

the Conservationist

A Quarterly Publication of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County **Summer 2017**



A "Slough" of Songbirds

Flying Cigars & Other Acrobats

Lunch Break Loops



Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

from the president



The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has nearly 26,000 acres, 145 miles of trails, five education centers and 4.3 million annual visitors. For any agency this size, one of the biggest ongoing challenges is determining which large projects to tackle in which order. Which will offer the best services for the most visitors? That's where a master plan comes into play.

A Forest Preserve District master plan guides natural-area, educational and recreational development over a certain number of years by looking at the District as a whole rather than individual components. Without one, it's difficult to appropriately forecast when and where we'll need to allocate money and efforts.

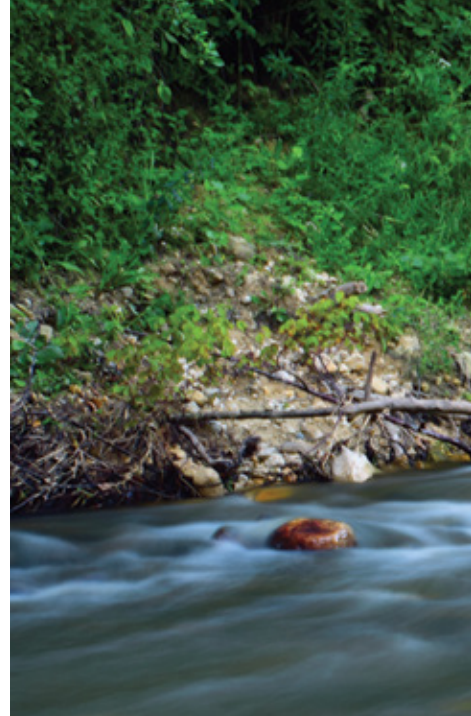
The last time the District completed a master plan was 1992, and I don't need to tell you things have changed since then. We've grown by 3,500 acres, adding Night Heron Marsh, Oldfield Oaks, St. James Farm, Dunham and others to the list of your preserves. We've also installed 70 miles of additional trails, earned state nature preserve or land and water reserve status for 2,600 acres of high-quality habitat, and constructed key buildings including the Urban Stream Research Center, Timber Ridge Visitor Center, Maple Meadows Clubhouse and Danada House annex.

Creating a new master plan will mean more than jotting down a simple to-do list, though. We'll need to inventory our assets (acres of land, historic sites, lakes, miles of trails, number of picnic shelters, etc.) and gather opinions from visitors, employees, commissioners and partner agencies via surveys, focus groups and meetings. We'll then need to analyze all of the information so we can formulate and rank goals and action items to carry us through the next five years.

We're at the beginning of this extensive endeavor and will announce agendas, meetings and surveys on dupageforest.org and our social media pages as they develop, so please look for updates because we'll certainly want to hear from you. Together, I know we'll be able to make the award-winning forest preserves we all love and enjoy even better!

Joseph F. Cantore

President, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BOARD MEETINGS

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



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Editor

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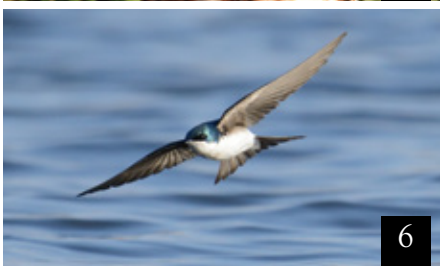
On the cover: Great blue heron

OUR *Mission*

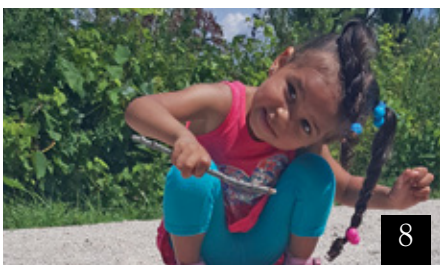
To acquire and hold lands for the purpose of preserving the flora, fauna and scenic beauty for the education, pleasure and recreation of DuPage County citizens



4



6



8



18



20

news & notes

CONNECT *With Us 24/7*

Looking for DuPage County forest preserve news between issues of the Conservationist? Then check out the Follow Our Tracks section of dupageforest.org. You can link to our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages and sign up for our monthly e-newsletter.

GET READY TO GET INVOLVED

The District is kicking off a multiphase planning process to determine which projects and initiatives to complete over the next five years in support of its mission of conservation, education and recreation.

