is on the move. From a flash of migrating waterfowl skimming across a lake to the quiet beauty of a frosty morning on the trails, every visit offers something new to discover.

In August the Forest Preserve District and its partners celebrated the restoration of Salt Creek at Fullersburg Woods with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Restoring waterways like this creates healthier habitats for fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife and enhances the natural beauty of the places we all enjoy. It's a lasting investment in the future of our community and the land we share.

Speaking of waterfowl, with fall migration underway, ducks, geese, and other feathered swimmers will be using our lakes and rivers (Salt Creek included!) for places to rest and refuel. It's a great time of year to add a few more species to your birding life list. You can read about many of these dabblers and divers on Page 16.

Exploring the preserves is always fun, and to make it even more enjoyable we recently joined Goosechase, a mobile scavenger hunt app that lets you take on challenges, answer questions, and capture photos as you explore. It's a playful way to experience nature, whether you're out with friends, family, or just your own curiosity. Flip to Page 9, and scan the QR code to get going!

As fall progresses, I encourage you to join me in picking a destination from the map on Page 19 and stepping outside to see what our preserves have to offer. I hope you'll find the same sense of wonder that inspires so many people every day, including me!

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dan Hebreard". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Daniel Hebreard

President, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



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THE CONSERVATIONIST

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FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE COUNTY

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contents

Vol. 62, No. 4 | **Fall 2025**

- 4 **News & Notes**
- 6 **Redefining Tick Season**
- 8 **Fall Calendar**
- 16 **Fall Waterfowl**
- 18 **Directory**
- 19 **Map**

On the cover: Northern pintail

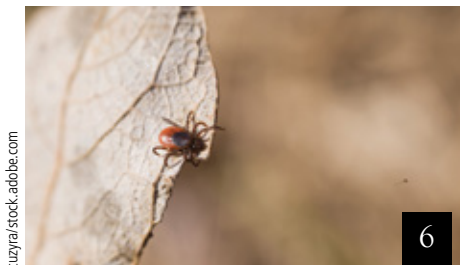
OUR *Mission*

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



© DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup

4

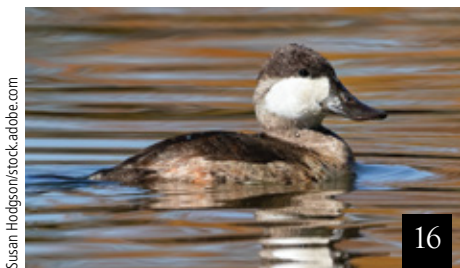


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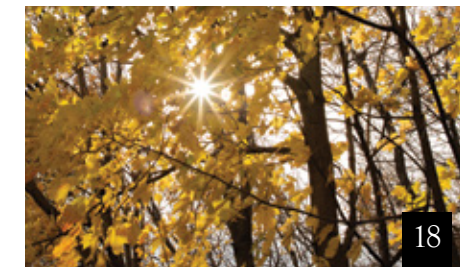


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Susan Hodgson/stock.adobe.com

16



18

news & notes



FISH RETURN TO UPSTREAM SALT CREEK

Recent sampling at Fullersburg Woods has confirmed what conservationists had hoped: Fish are once again swimming freely upstream in Salt Creek following the 2023 removal of the dam.

The Midwest Biodiversity Institute, a nonprofit focused on stream monitoring and habitat assessment, recently completed its first round of sampling following the dam's removal. The team documented eight native species previously found only downstream of the former dam: smallmouth bass (shown above), northern pike, hornyhead chub, emerald shiner, rosyface shiner, central stoneroller, blackside darter, and logperch. These exciting results show real ecological progress. Fish blocked by the dam are now moving freely, and the stream is on a solid path to recovery.

The removal was part of a larger effort to restore more than a mile of Salt Creek through a partnership between the Forest Preserve District and the DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup, a nonprofit coalition of local governments, waste-water treatment facilities, environmental groups, and engineers working to improve water quality and stream health. Although funding from the workgroup and its members supports numerous projects in the region, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago funded the majority of the removal project.

COLLECTIONS Corner

The Forest Preserve District has many books in its collections. The majority are in the library at Mayslake Hall at Mayslake Peabody Estate, but a smaller and older collection resides at Kline Creek Farm. The books help the District's heritage interpreters understand the past so they can share it with visitors.

The 500-page *Annual Report of the Illinois Farmers' Institute* from 1898 has been part of this collection for 35 years. The book describes cutting-edge farming technology for the time and shows how farmers have been finding better ways to grow food for decades.

In one report from an evening meeting on Feb. 23, 1898, A.D. Shamel shared research on different types of corn cultivation. The study showed that the biggest effect on yield was soil moisture. Weeds take moisture from the soil, and cultivation gets rid of weeds, but it also opens the soil up to evaporation. This can damage corn plants' roots, which limits the moisture they get from the soil. The research helped farmers better time cultivation to maximize yield and maintain healthy soil.

During the last two weekends in October you can experience an 1890s corn harvest for yourself at Kline Creek Farm. Flip to Page 12 of the calendar for details!



