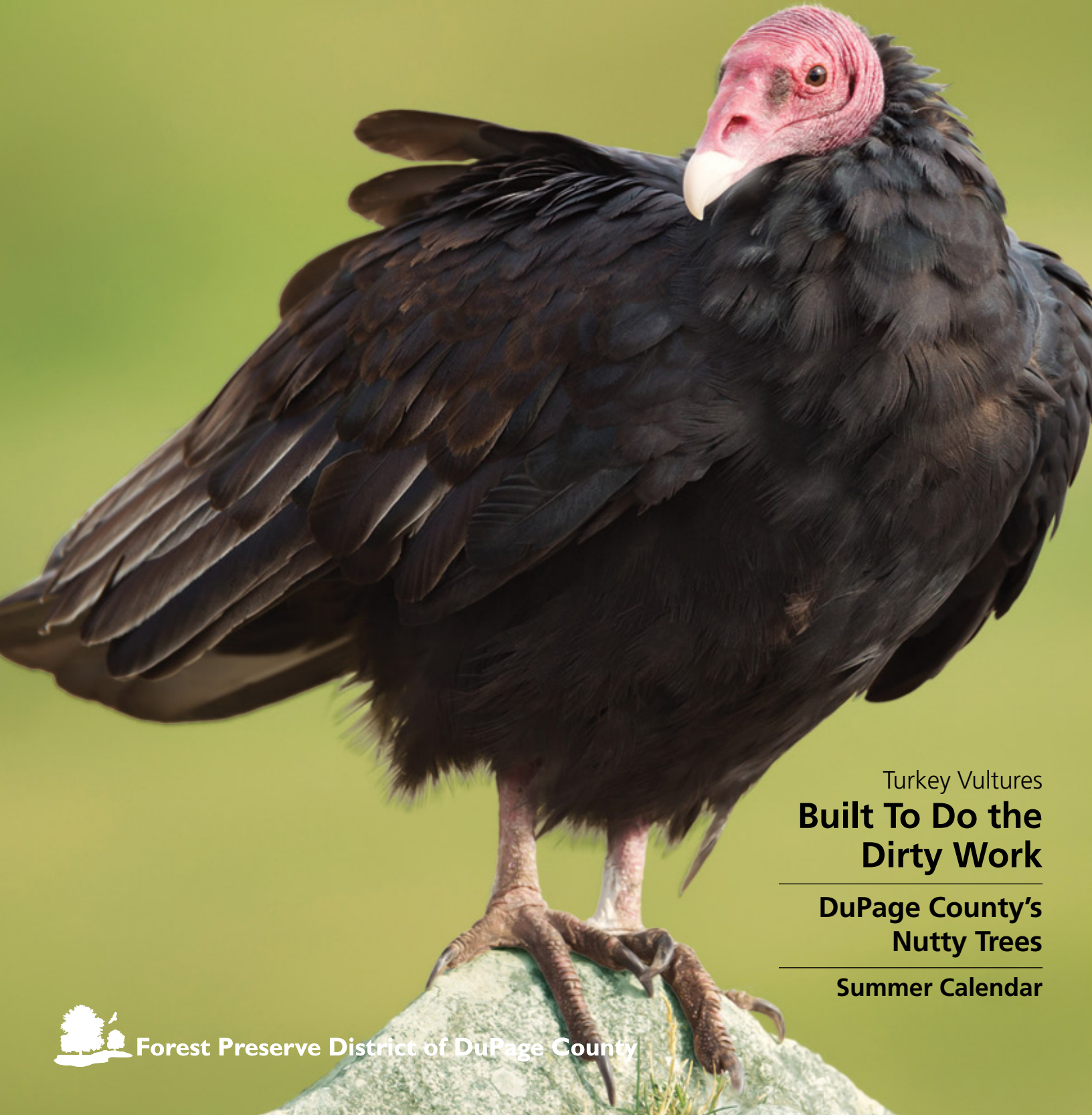


the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County **Summer 2026**



Turkey Vultures
**Built To Do the
Dirty Work**

**DuPage County's
Nutty Trees**

Summer Calendar



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

from the president



Summer is one of the best times to enjoy the forest preserves. The trails are lively, the prairies are blooming, the lakes are busy with anglers and paddlers, and families are spending more time outdoors making the most of long days and warm evenings.

Now through Labor Day the Forest Preserve District is inviting you to take that outdoor time one step further and “Unplug to Recharge” by setting aside your screens for at least 30 minutes a day and spending that time walking a trail, riding a bike, fishing, watching wildlife, journaling, or simply sitting quietly and noticing the world around you. In a world where so much of our attention is pulled toward screens, notifications, and constant information, our preserves offer something increasingly valuable: space to breathe, reflect, move, observe, and recharge.

Take the pledge by picking up an “Unplug to Recharge” cinch backpack, water bottle sticker, and challenge tracker sheet at select locations. Then, throughout the summer check out our biweekly emails, blog posts, and catchy videos, and submit your pics to our photo contest. You can find all the details at dupageforest.org/recharge.

This issue also arrives at an important time for the District as we welcome Anamari Dorgan as our new executive director. Anamari has served the District as director of Community Engagement since 2017, demonstrating steady leadership, strong communication skills, and a clear commitment to serving the residents of DuPage. Her experience, dedication, and understanding of our mission will help support the continued advancement of the board’s priorities and the important work of this organization.

Whether you take the “Unplug to Recharge” pledge, join a program, visit a favorite preserve, or discover a new one, I hope you find time this summer to enjoy all the preserves have to offer!

Daniel Hebreard
President, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Executive Director

Anamari Dorgan



BOARD MEETINGS

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



THE CONSERVATIONIST

Summer 2026, Vol. 63, No. 3



FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE COUNTY

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dupageforest.org

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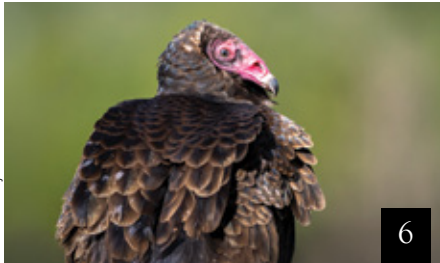
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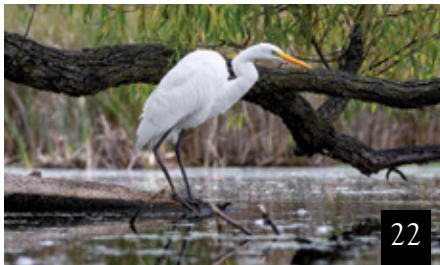
On the cover: Turkey vulture giedrius/stock.adobe.com



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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



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Matthew Jolley/stock.adobe.com

guenthermaus/stock.adobe.com

news & notes

CENACLE TRAIL REOPENS AT BLACKWELL

In May the Forest Preserve District reopened the Cenacle Trail in southwest Blackwell, which was closed as part of restoration work along Spring Brook, a tributary of the West Branch DuPage River.