The endeavor will use surveys, public meetings, focus groups, and commissioner and employee workshops to inventory existing natural areas and amenities, select and rank projects and initiatives, and determine how to complete those efforts between 2018 and 2023.

Details and updates will be posted throughout the process on dupageforest.org.



NEW REGS FOR FISHING FANS

In April the Forest Preserve District changed creel limits on its lakes and ponds to better match Illinois Department of Natural Resources regulations and to simplify information for anglers. Changes include:

Bluegill or redear sunfish	25 per day, no minimum length
Crappie	15 per day, no minimum length
Largemouth bass	Four per day (three under 14" and one 18" or longer)
Smallmouth bass	Catch and release only
Walleye	Three per day, minimum 16"
Yellow perch	Five per day, minimum 9"

Complete regulations are online at dupageforest.org. Rules with maps of 30 different lakes are also in the "Fishing in DuPage County" guide, which anglers can request through Visitor Services at 630-933-7248 or download from the website.

Forest Preserve District police officers strictly enforce creel limits. Anglers 16 and older who are not legally disabled must carry valid Illinois fishing licenses and must also have valid inland trout stamps if they're fishing for trout.



FLEET BUILDING EXPECTED IN 2018

The Forest Preserve District is readying to start construction in June on a new fleet maintenance building at Blackwell Forest Preserve.

With an expected summer 2018 completion date, the pre-engineered steel enclosure (shown in the drawing to the left) will have a barnlike exterior, reflecting the rural character of the site. Neighboring residents helped select the design and colors. With 5,200 square feet of office and training space and 23,800 square feet for maintenance and storage, the building will modernize the District's management of its alternative-fuel fleet, improving operational efficiencies and working conditions for staff. Native trees, shrubs and rain gardens will make the building and adjacent fueling station less noticeable to visitors, residents and traffic on Mack Road, and shielded, high-efficiency exterior LED lights will keep light pollution from reaching McKee Marsh and the adjacent neighborhood.

LIVE and On Demand

Can't make it to an upcoming Board of Commissioners meeting? Find the latest schedules and agendas and watch proceedings live or on demand at dupageforest.org under "About Us" and "Meetings and Agendas." Commission meetings and planning sessions are open to the public and take place at District headquarters at 35580 Naperville Road in Wheaton. Normally, commission meetings are at 8 a.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, and planning sessions are at 8 a.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays. At both the board discusses District business, hears public comments and staff reports, and votes on agenda items.



9,000 MUSSELS TO FIND HOMES IN DU PAGE RIVER

Between now and October the Forest Preserve District will release 9,000 native freshwater mussels at 11 locations along the West Branch DuPage River between Gary's Mill Road in Warrenville and 87th Street in Naperville. The District raised the mussels at its Urban Stream Research Center at Blackwell Forest Preserve in Warrenville, the only facility of its kind in Illinois.

The goal is to boost natural populations of these rare animals that ecologists call "keystone species," small animals that have enormously beneficial effects on the lives of other organisms.

As "filter feeders," mussels take in large amounts of water, filtering out bacteria, algae, and decaying plant and animal matter before passing the cleaner water back into the river. Just one mussel can filter more than 18 gallons of water in one day, and because they often live en masse, together they can filter enough to lower overall water pollution levels.

MANY Thanks

The Forest Preserve District thanks the donors who contributed to its efforts between Feb. 6 and April 16. To make your own tax-deductible donation or to learn how sponsorships and financial support can benefit the District, visit dupageforestgiving.org. To give to the Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit fundraising arm of the District, visit dupageforest.org/donate.

Gifts of Note

BP Foundation

\$2,330 — Matching hours volunteer grant from Patricia Banaszak to Friends of the Forest Preserve District for Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Edward and Lucia Haas

\$1,500 — Tribute bench at Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve

ExxonMobil Foundation

\$1,000 — Matching hours volunteer grant from Jerome and Marilyn LeMire for Mayslake Peabody Estate

Elizabeth Shaffer-McCarthy

\$600 — Willowbrook Wildlife Center in memory of Jack Rogers

Tate Woods Elementary School

\$544 — Willowbrook Wildlife Center from first- and second-graders in honor of Kindness Week

Donna Jelf Estate

\$500 — Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Phil and Amy Gelber

\$500 — Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Irene McMaster

\$500 — Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Paobu Sports

\$500 — Danada Equestrian Center and St. James Farm

Dianne Siekmann

\$500 — Friends of the Forest Preserve District for Willowbrook Wildlife Center



▼ Tree swallows make acrobatic twists and turns over land and water in search of insects.