50,000 PLANTS ADDED ALONG SALT CREEK

Forest Preserve District and DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup restoration efforts along the newly restored Salt Creek at Fullersburg Woods continued over the summer with the addition of 50,000 native wetland plugs to areas where invasive plants had previously been removed. Blueflag iris, swamp milkweed, marsh blazing star, and other flowers will support pollinators and add long-term structure to the wetland ecosystem.

In the coming years, another 15,000 plugs and over 350 trees and shrubs will be added throughout floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, and other areas at the preserve.



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 prior quarter. 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 \$15,000 or More

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Gift of \$5,000 – \$9,999

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Domtar

Gift of \$2,500 – \$4,999

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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 3S580 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.



GRAND REOPENING OF DANADA HOUSE

In July the Forest Preserve District celebrated the grand reopening of the historic Danada House. The \$6.25 million project was supported in part by a \$249,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Tourism Attraction Program.

The comprehensive renovation included exterior restoration, mechanical system upgrades, interior finish improvements, and ADA and life-safety enhancements.

Daniel and Ada Rice built the house in 1939. The District acquired it and the surrounding forest preserve in 1980. Renovations and modifications over the years included the addition of the atrium in 2003 and gardens in 2009.

Event planners can again make reservations for this beautifully restored space through the Friends of Danada at 630-668-5392.



2026 ANNUAL PERMITS ON SALE DEC. 1

Annual 2026 permits for off-leash dog areas, private boating, archery, and model crafts go on sale Monday, Dec. 1, at dupageforest.org under "Get a Permit." They will also be available Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. from Visitor Services at 630-933-7248 or at Forest Preserve District headquarters at 3S580 Naperville Road in Wheaton. Questions? Call Visitor Services, or use our convenient online chat at dupageforest.org.

Redefining Tick Season

by JENNIFER RYDZEWSKI, ECOLOGIST

Starting in spring and continuing throughout the hot, hazy summer and into a cooler fall, fans of the outdoors head out to enjoy their backyards and explore the county's forest preserves. But with the joys of nature comes a tiny often unwelcomed companion: the tick.

A few different types of ticks live in DuPage. The most common is the American dog tick, also called the wood tick. American dog ticks typically live in tall grasses, brush, and disturbed edges around natural areas, but they also inhabit backyards. Black-legged ticks, aka deer ticks, are well-established in wooded areas with oak leaf litter and wildlife trails. The American dog tick can transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia, but it's the black-legged tick that

can transmit Lyme disease, the most frequently reported tick-borne illness in Illinois.

Lone star and Gulf Coast ticks both hail from the southeastern United States, but both are now documented in northeastern Illinois, including DuPage County. Migratory grassland birds and the transportation of tick-infested livestock have played a role in the ticks' successful spread north, but so has the eight-legged hitchhikers' ability to survive in new areas where environmental conditions mirror those of their original home ranges.

Ticks have four stages of life: egg, larva, nymph, and adult. After they hatch, though, they must have a blood meal at each stage to survive. Ticks can feed on mammals, birds, reptiles,



▲ Even in fall it's a good idea to tuck your pant legs into your socks if you're planning an off-trail hike.



▲ Put clothes in the dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill any ticks that might have hitched a ride home.

and amphibians, but many require a different type of animal host for each stage. Ticks that do so can take up to three years to complete their full life cycle, but most die because they don't find a host for their next feeding.

"Tick season" has historically been synonymous with warm-weather months, roughly April through September with peak activity in late spring and early summer when nymphs (pinhead-sized juveniles often difficult to spot) and adults are most prevalent. But if you've noticed ticks making an appearance earlier in the year or lingering later into fall, you're not imagining things. Changing weather and climate patterns are subtly, yet significantly, altering natural rhythms in the environment. Because ticks are incredibly sensitive to temperature and humidity, these changes are reshaping when and where people are likely to encounter them.

Warmer temperatures extend the time ticks are out and about, and DuPage County, like much of the Midwest, is experiencing milder winters with longer periods of above-freezing temperatures. Once rare, it's now not uncommon to have a series of unseasonably warm days in December, January, or February. For black-legged ticks, which become active when temperatures reach around 45 degrees, this means they can be stretching out their legs in hopes of hooking onto a host (a behavior called "questing") for more than just a few months in the summer. Milder winters also mean more ticks are likely survive to the next season, leading to potentially larger populations next summer.

Precipitation plays a role, too. Ticks thrive in humid environments. A dry summer might reduce some tick populations, but consistent or increased humidity can create favorable conditions that allow them to flourish well into fall.

So what does this all mean for fans of the great outdoors? Simply that "tick awareness" needs to be a year-round mindset, not just a seasonal one. Even on a mild winter day or an early spring afternoon, personal precautions are the best defense. (Check out the feature box for tips.) But by staying informed and taking easy preventative measures, we can minimize risk and continue to safely experience — and enjoy — DuPage County's amazing preserves. •

Tick Tips for Trekkers

Stick to the trails. Avoid walking through tall grass and dense brush.

Dress wisely. Wear light-colored clothes, which makes ticks easier to spot, and tuck your pants into your socks.

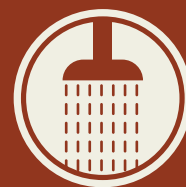
Use repellent. Apply EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or other approved ingredients as directed to exposed skin and clothing.