The project repaired and stabilized 3,600 feet of eroded streambank; added cobble and boulders to improve habitat for fish, mussels, and aquatic insects; and removed invasive plants from the floodplain and stream corridor. It also replaced a short pedestrian bridge to improve the flow of water below. (This bridge is separate from Blackwell's 100-year-old Cenacle Bridge, which is scheduled to be replaced in 2027.)

The project was funded by the Illinois Tollway Authority.

The restoration of Spring Brook began at St. James Farm in 2015 and concluded with this final phase at Blackwell, fully restoring 2.5 miles of the tributary.



COLLECTIONS Corner

As part of its America 250 celebration, the Forest Preserve District is displaying a 46-star flag from its collection at a special exhibit at St. James Farm. The flag was the official symbol of the country between 1908 and 1912.

A 1777 act of Congress gave the U.S. its first flag, one with 13 stars, each representing a state. In 1818 a new act, which is still in effect today, established how the flag would change as the country grew. Moving forward, each new flag would have 13 stripes of red and white and a blue field containing a star for every state. As states joined the union, the flag would gain stars the following July 4. When Illinois became a state in 1818, its star (added on July 4, 1819, giving the flag 21) was the first direct result of that act. The flag gained its 50th star on July 4, 1960, after Hawaii became a state.

To see the 46-star flag and other artifacts from the District's collection, visit St. James Farm Friday – Sunday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. through Oct. 31. For details on other Forest Preserve District America 250 happenings, visit dupageforest.org/America-250.

DISTRICT WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board of Commissioners has hired Anamari Dorgan as the agency's new executive director. Dorgan will oversee District operations and administrative functions while supporting the board and will help guide the District as it advances major conservation, restoration, education, and visitor-experience projects.

Since 2017 Dorgan has served as the District's director of Community Engagement, overseeing seven education centers, resident and media communications, and visitor-experience programs. During that time she has led major organizational initiatives involving public outreach, strategic priorities, cross-divisional coordination, communications, and crisis response.

Throughout her career Dorgan has led teams through change, managed complex public-facing operations, built productive partnerships, secured grant funding, and aligned mission-driven work with community expectations.





THANK YOU for Being a Friend

The Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County advances the Forest Preserve District’s vision through philanthropic endeavors and fundraising to benefit habitat restoration, wildlife preservation, and educational and recreational programs.

The Friends gratefully acknowledges those who gave \$500 or more in January, February, and March 2026.

Gift of \$10,000 or More

Rich and Nancy Buerger
Jeffrey Arthur Jens and Ann Boisclair

Gift of \$5,000 – \$9,999

Ecolab Foundation
Edward Jones — Financial Advisor
Toni Frazier
David Gibbs
GreenState Credit Union
Mains Family
Edith Podrazik
Elizabeth Weigensberg

Gift of \$1,000 – \$2,499

Anonymous
Kerschen Family Fund
Larry C. Larson
Patrick and Mary Ellen Mauro
Carol McGee
Microsoft
Sylvia Phillips
John Schroeder
Gerald J. and Amy Tavolino
Tyndale House Publishers

Gift of \$500 – \$999

Nicholas Boyan
Claudia and David D’Hooge
Izzie’s Garden
PayPal
Martha H. Sanders
John Schofield
Geraldine Sczygiel

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.

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT AMERICA 250 LINEUP

In celebration of the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence, this summer the Forest Preserve District is offering a themed lineup of features and activities.

In the visitor center at St. James Farm, *Stars and Stripes: Our American Flag* presents the history and significance of the American flag with red, white, and blue artifacts from the District’s collection. The exhibit is open Friday – Sunday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. now through Oct. 31.

Online, the four-part *A History of DuPage County* explores the land, plants, animals, and people of the region from 1776 to today. There’s also a video series that demonstrates the historical process of creating an American flag by hand from raw wool to died yarn to finished sewn piece.

The District is also running America 250 scavenger hunts on the Goosechase app that will guide explorers to forest preserve sites tied to local history.

For links to all of the Forest Preserve District America 250 blogs, videos, programs, and scavenger hunts, visit dupageforest.org/America-250.



FLIP TO PAGE 19 FOR MORE NEWS & NOTES.

◀ In addition to having wider nostrils than most birds, turkey vultures have larger “olfactory bulbs,” the part of the brain that processes smell.

Built To Do the Dirty Work

Matthew Jolley/stock.adobe.com

by **STEPHANIE TOUZALIN**, WILDLIFE EDUCATION SUPERVISOR

Underappreciated and undervalued, the job of a scavenger is one of the more important functions in the ecological workforce. This role in the food chain is essential to keep ecosystems clean and healthy. Lucky for us, DuPage County is home to one of the best scavengers around: the turkey vulture.

Scavengers and decomposers have similar “dirty” jobs. They clean up rotting plants and animals. Scavengers lead off the process by picking apart or eating decaying materials,

breaking them into smaller pieces. Decomposers (fungi, bacteria, insects) step in as the closers, breaking things down further and returning essential nutrients to the soil. Together, the two groups are nature’s recycling dream team.

Although many animals scavenge for food, most are considered “facultative,” or opportunistic, scavengers. They have the ability to forage or hunt but won’t pass up an easy meal. Eagles, gulls, coyotes, raccoons, opossums, snapping turtles, and crows are all facultative eaters. Turkey vultures, on the other hand, are “obligate scavengers,” the true professionals in their field. They rely on carrion (aka dead animals) as their sole source of food and have special adaptations for eating these otherwise unpalatable meals.

Turkey vultures begin their search for food high in the sky. With wingspans up to 6 feet, vultures can soar with incredible efficiency. The “fingers” of the splayed primary feathers at the tip of each wing create mini eddies of air currents that reduce the need to flap, and a wobbly V-shaped wing position keeps the birds afloat and stable. This allows vultures to take advantage of thermals, warm rising air currents that develop over land. Riding thermals gives vultures height, and a controlled descent allows their noses to find dinner.

It wasn’t originally understood if turkey vultures used scent or sight to locate food, but the answer turned out to be both. Early experiments set out hidden, visible, and fake



Carol Hamilton/stock.adobe.com

▲ Extremely strong stomach acids and gut bacteria allow turkey vultures to safely eat what many animals cannot.



Janel/stock.adobe.com

▲ Turkey vultures often dine on roadkill, so be careful and on the lookout for these important scavengers when driving.



© Howard Thiele

▲ A turkey vulture's 6-foot wingspan, splayed feathers, and V-shaped wings make it an excellent soarer.

carrion and timed vultures' arrivals. Results were mixed, but turkey vultures appeared to have standards: the fresher the dead animal the better. A eureka moment occurred when researchers realized turkey vultures also responded to leaky gas lines. There was no food, but there was an enticing aroma.