© Greg Lahey

▲ Because of their shape and color, chimney swifts have earned the nickname “flying cigars.”



Flying Cigars & Other Acrobats

by **RACHEL REKLAU**, NATURAL RESOURCES

© JanetandPhil

DuPage County’s forest preserves are literally buzzing with the sounds of summer, which means they’re welcoming back birds with insects on their minds and menus: chimney swifts and swallows.

Chimney swifts get their common name from one of their favorite roosting sites: chimneys. (Thanks to their streamlined dark gray-brown bodies with stubby tails, they have the added nickname “flying cigars.”) At one time swifts exclusively used natural areas such as caves and hollow trees in old-growth forests, but as buildings spread over the landscape, they found the structures offered suitable accommodations. Unfortunately, as chimneys across the country deteriorate or are capped to prevent other animals from denning inside, swifts are losing some of this important roosting and breeding habitat.

Swifts spend almost their entire lives in the air, flying with constant wing beats and rapid, erratic patterns reminiscent of bats as they give off high, chattering calls. The only time they stop

is to roost or nest, and even then they only do so on vertical surfaces. Short forked tails with bristled ends help them stay propped up.

Chimney swifts feed on flying insects and spiders that float by on lines of silk. They typically hunt during the day in residential neighborhoods, grasslands, orchards, forests and marshes but may look for food at night around streetlights.

Couples are seasonally monogamous and build their nests as a pair. They use their saliva to glue together short sticks, which they affix to vertical surfaces. Unmated birds, which roost in large groups, may occupy the same chimney as a nesting pair and help to rear the couple’s young.

At the end of summer, swifts gather in large groups to migrate to South America. During migration, flocks up to 10,000 may circle at dusk before funneling into chimneys to roost for the night.

Summertime northern Illinois is also home to several kinds



© Greg Lasley

▲ With access to chimneys declining, many swifts are relying on specially designed birdhouses to roost and raise their young.

of insect-loving swallows. Compared to chimney swifts, swallows have longer, notched tails and wider, shorter wings. As gliders, they beat their wings far less frequently than chimney swifts, too.

Bank and northern rough-winged swallows reside in DuPage, and cliff swallows migrate through, but barn and tree swallows are by far the most common. Both rely on open wetlands or grasslands near water for habitat, where they make acrobatic twists and turns over land and water in search of insects. During the breeding season, tree swallows will also eat foods high in calcium, such as fish bones and crayfish exoskeletons, to help form eggs. They'll eat plants, too, which can help them survive cold early springs, when insects aren't abundant.

Tree swallows look for ready-made nesting areas, such as cavities excavated by woodpeckers, and will gladly set up homes in nest boxes. Although couples pair up to breed, they often mate outside the pair in secret. An individual swallow may have the same mate for several years but is likely to be more faithful to a good nesting site!

Parents line nests with feathers, materials they appear to "play" with early in the nesting season. If a tree swallow flies above a nest with a feather clasp in its bill, another swallow may chase it. If it drops the feather, others may race to retrieve it.

Barn swallows, on the other hand, build their nests with mud. They once nested in caves across the U.S. but now rely almost exclusively on shelters, bridges and other human-made structures, as long as they're close to good sources of mud, such as riverbanks or mud flats.

Male and female barn swallows work together, collecting mud in their bills and mixing it with grass to form pellets. Nests they build on beams or other horizontal surfaces are shaped like cups; ones they construct on vertical surfaces, half cups. Once their eggs hatch, parents may get help feeding their young from other



© John Sutton

▲ Barn swallows build their homes near good sources of mud, a prime nest-building material.



© Thomas Went

▲ Barn swallow parents may scope out several nesting sites before picking one for their brood.



© John Matthews

▲ Being natural cavity nesters makes tree swallows fans of nest boxes, too.

barn swallows, such as older siblings from previous clutches or unrelated juveniles.

Whether you're a fan of swallows or swifts, you may be able to help these amazing birds by offering nesting boxes or towers right in your own backyard. Find out how at Cornell Lab of Ornithology's All About Birdhouses at nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses. Of course you don't need a yard to view these seasonal shows. Find your favorite DuPage downtown area or forest preserve prairie or marsh and enjoy! •

summer calendar

See pages 10 – 17 for program descriptions. Cancellation policies vary.
You can register for most programs online at dupageforest.org.