Check thoroughly. After spending time outdoors, perform a full-body tick check on yourself, your children, and your pets. Pay close attention to warm, hidden areas like armpits, behind the ears, and the scalp.

Shower. Shower within two hours of returning indoors to wash off any unattached ticks.

Dry clothes. Tumble dry clothes on high heat for at least 10 minutes to dry up any remaining ticks.

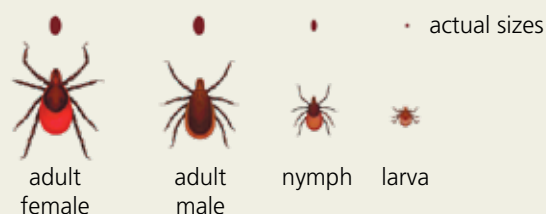
Remove ticks. Remove any attached ticks properly and promptly using a pair of tweezers. Then clean the bite site thoroughly. Consider consulting a medical professional for further guidance if any symptoms develop.



Common Ticks of DuPage

black-legged (or deer) tick

Infected deer ticks are most likely to transmit Lyme disease as nymphs, when they are hard to spot, but adults can also carry and transmit the bacteria.



American dog (or wood) tick



lone star tick



fall calendar

Plants & Wildlife	Page 10	Living Green	Page 11
Ways to Play	Page 10	Heritage	Page 12
Health & Well-Being	Page 11	Nature Art & Culture	Page 14
		Volunteer	Page 15



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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28	29	30	dec			

October

- 1

Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 2

Gothic Ghost Stories
- 3

Art Class: Introduction to Painting
Landscapes in Pastel Six-Part
Class Begins
Art Class: Watercolors Six-Part
Class Begins
Bird Walk
Mayslake by Moonlight
Mansion Tour
Peabody's Pages Book Club Three-
Part Program Begins
- 4

Art Class: Ceramic Mushroom
Ornaments Three-Part
Class Begins
ID That Tree
Pop, Pop, Pop, Popcorn!
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 5

Raw to Roving
Spinning for Beginners
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 6

Fall Forest Hike
- 8

Volunteer Restoration Workday
Waycar Wednesday
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 9

Gothic Ghost Stories
- 10

Bird Walk
Fresh Air Friday
Mayslake by Moonlight
Mansion Tour
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 11

Fall Festival at Danada
Nature Study Explorers
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 12

Fall Festival at Danada
St. James: Our Story on Foot
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 15

Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 16

The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
Fall Colors Hike
- 17

Bird Walk
Mayslake by Moonlight
Mansion Tour
Pumpkin Night Hike for Families
- 18

Art Class: Get Creative With
Mixed-Media
Corn Harvest
Fishing: Fall Trout Season Opener
Mammoth Discovery Hike
Pumpkin Night Hike for Families
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 19

Corn Harvest
OAKtober Walk
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 20

Fall Forest Hike
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 22

Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 23

Fall Colors Hike
Gothic Ghost Stories
- 24

Lantern-Lit Halloween Hike
Mayslake by Moonlight
Mansion Tour
- 25

Corn Harvest
Horsin' Around Day: Trick-or-Treat
at Danada
Lantern-Lit Halloween Hike
Lanterns and Legends: A Historic
Jack-O'-Lantern Event
Salt Creek Restoration Hike
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 26

Corn Harvest
Lanterns and Legends: A Historic
Jack-O'-Lantern Event
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 27

Fall Forest Hike
- 29

Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 30

Fall Colors Hike
- 31

Fresh Air Friday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery

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.

November

- 1** ID That Tree
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 2** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 3** Fall Forest Hike
- 5** Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 7** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 8** Backyard Chickens
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Walden Writing Workshop
- 9** Spinning for Beginners
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 10** Fall Forest Hike
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 12** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 13** The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
- 15** Salt Creek Restoration Hike
Salting and Smoking
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Walden Writing Workshop
- 16** History of St. James Farm
Salting and Smoking
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 17** Fall Forest Hike
- 19** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 21** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 22** Volunteer Restoration Workday
Walden Writing Workshop
- 23** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 24** Fall Forest Hike
- 26** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 28** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 29** Holiday Candy Making
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Walden Writing Workshop
- 30** Holiday Candy Making
Volunteer Restoration Workday

December

- 3** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 5** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 6** Among the Leaves So Green
Mistletoe and Merriment
at the Mill
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 7** Among the Leaves So Green
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 10** Spinning for Beginners
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 11** The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game
- 13** Holiday Art and Craft Market
Horsin' Around Day: National Day
of the Horse at Danada
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 14** Holiday Art and Craft Market
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 17** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 20** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 21** Volunteer Restoration Workday

JOIN THE HUNT ON goosechase!

Discover cool facts about plants, animals, and history as you use your phone to search for clues on a forest preserve scavenger hunt!

1. Scan the QR code and download the Goosechase app.
2. Search for "DuPage Forest" in the app.
3. Pick your hunt and begin!





fall calendar



Plants & Wildlife

Bird Walk 27610

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.