Further studies revealed that a turkey vulture's olfactory bulb (the part at the base of the brain that processes smell) is much larger than that of a black vulture and contains more mitral cells, which are responsible for carrying information to the brain. Turkey vultures also have larger, more open "nares," or nostrils, that can detect food hundreds of feet below.

Once they catch a faint scent in the air, turkey vultures start making closer, circling inspections. This is when their keen vision pitches in to pinpoint the meal. (Interestingly, where black and turkey vulture ranges overlap, black vultures have learned to follow their cousins to the feast.)

Wing design and sharp senses have made the turkey vulture one of the most widespread and successful vultures in the world, but these features are just the wrappings. Inside is where the magic happens. A vulture's unique digestive system is a dead end for pathogens. Rivaling the acidity of battery

acid, a vulture's stomach has a pH of 1.3 or below, making it one of the most corrosive environments in the animal kingdom, one that can wipe out anthrax, botulism, rabies, and cholera. The gut biome manages what the stomach acid cannot with enzymes containing highly toxic clostridia and flesh-eating fusobacteria. This exceptional immune system lets vultures eat what would make most other creatures sick.

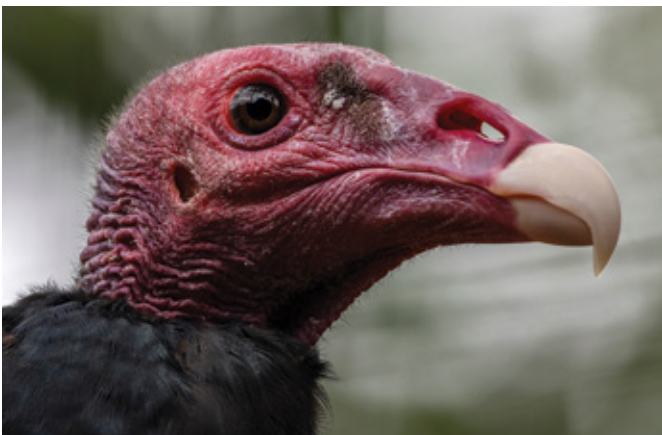
Unfortunately, vultures are some of the most threatened birds on the planet. Of the 23 species worldwide, 14 are threatened, including North America's critically endangered California condor. The biggest threats are habitat loss, lead and other types of poisoning, and collisions with vehicles and power lines.

The stark reality of a world without vultures was made evident in India in the mid-1990s. The birds were eating dead livestock that, when alive, had been treated with diclofenac, an anti-inflammatory that causes kidney failure and death in vultures. With few surviving vultures, over time, an accumulation of decaying animals and an increase in feral dogs caused a spike in rabies, pests, and other human health risks.

Here in DuPage, where turkey vultures reside March through November, there are a couple of easy ways to help these birds out. First, don't use rodenticides or lead fishing gear. When a vulture (or any predator) eats a poisoned rodent or fish, it also ingests the harmful toxins. Second, be on the lookout for vultures when driving. Many are killed while enjoying roadside meals.

Despite their value, vultures can get a bad rap for just being vultures. Scavengers in general are often incorrectly characterized as dirty or gross, and vultures carry the additional misguided label of harbingers of death. They may have heightened senses, but sensing approaching death is not one of them. In fact, turkey vultures are the opposite, renewing life and restoring balance to the natural world.

So the next time you see turkey vultures circling overhead, send a nod of thanks their way. Their dining habits may disgust us, but somebody's got to do it, and turkey vultures' extraordinary abilities make them perfect for the job. •



Mauro Rodrigues/stock.adobe.com

▲ Turkey vultures' featherless heads may make it easier for these birds to clean up after a meal.

summer calendar



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 Ways to Play Page 12 Nature Art & Culture Page 18
 Health & Well-Being Page 14 Volunteer Page 18

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July

- 1** Arts and Crafts for Adults at the Miller's House:
Papermaking
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 2** Celebrating the Fourth
- 3** Peabody's Pages Book Club Three-Part Program Begins
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 6** Little Explorers: Forest Colors and Shapes
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 7** Nature 101: Biking in the Preserves
Prairie Time
- 8** Spinning for Beginners
Waycar Wednesday
- 9** Prairie Time
Pre-K Nature Play
- 10** Family Evening Hike: Wildlife at Dusk
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 11** CCC at Fullersburg: A Guided History Hike
Family Time at the Miller's House
Kayaking: Basics
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 12** Got Milkweed?
- 13** Prairie Preschool
- 15** Tree Trackers
- 16** Brown Bag Lunch and Learn
Nature Journaling for Beginners
- 17** Moonlight Moth Walk
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 18** Storytime With the Miller
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 19** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 20** Archery: All Ages
Little Explorers: Animals on the Move
- 21** Prairie Time
- 22** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Waycar Wednesday
- 23** Prairie Time
- 24** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 25** Kayaking: Safety and Rescue Techniques
Vintage Baseball Match: Lemont Quarrymen vs. Chicago Salmon
- 26** Behind the Scenes at the DuPage Wildlife Conservation Center
- 27** Prairie Preschool
- 30** Nature Photography and Journaling Hike
- 31** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
World Ranger Day: Ask a Ranger



How to Register on ActiveNet

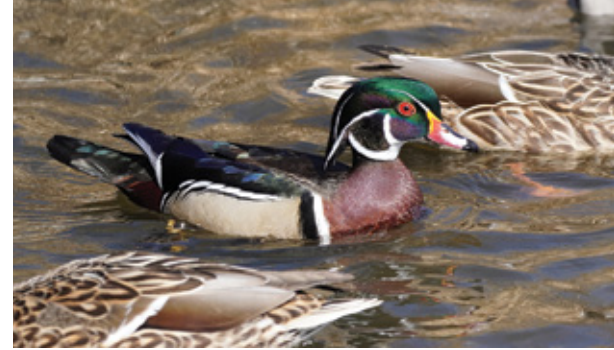
1. Visit dupageforest.org. Scroll down and click "Find a Program."
2. Click "Search Programs on ActiveNet."
3. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one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

August

- 1** Archery: Open House
Fullersburg Days
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 2** Fullersburg Days
Kayaking: Paddle With a Ranger
Wild Baby Brunch
- 3** Little Explorers: Creek Critters
- 4** International Owl Awareness Day
- 5** Arts and Crafts for Adults at the Miller's House: Sewing and Embroidery
- 6** Forest Invaders
- 7** Fresh Air Friday
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 8** Family Time at the Miller's House
Nature Study Explorers
Thresher's Dinner
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 9** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 11** Nature 101: Biking in the Preserves
- 12** Fishing: Rivers
Spinning for Beginners
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 13** Pre-K Nature Play
- 14** Family Evening Hike: Sounds of the Evening
Hoofprints Through History
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 15** Nature 101: Biking in the Preserves
Storytime With the Miller
- 16** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 17** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 20** Brown Bag Lunch and Learn
Evening Bat Walk
Nature Photography and Journaling Hike
- 22** CCC at Fullersburg: A Guided History Hike
Fishing: Beginners
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wild Baby Brunch
- 23** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 26** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 28** Family Evening Hike: Trees and Trails
- 29** Paws and Play
- 30** Archery: Games
Turtle Time
Volunteer Restoration Workday