Oct. 3	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Herrick Lake
Oct. 10	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Hidden Lake
Oct. 17	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	St. James Farm

Fall Colors Hike 27606

Catch them while you can! Enjoy a hike during peak fall colors, and learn about the trees behind this beautiful phenomenon. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-942-6200.

Oct. 16	2 – 3 p.m.	W. DuPage Woods
Oct. 23	2 – 3 p.m.	Maple Grove
Oct. 30	2 – 3 p.m.	Wood Dale Grove

ID That Tree 27501

Join us for a 1-mile guided hike through scenic trails, where you'll discover the unique features of native trees and shrubs and learn how to identify them in the wild. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Oct. 4	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
Nov. 1	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Mammoth Discovery Hike 27507

Bring the family on a 1.5-mile hike to the site where Forest Preserve District staff unearthed the remains of a woolly mammoth. Hear how the skeleton was discovered, and learn about the natural history of mammoths and mastodons. Ages 5 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8112.

Oct. 18	10 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
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OAKtober Walk 27595

Celebrate Oak Awareness Month! Enjoy the fall colors as you learn about oaks on a 1.5-mile guided walk. Ages 5 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Oct. 19	10:30 – 11:45 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Salt Creek Restoration Hike 27504

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.

Oct. 25	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
Nov. 15	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Wednesday Wilderness Walk 27600

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

Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29	8 – 10 a.m.	Lincoln Marsh
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Ways to Play

The Challenge: Trivia Quiz Game

Challenge your friends and neighbors and show off your knowledge during this friendly quiz game with questions on music, animals, geography, history, and more! Come with a team of up to seven, or have us help you find one. Ages 18 and up. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Oct. 16	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Oak Meadows
Nov. 13	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Oak Meadows
Dec. 11	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Oak Meadows


CELEBRATE
AKtober WITH US!

What's so great about oaks? Find out during the month of OAKtober! Look for acorns throughout the calendar for featured programs.



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.

Fall Festival at Danada

The Forest Preserve District's largest event returns for two days! Festivities will include equestrian performances and demonstrations in the outdoor arena, wagon rides, food, entertainment, children's activities, barn tours, and more. All ages. Free admission and parking with small fees for some activities. No registration. Questions? Call 630-668-6012.

Oct. 11 & 12	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Danada
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Fishing: Fall Trout Season Opener

Drop a line for this popular sport fish at Silver, Grove, and Pickerel lakes. Anglers 16 and older must carry valid Illinois fishing licenses with inland trout stamps. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Oct. 18	6 a.m.	Blackwell, Wood Dale Grove, Pratt's Wayne
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Horsin' Around Day: National Day of the Horse at Danada

Cozy up to a warming fire in our rustic picnic area, see the Danada horses in their keep-warm-for-winter coats, and watch the chores of a winter barn in action. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-668-6012.

Dec. 13	Noon – 4 p.m.	Danada
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Horsin' Around Day: Trick-or-Treat at Danada

Trick-or-treat at the barn! The horses will be handing out candy and dressed to impress so you can vote for the one with the best costume. We'll also have tractor-drawn wagon rides. All ages. Free admission; wagon rides \$5 per person ages 5 and up and under 5 free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-668-6012.

Oct. 25	Noon – 4 p.m.	Danada
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Lantern-Lit Halloween Hike 27567

Experience a 2-mile self-guided lantern-lit hike along spooky trails starting with a ghost story and ending with family and friends around the fire. Hikes leave every 15 minutes. Last group leaves at 7:30 p.m., and trails close at 9 p.m. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$10 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Oct. 24 & 25	6 – 9 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Pumpkin Night Hike for Families 27548

Use pumpkins and lanterns to light your way on a self-guided night hike through the woods. There will be a Halloween-themed scavenger hunt for kids to complete and a treat at the end! Hikes leave every 15 minutes. Last group leaves at 7:30 p.m., and trails close at 9 p.m. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$10 per person ages 3 and up; under 3 free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Oct. 17 & 18	5:30 – 9 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Health & Well-Being

Fall Forest Hike 27582

Enjoy the wonders of the preserves and get some healthy exercise on a quick-paced 3-to-5-mile walk. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Oct. 6	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
Oct. 20	8:30 – 10 a.m.	W. DuPage Woods
Oct. 27	8:30 – 10 a.m.	St. James Farm
Nov. 3	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Pratt's Wayne
Nov. 10	8:30 – 10 a.m.	McDowell Grove
Nov. 17	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Greene Valley
Nov. 24	8:30 – 10 a.m.	Waterfall Glen

Fresh Air Friday 27591

Enjoy a relaxing hour of mindful walking surrounded by nature 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.

Oct. 10 & 31	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Living Green

Backyard Chickens 27482

Learn how to buy and raise chicks for eggs and meat. We'll cover shelter, care, nutrition, breed characteristics, and processing for the dinner table. Ages 18 and up. \$40 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9576.

Nov. 8	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Heritage

Among the Leaves So Green

Step back into winter holiday traditions of the 1890s as you tour the farmhouse decked out in all its splendor with antique ornaments, piney boughs, holly, and more. Learn about the importance of “planting” the tree and sprucing up in winter. Help decorate the farm by stringing popcorn and twisting greenery, and gather around the fire to mull cider and enjoy some sweet treats. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

Dec. 6 & 7 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Kline Creek Farm

Corn Harvest

Help with our annual heirloom corn harvest, which will feed the farm’s livestock throughout the year, and learn the importance of corn to an 1890s farm family. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

Oct. 18, 19, 25 & 26 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Kline Creek Farm

History of St. James Farm 27594

Get an in-depth look into St. James Farm’s fascinating history through stories and historic photographs, and learn about the people who were part of its legacy. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Nov. 16 2 – 3:15 p.m. St. James Farm

Holiday Candy Making

Enjoy the sweet life of the 1890s as you learn how farm families made, shared, and enjoyed hard candy. Smell the vibrant flavors as the candy cooks on the wood-burning stove, and sample some of the recipes as well. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

Nov. 29 & 30 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Kline Creek Farm

Lanterns and Legends: A Historic Jack-O'-Lantern Event 27500

Carve a pumpkin and craft a candle while hearing the legend of this spooky Halloween tradition. (Family-friendly stories 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.; stories for ages 10 and up 2 p.m. and later.) Supplies provided. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$15 per pumpkin. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Oct. 25 & 26 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Graue Mill

Mayslake by Moonlight Mansion Tour 27534

History and mystery collide after the sun sets for a thrilling mix of beauty and suspense – with a touch of the supernatural. Explore the shadowy halls as you hear thrilling urban legends, tales of hauntings, and stories of mischief. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$15 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 3, 10, 17 & 24 7 – 8 p.m. Mayslake



1890s Living

Kline Creek Farm

Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

HOUSE TOUR: WINTER HOLIDAYS IN THE 1890S

Join us for a guided tour of the 1890s farmhouse focusing on winter holiday traditions. Learn how farm families decorated the tree, exchanged gifts, and prepared food for the holidays.

Nov. 21 – Dec. 29 (except Nov. 27, Dec. 24 & Dec. 25)
Thursday – Monday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the hour



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.

Mistletoe and Merriment at the Mill

Enjoy hot apple cider as you explore the mill in its Victorian holiday splendor, and learn what the holidays were like in the 1850s. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-850-8110.

Dec. 6	10 a.m. – 2 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 and science experiments. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

Oct. 11	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Pop, Pop, Pop, Popcorn!

Learn all about popcorn – how it's grown, how to cook it, and why it was important to Midwestern farmers in the 1890s – and sample different heirloom varieties. Suggested admission donation of \$5 per person ages 3 and up to enter the farm. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

Oct. 4	10:30 a.m. – Noon & 1 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Raw to Roving ²⁷⁵⁰⁸

Learn how a 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 you've prepared yourself or are just curious about 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.

Oct. 5	10:30 a.m. – Noon	Graue Mill
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Salting and Smoking

Autumn was the time that 1890s farmers would preserve food to get ready for winter. Learn about the process of salting and smoking pork and grinding and stuffing for sausage. 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.

Nov. 15 & 16	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Spinning for Beginners ²⁷⁴⁹⁶

Discover how the ancient craft of spinning wool helped clothe a nation, and then learn the basics as you try it yourself on an old-fashioned spinning wheel. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Oct. 5	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
Nov. 9	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
Dec. 10	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Graue Mill

St. James: Our Story on Foot ²⁷⁵⁹⁶

Discover how the farm's buildings once hummed with agricultural life and served the equestrian community on a 1-mile guided walking tour of the building exteriors. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Oct. 12	2 – 3:15 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride

Enjoy a 30-minute ride as you hear about the preserve's history 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 630-668-6012.

Oct. 4, 5, 18, 19, 25 & 26	1 – 3 p.m.	Danada
Nov. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 & 16	1 – 3 p.m.	Danada

Waycar Wednesday

Walk through our 1906 waycar (also called a caboosse) 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.

Oct. 8	11 a.m. – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Nature Art & Culture

Art Classes

Ceramic Mushroom Ornaments Three-Part Class 27525

Learn about the visual features, shapes, sizes, and colors of mushrooms found in Illinois and the Midwest, and create ceramic mushroom ornaments for gifts or home. Take what you learned and create botanically correct pieces, or add your creativity to design mushrooms of your very own. Ages 18 and up. \$206 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 4	1 – 3 p.m.	Mayslake
Oct. 11 & 25	2 – 3 p.m.	Mayslake

Get Creative With Mixed-Media 27540

Let your creativity loose in this one-day workshop designed to expand your vision of art. Explore color, texture, and form as you create a three-dimensional artwork using acrylic paints, acrylic matte medium, molding paste, paper, and museum board with found objects from nature as well as upcycled materials. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$90 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 18	10 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Mayslake
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Introduction to Painting Landscapes in Pastel

Six-Part Class 27546

Whether you are a beginner, looking to improve your skills, or exploring a new medium, this workshop will help you see landscapes in a new way. Guided by a national award-winning artist who has worked with pastels for over 30 years, you will learn techniques to capture the essence and mood of a particular moment and place in time. Ages 18 and up. \$320 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 3 – Nov. 21	10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Mayslake
Fridays (except Oct. 10 & 31)		