September

- 2** Evening Hike Club
Spinning for Beginners
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 3** Vultures: Nature's Cleanup Crew
- 5** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 6** Volunteer Restoration Workday
Wild Baby Brunch
- 7** Migration Mysteries
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 9** Archery: Adults
Arts and Crafts for Adults at the Miller's House: Watercolors
Evening Hike Club
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 11** Bird Walk
- 12** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 13** Fishing: With Grandparents
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 14** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 15** Homeschool Historians: Pasture to Petticoats
Nature 101: Biking in the Preserves
- 16** Evening Hike Club
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 17** Brown Bag Lunch and Learn
A Night for Nature
- 18** Bird Walk
Moonlight Moth Walk
St. James: Our Story on Foot
- 19** Playing the Past: A Girl Scout Junior Badge Program
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wild Baby Brunch
- 20** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 23** Evening Hike Club
Wednesday Wilderness Walk
- 25** Bird Walk
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 26** Ranger Discovery Hike
Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
- 27** Tractor-Drawn Wagon Ride
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 29** Kayaking: Paddle With a Ranger
- 30** Evening Hike Club
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
Wednesday Wilderness Walk



Plants & Wildlife

Behind the Scenes at the DuPage Wildlife Conservation Center 29101

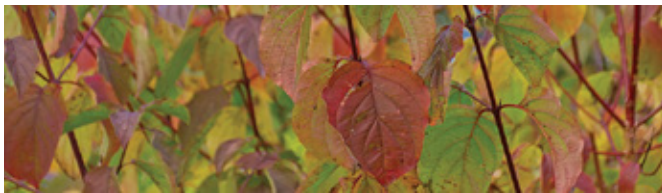
Get a behind-the-scenes look at a working wildlife hospital as you learn about the rehabilitation process from arrival and examination to rehabilitation and release of our wildlife patients. Learn, too, about sustainable features of this state-of-the-art, net-zero-designed facility. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$25 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-942-6200.

July 26	1:30 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center
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Bird Walk 28942

Bring your binoculars and enjoy birding camaraderie as you learn ID tips and tricks and look for migrating birds on a casual 2-mile guided walk for beginning to advanced birders. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 11	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Salt Creek Marsh
Sept. 18	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Greene Valley
Sept. 25	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks



Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale

Shop online for native trees and shrubs adapted to DuPage conditions, and then pick up your plants in September at St. James Farm. Plants must be ordered in advance; there will not be in-person sales at the farm. Additionally, orders are processed on a first-come, first-served basis while supplies last and are subject to nursery availability. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Starting Aug. 3 at 9 a.m.

Review the catalog and order online at dupageforest.org/fall-tree-shrub-sale.

Sept. 11 and 12

Pick up your plants at St. James Farm.

Evening Bat Walk 28955

Join us on an evening walk through the woods to learn about DuPage bats. We'll begin with a brief discussion on the importance of bats, how local ecologists monitor their populations, and why these animals are connected to Halloween. We'll then use technology to identify bats flying overhead. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$10 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 20	7:30 – 9 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Forest Invaders 28992

Take a short hike with plant experts, and learn how to identify nonnative and invasive species in the wild by leaf, root, and stem. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

Aug. 6	6 – 7 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Got Milkweed? 29021

Learn about the monarch butterfly life cycle and migration and ways to help monarchs and other pollinators. Then hunt for butterflies, eggs, and caterpillars in our native prairie gardens. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 12	10:30 – 11:45 a.m.	St. James Farm
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International Owl Awareness Day 29107

Celebrate the owl as you learn about local species and find out how their adaptations make them incredible hunters. Then dissect an owl pellet to see what these birds eat. Ages 7 – 13. \$10 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-942-6200.

Aug. 4	2 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center
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Migration Mysteries 29108

Explore the phenomenon of migration on a guided walk that focuses on birds' fall flights to warmer regions. Learn about different birds and migration routes, environmental cues that trigger migration, and challenges birds face along the way, such as habitat loss and urban development. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-942-6200.

Sept. 7	8 – 10 a.m.	Wildlife Center
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How to Register on ActiveNet

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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.

Moonlight Moth Walk 28975

Join a guided walk through the woods to learn about moth conservation efforts and how the District monitors moths to study biodiversity. Then help with a nighttime science project. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 17	9 – 10:30 p.m.	Wood Dale Grove
Sept. 18	8 – 9:30 p.m.	W. DuPage Woods



Prairie Time

Take a self-guided scavenger hunt through the prairie gardens, and learn about plants and insects while making a fun themed craft. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

July 7, 9, 21 & 23	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Tree Trackers 29015

Hey, kids, become tree detectives at this hands-on adventure where you'll explore the forest preserve, make leaf and bark rubbings, sort "clue" leaves, count rings on a tree cookie, and discover how to ID trees by looking at their different features. Ages 6 – 9 with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 15	1 – 2 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Turtle Time

Get a close look at the center's native resident turtles as they bask in the sun and display their natural behaviors in a safe, educational setting. Learn how to identify common turtles, why basking is essential to their health, and which habitats these turtles call home. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-942-6200.

Aug. 30	2 – 3 p.m.	Wildlife Center
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Vultures: Nature's Cleanup Crew 29103

Celebrate International Vulture Awareness Day with us, and learn about vultures' role in the ecosystem, their adaptations, and the threats they face. Then examine bones and feathers of the turkey vultures that call DuPage home. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-942-6200.

Sept. 3	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Wildlife Center
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Wednesday Wilderness Walk 29090

Observe the flora and fauna in the greatly diverse Lincoln Marsh on a guided nature hike. 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 on ActiveNet, at 630-942-6200, or at the walk.

Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30	8 – 10 a.m.	Lincoln Marsh
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UNPLUG TO RECHARGE
DUPAGE FOREST PRESERVES

We've all read the news. We all know the facts. Sometimes we have to put down those slick devices we carry around all day and look up at some trees and clouds instead.

For those who need more than a nudge to try it, this summer the Forest Preserve District is offering some fun challenges, contests, and free swag to amp up your motivation.

So get ready to hit ESC, change your background, and clear your cache for real.

Find out how at dupageforest.org/recharge.

summer calendar



Wild Baby Brunch

Get glimpses of the wildlife rehabilitation process through the observation windows, see babies as they're fed, and learn what it takes to care for young wild animals. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-942-6200.