Watercolors Six-Part Class 27524

Expand your drawing and painting skills and learn new techniques for observing our natural surroundings guided by a professional natural history illustrator. Explore surface structures and coloration of plants and animals with a combination of museum-quality specimens and outdoor exploration, weather permitting. Ages 18 and up. \$200 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 3 – Nov. 21	3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Mayslake
Fridays (except Oct. 10 & 31)		

Gothic Ghost Stories 27527

Step into a shadowy world of mystery and terror with stories that will take you on a journey of vengeful spirits, tragic souls, and haunted landscapes. The chills will haunt you long after the final tale is told! Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 2, 9 & 23	7 – 8 p.m.	Mayslake
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Art and More at Mayslake

Mayslake Peabody Estate

AT HOME WITH NATURE HOUSE TOUR

Learn the surprising history of Mayslake Hall, the 1921 home of F.S. Peabody 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.

Oct. 1 – Dec. 31

(except Nov. 27 & 28 and Dec. 13, 24 & 25)

Monday – Friday 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Saturdays 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

PRESERVED FOR YOU

Forest Preserve District employees proudly share their visions of how we all can connect to nature through art. On Oct. 8 at 6 p.m., meet the artists and enjoy signature mocktails at a special reception. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Sept. 29 – Dec. 6 (except Nov. 27 & 28)

Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

ROOTED IN BEAUTY

Photographers from In Focus share their personal expressions of life and experience. On Oct. 8 at 6 p.m., meet the artists and enjoy signature mocktails at a special reception celebrating the connections we all share in nature and in art. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Sept. 29 – Dec. 6 (except Nov. 27 & 28)

Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



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.

Holiday Art and Craft Market

Shop for quality artisan holiday gifts for family and friends. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free admission. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Dec. 13	11 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Mayslake
Dec. 14	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Mayslake

Peabody's Pages Book Club

Three-Part Program 27526

Join our enriching meet-ups where you'll discuss great reads with fellow book fans! In October we'll discuss *Chicago Haunts* by Ursula Bielski; in November, *Cheddar* by Gordon Edgar; and in December, *Looking for Rachel Wallace* by Robert B. Parker. Titles subject to change. Ages 18 and up. \$10 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Oct. 3, Nov. 7 & Dec. 5	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Mayslake
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Walden Writing Workshop 27547

Explore poetry with a published poet and creative journal editor. Begin by sharing your thoughts and analysis of an assigned poem. Then, write your own piece, which you can read to others in the class for feedback if you wish. We'll discuss a different poem each week, so sign up for more than one session. Ages 18 and up. \$15 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Nov. 8, 15, 22 & 29	2 – 3:30 p.m.	Mayslake
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Volunteer

Volunteer Restoration Workday 27791

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).

Churchill Woods

Oct. 4 & 5	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Nov. 1, 2, 8, 9, 28, 29 & 30	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Dec. 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 & 21	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods

Churchill Woods Glacial Ridge

Oct. 11 & 25	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill/Glacial
Nov. 1 & 15	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill/Glacial

Fullersburg Woods

Oct. 25	9 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg Woods
Nov. 15	9 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg Woods
Dec. 13	9 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg Woods

Maple Grove

Oct. 4 & 18	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove
Nov. 1 & 15	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove
Dec. 6 & 20	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove

Oldfield Oaks

Oct. 1 & 15	9 – 11 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks
Nov. 5 & 19	9 – 11 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks
Dec. 3 & 17	9 – 11 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks

Springbrook Prairie

Oct. 1, 8 & 15	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
Oct. 12	1 – 4 p.m.	Springbrook
Nov. 12	1 – 4 p.m.	Springbrook
Nov. 19, 26 & 29	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
Dec. 3 & 14	1 – 4 p.m.	Springbrook
Dec. 6, 10 & 17	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook

Wayne Grove

Oct. 11 & 25	9 a.m. – Noon	Wayne Grove
Nov. 8 & 22	9 a.m. – Noon	Wayne Grove
Dec. 6 & 14	9 a.m. – Noon	Wayne Grove

West DuPage Woods Elsen's Hill

Oct. 5 & 26	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage/Elsen's
Nov. 2, 9, 16 & 23	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage/Elsen's
Dec. 7, 14 & 21	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage/Elsen's

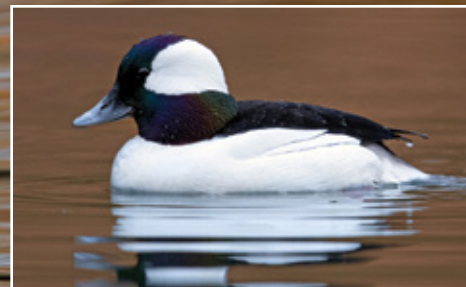
Willowbrook

Oct. 10 & 25	9 a.m. – Noon	Willowbrook
Nov. 7 & 22	9 a.m. – Noon	Willowbrook
Dec. 5 & 20	9 a.m. – Noon	Willowbrook

Volunteer Workday at the Nursery 27620

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).

Oct. 4, 10, 15, 20, 25 & 31	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell
Nov. 5, 10, 15 & 21	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell



Brian Lazenby/stock.adobe.com

▲ White feathers can help with identification. A male ruddy duck (left) has just a white patch on its cheek. A male bufflehead (above) has a white chest and belly and white along the entire back half of its head.

Fall Waterfowl

by NATE HAMBEL, WILDLIFE INTERPRETER

Susan Hodgson/stock.adobe.com

Some of the first animals we learn to recognize as children are waterfowl. We've all watched mallards confidently waddling across freshly mowed grass making their way into a nearby pond, the males with their iridescent heads and the females with their elegant subtle palettes. The mallard is by far Illinois' most common waterfowl, but the group includes far more than just these familiar ducks.

"Waterfowl" is not a scientific term, but it's commonly accepted to include birds like ducks, geese, swans, grebes, mergansers, coots, and loons, which all spend significant time in the water and tend to be strong swimmers. About four dozen different species have been spotted in DuPage County,

many as they stop over during fall and spring migration.

Aside from the occasional encounter (and resulting hiss) with a female Canada goose and her nest, waterfowl are usually docile creatures. In fact, many are skittish and fearful of people. As a result, we don't always get an opportunity to see them up close. But by comparing sizes, behaviors, shapes, and colors, you can often tell which one you happen to be observing.

For starters, if you want to increase your odds of figuring out who's who, binoculars or a spotting scope and tripod are both good options. Scopes can be expensive, though, so binoculars are a more practical place to start. A nice overall pick is a pair that's 8x42. This means they offer eight times

A bird's relative size can help with identification when you can't determine feather colors because of lighting or distance.



Trumpeter Swan



Canada Goose



Mallard



Pie-Billed Grebe



American Robin (for reference)



Don Mrozowski/stock.adobe.com

▲ Mallards “dabble” for food such as seeds and plants but also for aquatic insect larvae, earthworms, and snails.



Roger Urting/stock.adobe.com

▲ A bufflehead dives in search of a meal, likely aquatic insects or mussels.

the magnification of the human eye and have lenses 42 millimeters in diameter. Bumping up to 10x50 will let you see birds swimming from even further away.

With or without binoculars, knowing the general shapes and sizes of waterfowl can make identification easier. Trumpeter swans, Canada geese, and mallards are three common birds with different features. Swans, the largest, have long elegant necks. Mallards, the smallest of the three, have noticeably shorter necks. But mallards are by no means the smallest waterfowl that visit or nest in the forest preserves. Blue-winged and green-winged teals are smaller, and pie-billed grebes are smaller yet, somewhere between the size of a robin and a crow.

As for behaviors, first, notice how the bird floats on the water. Grebes and loons sit lower while swans, geese, and ducks appear to have most of their bodies on top of the surface.

Second, how is the bird looking for food? If you recall those mallards in the nearby pond, you might remember seeing them feeding with their heads and necks fully submerged, their little upturned tails and flailing bright orange webbed feet sticking straight in the air. This goofy behavior called “dabbling” is a feeding strategy for certain ducks as well as geese and swans. “Diving” waterfowl on the other hand — mergansers, loons, grebes, and other types of ducks — tuck their wings in and dive bill first into the water, resurfacing in another spot a few to several seconds later, hopefully with a fish, crayfish, or mussel in their grasp.

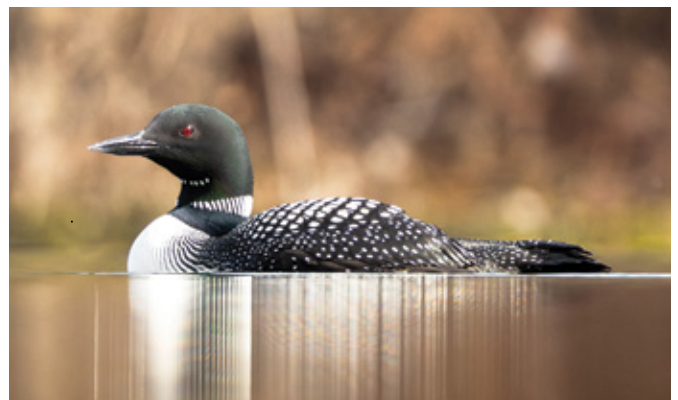
The shape of a bird’s bill can also be a clue, especially when looking at a silhouette in low lighting. Swans, geese, and ducks have more rounded bills; grebes, loons, and mergansers have sharper, pointier bills, which help them as they fish for meals.

Another question to ask is “where’s the white?” Not every bird is going to have white, but most can be identified by taking note of where a white patch, stripe, or wing bar is located. For instance, ruddy ducks and buffleheads are both small diving ducks, and as such, tend to avoid close encounters with people. From a distance, their field marks

and color patterns can be difficult to discern. But if you look at where the white is on the head, neck, and body, it’s still feasible to make an identification. A male ruddy duck has white only on a patch on the cheek. The rest of the body appears dark, especially in poor lighting. A male bufflehead, on the other hand, has a thick white headband that starts near the eye and wraps around the back all the way to the other side, fully encompassing the back half of the head. Its chest and belly are also white.