Aug. 2 & 22	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Wildlife Center
Sept. 6 & 19	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Wildlife Center

Family Evening Hike 28998

Join an adventure with short stops along the way, kid-friendly activities, and a take-home spotlight card. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$10 per family. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

Wildlife at Dusk

July 10	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Sounds of the Evening

Aug. 14	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Trees and Trails

Aug. 28	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Ways to Play

Archery

Adults 29084

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 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 9	4:30 – 6 p.m.	Churchill Woods
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All Ages 29079

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 20	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Blackwell
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Games 29083

Compete with others in different enjoyable games for all levels. Equipment provided. Ages 9 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 30	1 – 3 p.m.	Blackwell
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Open House

Learn about equipment, try some of the basics with a certified instructor, and talk to representatives from local archery groups at this family-friendly event. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Aug. 1	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell
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Fishing

Beginners 29081

Don't rely on luck to catch fish! Learn basic skills to improve your confidence and make family outings successful. We'll cover equipment, knots, where and how to find fish, and what to do when you catch them. Equipment and bait are provided, but feel free to bring your own gear. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 22	9 – 10:30 a.m.	Meacham Grove
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Rivers 29080

Discover techniques for fishing in rivers and streams at this intermediate clinic. Equipment and bait are provided, but feel free to bring your own gear. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 12	4 – 6 p.m.	McDowell Grove
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With Grandparents 29082

Spend the morning by the lake with the grandparents in your life, creating memories and learning skills to increase your fishing successes. Equipment and bait are provided, but feel free to bring your own gear. All ages. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 13	10:30 a.m. – Noon	Pratt's Wayne
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How to Register on ActiveNet

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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.

Kayaking

Basics 29075

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

July 11	5 – 7 p.m.	Hidden Lake
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Paddle With a Ranger 29077

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 2	9 – 11 a.m.	Mallard Lake
Sept. 29	4 – 6 p.m.	Herrick Lake

Safety and Rescue Techniques 29076

Learn about equipment and ways to ensure safe paddling, and then take part in rescue maneuvers with an American Canoe Association-certified instructor. Equipment provided. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$20 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 25	2 – 4 p.m.	Hidden Lake
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Little Explorers 29007

Discover the magic of nature with your preschooler, starting with a story and then continuing outdoors for kid-friendly adventures. Ages 3 – 5 with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

Forest Colors and Shapes

July 6	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Animals on the Move

July 20	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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Creek Critters

Aug. 3	9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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A Night for Nature

Join the 501(c)(3) Friends of the Forest Preserve District for fellowship, food, drinks, live music, an auction, and wagon rides at this annual event that supports the restoration of habitat and preservation of wildlife in DuPage preserves. Ages 21 and up. \$125 per person. Tickets available starting July 1 at dupageforest.org/friends. Questions? Call 630-871-6400.

Sept. 17	5 – 8:30 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Paws and Play

Take a "paws" from your screen to learn about local reptiles through self-guided and self-paced activities. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-942-6200.

Aug. 29	9 a.m. – Noon	Wildlife Center
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Riding Lessons 29124

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-668-6012.



Save the Date! Fall Festival at Danada

Danada Equestrian Center

Our largest event returns again for two days with equestrian performances and demonstrations in the outdoor arena, wagon rides, children's activities and entertainment, barn tours, and more. All ages. Free admission and parking; small fees for some activities. No registration. Questions? Call 630-668-6012.

Oct. 10 and 11 • 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

summer 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

Weekends Through Sept. 27

Weekdays Through Aug. 14

11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Herrick Lake

Weekends Through Sept. 7

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.

Weekends Through Oct. 25

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 the holidays, call 630-933-7248.

Friday and Saturday Nights Through Oct. 12

Plus Select Additional Holiday Nights

Prairie Preschool 28971

Explore the prairie and other habitats as you learn why these areas are special and how wild animals use them. Then enjoy a guided nature walk and activity. Ages 2 – 5 with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 13 & 27 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. St. James Farm

Pre-K Nature Play 28946

Bring your little ones to a guided morning of nature play in the forest, where you'll stretch, sing, move, and explore together. Ages 2 – 5 with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 9 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Fullersburg Woods
Aug. 13 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Fullersburg Woods

Ranger Discovery Hike 29085

Learn everything you wanted to know about the preserves — ways to play, plants, animals, history, and more — on this wildly entertaining ranger-led hike. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 26 9 – 11 a.m. Greene Valley

World Ranger Day: Ask a Ranger

Discover the roles rangers play at this open house, where you can explore the trails, meet the people who care for the preserves, and get your questions answered. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

July 31 5 – 6:30 p.m. Hidden Lake

Health & Well-Being

Evening Hike Club 28956

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 2 6 – 7:30 p.m. Danada
Sept. 9 6 – 7:30 p.m. St. James Farm
Sept. 16 6 – 7:30 p.m. McDowell Grove
Sept. 23 6 – 7:30 p.m. Blackwell
Sept. 30 6 – 7:30 p.m. Herrick Lake



How to Register on ActiveNet

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Fresh Air Friday 29020

Enjoy a relaxing, mindful hour surrounded by nature on a 1-mile walk on crushed limestone and grass trails. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 7	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Nature 101: Biking in the Preserves 28949

Bring your bike and helmet, and enjoy the scenic trails on a low-intensity ride that's perfect for anyone who wants to connect with nature in a friendly group setting. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 7	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Springbrook
Aug. 11	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Mallard Lake
Aug. 15	8 – 10 a.m.	Waterfall Glen
Sept. 15	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Herrick Lake

Nature Photography and Journaling Hike 29285

Unplug to recharge and use your creativity to record the changing world around you as you take photos on a 1-mile hike using an instant-print camera. Then use your photos to create your own nature journal. Supplies provided. Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 30	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods
Aug. 20	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg Woods

Heritage

Brown Bag Lunch and Learn 28984

Large lectures can be a lot, so bring your lunch to this small-group setting in the miller's house, where we'll present different topics each month. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 16	Noon – 1 p.m.	Graue Mill
Aug. 20	Noon – 1 p.m.	Graue Mill
Sept. 17	Noon – 1 p.m.	Graue Mill

CCC at Fullersburg:

A Guided History Hike 28978

Visit trails and structures built by the Civilian Conservation Corps on a 2.5-mile hike that explores the legacy of the World War I veterans who helped shape the preserve during the Great Depression. Ages 16 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$10 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 11	10 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg Woods
Aug. 22	10 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg Woods

Celebrating the Fourth

Party like Victorians as you celebrate the 250th anniversary of the U.S. at Kline Creek Farm. Picnic among the farm's natural beauty, explore a historical picnicking display, compete in historical games, and help make a special dairy treat using ice from our icehouse. 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.

July 2	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Fullersburg Days

Celebrate the history of one of the county's oldest preserves with hands-on activities, nature exploration, and old-fashioned fun. Hunt for crawfish in Salt Creek (bring your water shoes), make traditional corn husk dolls, and hear about the Civilian Conservation Corps and its role in shaping the preserve, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Tour Graue Mill, examine the remains of a woolly mammoth in the nature center, and end the day by exploring the trails. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-850-8110.