Identifying waterfowl in the forest preserves can be a treat, especially when you spot an uncommon species, which happens more than you might think, particularly in fall and winter. Waterfowl are mostly migratory. Many spend summer far north, some above the Arctic Circle. But when the days shorten and the temperatures cool, they head back down our way, many flocking to forest preserve lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. Rare sightings have included a white-winged scoter at Mallard Lake, a black-bellied whistling duck at Lincoln Marsh, ruddy ducks at Rice Lake at Danada, and common loons at Silver Lake at Blackwell.

Whether you’re thrilled at the sight of a rare bird on the wing or marveled by a mallard in a neighborhood pond, watching waterfowl is a special way to enjoy the outdoors — just as it was when we were kids. •



▲ Migrating common loons often use Silver Lake at Blackwell as a rest stop.

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 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
630-451-3430

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

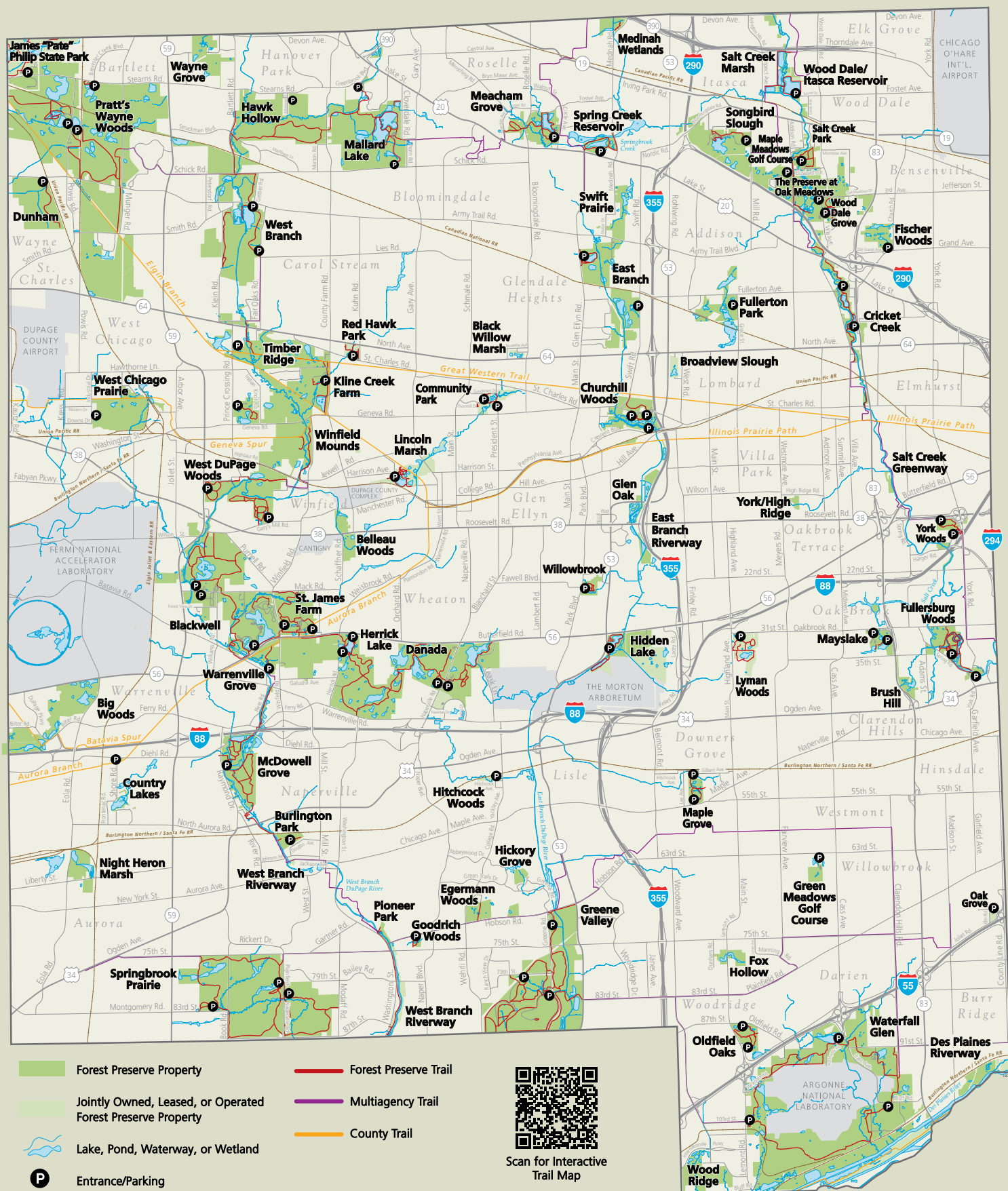
272 S. Addison Road
Wood Dale • 630-616-8424

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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the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Fall 2025

FALL FESTIVAL AT DANADA

OCT. 11 & 12
11 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Free Admission (Fees for Some Activities)

Horse Show Performances in Our Outdoor Arena

Wagon Rides • Horse-Care Demos • Stable Tours

Pony Rides, Hobbyhorse Craft, and Other Children's Activities

Food and Entertainment • More!

For more information, call the Danada Equestrian Center in
Wheaton at 630-668-6012, or visit dupageforest.org.

TWO DAYS!