Aug. 1 & 2	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Fullersburg Woods
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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. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900 or visit facebook.com/klinecreekfarm.

HOUSE TOUR: BACK TO SCHOOL IN THE 1890S

On this guided tour, find out how fall was back-to-school time for kids in the 1890s just as it is today.

Aug. 13 – Sept. 28 (except Sept. 7)

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

HOUSE TOUR: FARM POWER

Join a guided tour of the farmhouse and discover how nonelectric tools and machines helped with household chores in the 1890s.

July 2 – Aug. 10

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

TIME TO GO CHORIN'

Pitch in with household or barnyard chores that vary every visit, and learn the skills farm families needed to have to get the job done. It can get messy, so wear shoes and clothes that can get a little dirty.

July 6 – Aug. 31

Mondays and Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Homeschool Historians: Pasture to Petticoats 28981

Bring your homeschooled students to this guided exploration, where they'll discover how raw sheep wool is transformed into yarn and then woven into fabric. They'll experience the entire process from fleece to finished textile while enjoying hands-on crafts and activities. Ages 8 – 16 with an adult. \$10 per student. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

Sept. 15 1 – 3 p.m. Graue Mill

Hoofprints Through History 29022

Join us on a 1-mile tour of the farm's historic equestrian areas. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 14 10 – 11:15 a.m. St. James Farm

Nature Study Explorers

Explore the outdoors just like kids from the 1890s as you take a step back in time and learn from the nature-study movement of the late Victorian era with seasonal craft projects or 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.

Aug. 8 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Kline Creek Farm

Playing the Past: A Girl Scout Junior Badge Program 29073

Earn your Playing the Past badge by stepping into the shoes of a child on a working 1890s farm. Learn what life was like as you bake cornbread, churn butter, make a historic craft, and play outdoor games. Junior Girl Scouts in fourth and fifth grades. \$30 per Scout. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-876-5900.

Sept. 19 9 a.m. – Noon Kline Creek Farm

Spinning for Beginners 28982

Learn about the basics of spinning wool into yarn and how this ancient craft helped clothe a nation. Then try it for yourself on an old-fashioned spinning wheel. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 8 1 – 2:30 p.m. Graue Mill
 Aug. 12 1 – 2:30 p.m. Graue Mill
 Sept. 2 1 – 2:30 p.m. Graue Mill



How to Register on ActiveNet

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4. If a program has more than one date, time, or location, click "View Subactivities" to find the one you want.

St. James: Our Story on Foot 29023

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

Sept. 18	2 – 3:15 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Storytime With the Miller 28995

See history come alive through literature as you hear a historic tale and then try your hand at a craft, activity, or chore from the story. Ages 8 – 12 with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 18	11 a.m. – Noon	Graue Mill
Aug. 15	11 a.m. – Noon	Graue Mill

Thresher's Dinner 29074

Learn why harvesting oats was a huge chore that required hired help, and then sit down to a dinner featuring farm-raised foods and 1890s recipes cooked on a wood-burning stove. After the dinner, stop by the field to see the threshing machine in action. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$75 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-876-5900.

Aug. 8	Noon – 1:30 p.m.	Kline Creek 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? For St. James Farm, call 630-580-7025. For Danada, call 630-668-6012. (Also call Danada starting Aug. 3 for reservations for private group evening rides on Sept. 18, 19, 25 or 26.)

July 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31	1 – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
Aug. 7 & 14	1 – 3 p.m.	St. James Farm
Sept. 19, 20, 26 & 27	1 – 3 p.m.	Danada

Vintage Baseball Match: Lemont Quarrymen vs. Chicago Salmon

Pack a picnic, bring a blanket or chair, and celebrate America 250 as you watch Vintage Base Ball Association teams the Lemont Quarrymen and the Chicago Salmon play America's pastime. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900.

July 25	1 – 3 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Waycar Wednesday

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

July 8 & 22	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	St. James Farm
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America 250

The Forest Preserve District is celebrating America's 250 years of independence with programs connecting people to local history, museum collections, and the evolving story of DuPage. Links to our America 250 blogs, videos, programs, and scavenger hunts will post as they become available on dupageforest.org/America-250.

STARS AND STRIPES: OUR AMERICAN FLAG

St. James Farm

Celebrate by learning the history of the United States flag and viewing variations from our museum collection. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

July 3 – Oct. 31

Friday – Sunday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.



Nature Art & Culture

Arts and Crafts for Adults at the Miller's House 29002

Formal art lessons can be a little intimidating, but you'll feel at home at these relaxing beginner programs, where you'll meet new friends as you learn the basics. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

Papermaking

July 1	2 – 3:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
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Sewing and Embroidery

Aug. 5	2 – 3:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
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Watercolors

Sept. 9	2 – 3:30 p.m.	Graue Mill
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Family Time at the Miller's House 29009

Get your creativity flowing and add a little art to your day at these fun family arts and crafts sessions at the miller's house. Ages 8 and up with an adult. \$5 per child. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-850-8112.

July 11	11 a.m. – Noon	Graue Mill
Aug. 8	11 a.m. – Noon	Graue Mill

Nature Journaling for Beginners 28954

Nature journaling connects us to nature through pictures, words, numbers, and art. Learn different techniques for nature observation and personal reflection regardless of your artistic ability. Materials provided. Ages 18 and up. \$5 per person. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-933-7248.

July 16	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Mayslake
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Peabody's Pages Book Club

Three-Part Program 29112

Join these enriching meetups and discuss great reads with fellow book fans. We'll discuss *The Birth of the Republic* by Edmund S. Morgan in July and *True Story* by Michael Finkle in August. In September, pick your favorite book to share with the group. Titles subject to change. Due to work at Mayslake Hall, these meetings will be at the Graue House next to the Graue Mill and Museum. Ages 18 and up. \$10 per person for all three discussions. Register on ActiveNet or at 630-206-9566.

July 3, Aug. 7 & Sept. 4	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Graue Mill
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Volunteer

Volunteer Restoration Workday 29225

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-206-9630 at least five days in advance (10 days by phone for groups of five or more).

Churchill Woods

July 18 & 19	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Aug. 8 & 9	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Sept. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 19 & 20	8:30 – 11 a.m.	Churchill Woods

Churchill Woods Glacial Ridge

July 11 & 18	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill/Glacial
Aug. 1 & 22	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill/Glacial
Sept. 5 & 19	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill/Glacial

West DuPage Woods

Aug. 16, 23 & 30	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage Woods
Sept. 13, 20 & 27	9 a.m. – Noon	W. DuPage Woods

Volunteer Workday at the Nursery 29035

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 on ActiveNet or at 630-206-9630 at least five days in advance (10 days ahead for groups of five or more).

July 1, 6, 11, 17 & 22	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 1, 7, 12, 17, 22 & 26	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 9, 14 & 19	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 25 & 30	9 a.m. – Noon	Blackwell

news & notes

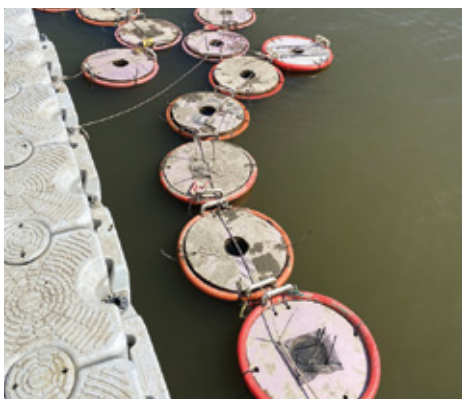
MUSSELS ON THE MOVE

For the past 14 years the main goal of the Forest Preserve District's Urban Stream Research Center at Blackwell has been to raise and release native freshwater mussels, the most imperiled wildlife species in the U.S. Over that time the center has placed more than 38,000 into local rivers and streams.

Last winter, for the first time since opening, the center overwintered 4,000 young mussels in 18 special baskets attached to a floating dock in Rice Lake at Danada. The effort yielded a recovery rate of 91%, a marked increase over the average 26% that survive when overwintering in the lab.

Because the dock was already in place, in spring, ecologists were able to move mussels from the research center to Rice Lake for summer grow-out sooner than normal. As of May, over 30,000 mussels from five different species were already in the lake. Visitors will likely see staff at the preserve on a weekly basis throughout the season as they monitor the mussels' growth and survival.

Combined, these winter and spring efforts along with the 23,000 mussels still at the lab put the center on track for one of its largest propagation years to date. For more on the center, visit dupageforest.org/what-we-do/species-recovery.



TRAIL CONSTRUCTION *Celebration*

In May the Forest Preserve District marked the start of construction on the final stretch of the 26-mile West Branch DuPage River Trail with a ceremony at Blackwell. The 0.7-mile segment will connect Blackwell and West DuPage Woods and feature a 750-foot prefabricated steel truss pedestrian bridge over Route 38 (Roosevelt Road) and the West Branch DuPage River.

Construction is expected to be completed in June 2027. Most of the \$8.5 million project is being funded through the federal Transportation Alternatives Program and Surface Transportation Program. The Forest Preserve District is contributing \$1.88 million.

The regional trail roughly follows the West Branch DuPage River and when complete will connect the North Central DuPage Regional Trail at Hawk Hollow in Bartlett to Will County to the south.



FULLERSBURG WOODS JOINS NATIONAL REGISTER

In May the U.S. Department of the Interior added 176.9 acres of Fullersburg Woods to the National Register of Historic Places. Among other features, the designation includes trails, five buildings, and eight additional structures. The listing not only recognizes how the preserve and its architecture exemplify the history of the Great Depression-era New Deal program and the Civilian Conservation Corps but also opens up the possibility of potential grant opportunities.

MAYSLAKE HALL CLOSURE

As a reminder, Mayslake Hall at Mayslake Peabody Estate is closed as the Forest Preserve District works to renovate the interior of the 100-year-old building. The surrounding forest preserve and access to Trinity and Mays lakes will remain open. For updates visit dupageforest.org/mayslake.

◀ Shagbark hickory nuts feed wild animals from blue jays to coyotes.

DuPage County's Nutty Trees

guentermanaus/stock.adobe.com

by **ANTONIO DEL VALLÉ**, ECOLOGIST

DuPage County's native nut-producing trees have been part of the landscape for centuries, providing food and habitat for wildlife and food, shelter, medicine, and tools for Native Americans. Oaks, chestnuts, and buckeyes all produce nuts, but today let's look at the hickories and walnuts that grow in our forest preserves.

First, a quick botany lesson. When people think of a "fruit," they likely picture something like a fleshy apple or orange. But a fruit is merely the part of a plant that carries a seed (the part that can develop into a new plant). That means a nut is a fruit.

Two types of hickories are common in DuPage County's high-quality woodlands and savannas: the bitternut and the shagbark. The bitternut hickory is aptly named for its generally unpalatable nuts, which are so bitter that even mammals such as squirrels rarely eat them. However, in the caterpillar stage, hickory hairstreak, hickory tussock, and other moths eat bitternut leaves, making the trees popular dining sites for insect-eating birds such as cuckoos, tanagers, vireos, and warblers.

The shagbark hickory gets its name from its characteristic peeling bark, which provides roosting sites for bats and nesting

sites for brown creepers and other cavity-nesting birds. Unlike those from the bitternut hickory, shagbark hickory nuts are sweet and an important source of food for wildlife ranging from crows, blue jays, and woodpeckers to chipmunks, squirrels, coyotes, and foxes.

Like other native trees, shagbark hickories were growing in Illinois savannas when the first Europeans arrived in the late 1600s, although they were shrubbier in stature, the result of periodic fires set by Native Americans, which helped savannas remain fairly open with a few scattered oaks and short hickories. As European settlers suppressed fires in



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▲ The peeling shingles of bark on a mature shagbark hickory give the tree its common name.

Editor's Note: Although some nuts featured in this article are edible, collecting any plant parts in a DuPage forest preserve, even nuts on the ground, is prohibited.



▲ A leaf scar (a spot where a leaf was once attached to a twig) on a butternut looks like a little “face” and helps even experienced ecologists identify these rare trees.



▲ The caterpillars of hickory tussock moths eat the leaves of bitternut hickories, which makes the trees attractive to hungry caterpillar-eating birds.

natural areas in the 1800s and into the 1900s, many shagbark hickories grew tall, but as the Forest Preserve District uses prescription burns as a habitat restoration tool throughout the preserves, ecologists are again seeing smaller hickories in places like Elsen’s Hill at West Branch.

DuPage County has two walnut trees in the genus *Juglans*, black walnut and butternut. Most walnuts produce “juglone,” a chemical found in the trees’ roots, leaves, bark, and fruit. Juglone is “allelopathic,” which means it suppresses the growth of nearby plants. This is why you won’t see a lot of vegetation growing below mature walnut trees.

Of the two walnuts, black walnuts are far more common. Similar to hickories they’ve been in local savannas and woodlands for ages, although often restricted to wetter floodplains along rivers. Due in part to a lack of fire and the trees’ overall adaptability, black walnuts are now abundant in a variety of forest preserve habitats.

The lesser-known butternut, also called the white walnut, is state-endangered due in part to an invasive fungus called butternut canker, which eats away the living tissue underneath the bark. If the canker eats a complete ring around a tree, the

tree will die.

Records show butternuts once grew in 17 DuPage forest preserves, but today they remain only in five. That’s why Forest Preserve District ecologists along with researchers from The Morton Arboretum are tracking and studying butternuts to better understand where they still grow, how the butternut canker affects them, and what we can do to help conserve the species. One way the two agencies are teaming up is by propagating butternut seedlings from fruits collected at different preserves. Experts at the arboretum start by growing little butternut trees from the seeds. Forest Preserve District staff then replant the seedlings in recently restored habitats to increase their odds of survival. Through this partnership ecologists hope to learn how to best conserve butternuts so they can grow in the preserves for future generations of people to enjoy and wildlife to use.

Whether it’s the common shagbark or bitternut hickory, the black walnut, or the rare butternut, many magnificent nut-bearing trees grow in DuPage forest preserves. Look for them on your next summer walk (just watch out when those nuts begin to drop in the fall!) •

When a Fruit Is a Drupe

The nuts of hickories and walnuts are classified as “drupes.” A drupe, like this one from a black walnut, consists of a fleshy outer layer, an inner pit, and a seed within the pit. In the case of a walnut, it’s this seed in the center that we think of when we think of a nut. Other trees that produce drupes include plums, peaches, olives, cashews, and pecans.

fleshy outer layer

inner pit

seed (aka “the nut”) at the center of the inner pit



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

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

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

FULLERSBURG WOODS NATURE EDUCATION CENTER

3609 Spring Road
Oak Brook • 630-850-8110

Mid-April – Mid-November
Daily 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Mid-November – Mid-April
Monday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Closed Sundays

GRAUE MILL AND MUSEUM

3800 York Road • Oak Brook
630-451-3430

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

Mid-November – Mid-April
Closed

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

Mayslake Hall is under renovation and closed for the year. For updates visit dupageforest.org.

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 PRESERVE

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

Maple Meadows is under renovation and closed for the year. For updates visit dupagegolf.com.

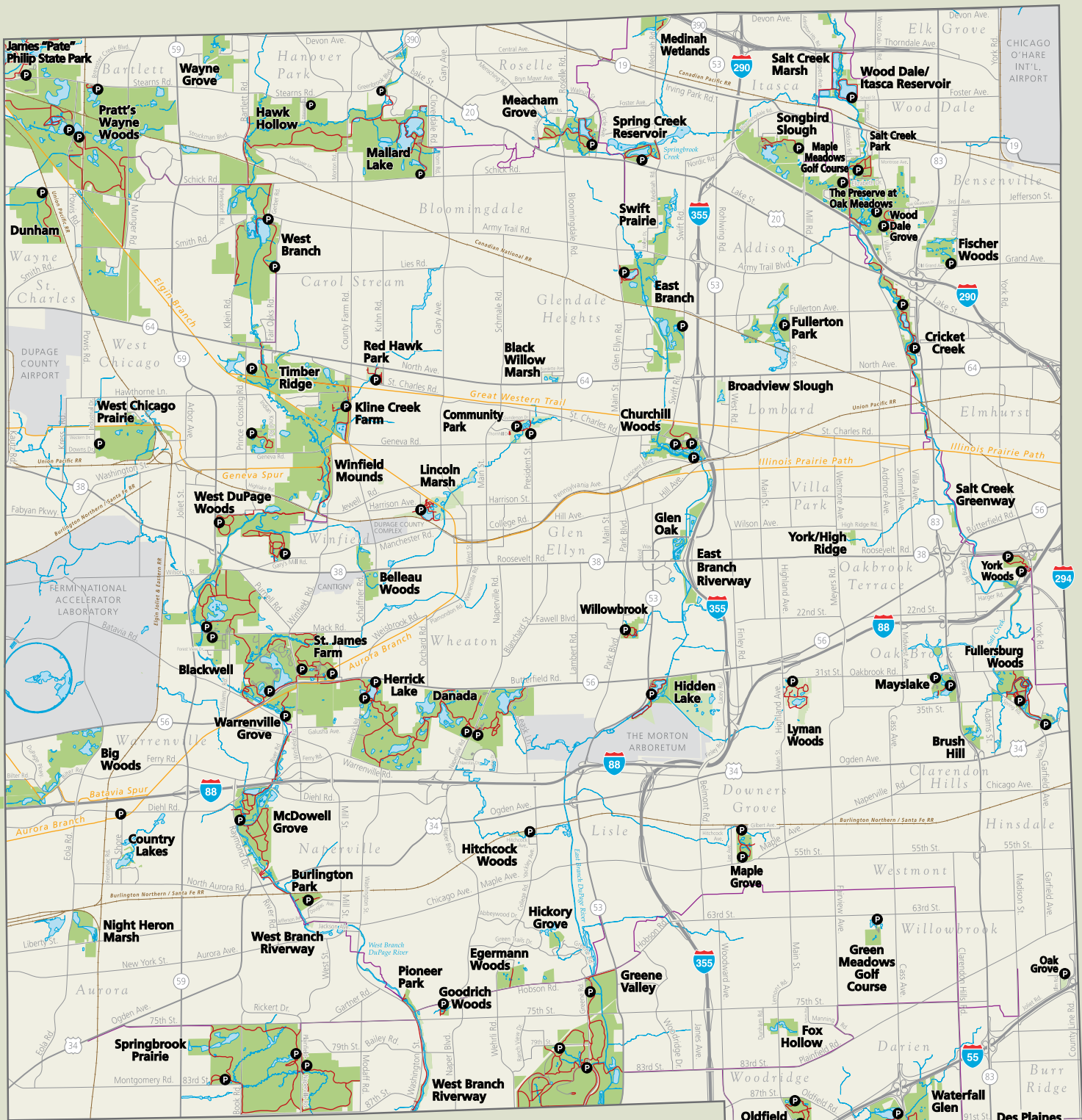
GREEN MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

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 program that requires registration.





- Forest Preserve Property
- Jointly Owned, Leased, or Operated Forest Preserve Property
- Lake, Pond, Waterway, or Wetland
- Entrance/Parking
- Forest Preserve Trail
- Multiagency Trail
- County Trail



Scan for Interactive Trail Map





**Forest Preserve District
of DuPage County**

3580 Naperville Road
Wheaton, IL 60189

dupageforest.org



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the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County **Summer 2026**

A Night FOR Nature
A BENEFIT FOR WILDLIFE AND WILD AREAS

THURSDAY • SEPT. 17 • 5 – 8:30 P.M.
ST. JAMES FARM

Picnic Pavilion
2541 Winfield Road • Warrenville

Join us for fellowship, food, drinks, live music, an auction, and wagon rides. Our annual event supports the restoration of habitat and preservation of wildlife in DuPage forest preserves. Ages 21 and up.

Tickets are \$125 per person and are available starting July 1 at dupageforest.org/friends.

Questions? Call **630-871-6400**.

Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



Duck Race

A BENEFIT FOR WILDLIFE AND WILD AREAS

SATURDAY • AUG. 1 • 9:45 A.M.

FULLERSBURG WOODS

FOREST PRESERVE

3609 Spring Road • Oak Brook

Purchase a rubber duck for a chance to win \$500, and watch it race along the newly restored Salt Creek!

Ages 18 and up. \$15 per duck; \$60 for five; \$100 for 10. Buy yours at

dupageforest.org/friends.

Questions? Call **630-871-6400**.