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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

July

- 6** Evening in the Country
- 7** Fishing: Catfish After Dark
- 8** Paddling: Kayaking Basics
Plants and People
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 10** Art at Mayslake: Natural Illustration Begins
McKee Marsh Habitat Hike
- 12** Archery: Families
Art at Mayslake: Botanical Arts Summer Blooms Begins
Family Evening at St. James Farm
Paddling: With a Ranger
- 13** Evening in the Country
Women in the Woods Begins
- 14** Fishing: For Carp
Lectures at Mayslake: Establishing Our Roots
Parents Night Out
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 15** Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 16** Fishing: For Bass
- 17** Navigation: Geocaching
- 18** Archery: Junior Achievement Series Begins
Music at Mayslake: Sinfonietta Bel Canto
- 19** Archery: Families
Family Evening at St. James Farm
Little Sprouts Tales and Trails
Ranger Trek Jr.
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 20** Evening in the Country
- 21** Paddling: Kayaking Basics
- 22** Discover Mayslake
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 23** Nature Scavenger Hunt
- 24** Sunset Hilltop Hike
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 25** Music at Mayslake: Sinfonietta Bel Canto
- 26** Archery: Families
Family Evening at St. James Farm
Navigation: Geocaching
- 27** Evening in the Country
- 28** Archery: Families
- 29** Backyard Chickens
Fishing: Flowing Waters
Mayslake Franciscan Era Tour
Night Hike and S'more-gasbord
- 30** Paddling: With a Ranger

August

- 1** Art at Mayslake: Exploring Watercolor Begins
Music at Mayslake: Sinfonietta Bel Canto
- 2** Archery: Families
Paddling: Kayaking Basics
Tales From the Rails and Caboose
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 3** Evening in the Country
- 4** Fishing: Family Fishing 101
- 5** Archery: Open House
Nature Poetry Walk
Paddling: Safety and Rescue
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 7** Full Moon Hike
- 8** Archery: Just for Kids
Music at Mayslake: Sinfonietta Bel Canto
- 9** Archery: Families
Paddling: Kayaking Kids
- 10** Active Adults Adventure Series Begins
Evening in the Country
Fishing: Family Fishing 101
- 11** Fishing: Catfish After Dark
Paddling: With a Ranger
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 12** Carriages and Weather Vanes
Trek Sawmill Creek
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 13** Paddling: With a Ranger
- 14** Navigation: Geocaching
- 15** Paddling: Kayak Adventure Series Begins
- 16** Forest Fitness Walk
Little Sprouts Tales and Trails
McKee Marsh Habitat Hike
- 17** Evening in the Country
- 18** FullersBird Friday
Lectures at Mayslake: The CCC in the Preserves
Night Games
Paddling: Kayaking Basics
- 19** Navigation: International Geocaching Day
Paddling: Kayaking at Sunset
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 20** Archery: Families
- 21** Sunset Hilltop Hike
- 23** Archery: Active Adults
Forest Fitness Walk
- 24** Evening in the Country
- 25** Oak Meadows Habitat Hike
- 26** Backyard Chickens
- 27** Navigation: Geocaching
- 28** Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 30** Forest Fitness Walk
- 31** Evening in the Country

September

- 1** Fishing: Family Fishing 101
FullersBird Friday
Paddling: Kayaking Basics
- 2** Backpacking Overnight
Country Fair
Recipe Swap and Harvest Hike
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 3** Country Fair
Paddling: With a Ranger
- 4** Nature Scavenger Hunt
- 5** Full Moon Hike
Stroller Strut
- 6** Archery: Active Adults
Art at Mayslake: Chicago Pastel
Painters Workshop Begins
Forest Fitness Walk
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 7** Bike With a Ranger
- 8** Fishing: Catching and Cooking Catfish
Fishing: Flowing Waters
FullersBird Friday
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 9** Paddling: Kayaking at Sunset
St. James Farm Dairy Day
Team-Building Games
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 10** Fishing: Off the Beaten Path
Music at Mayslake: Picoso
- 11** Art at Mayslake: Natural Illustration Begins
Forest Fitness Walk
Navigation: Geocaching
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 12** Be a Junior Ranger! Begins
Stroller Strut
- 13** Archery: Families
Art at Mayslake: Botanical Arts
Summer Blooms Begins
Forest Fitness Walk
- 14** Bike With a Ranger
- 15** Archery: Families
FullersBird Friday
Lectures at Mayslake:
Rediscovering Camp McDowell
Music at Mayslake: Chicago Gay Men's Chorus
- 16** Photography: Kline Creek Farm
Excursion
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 18** Forest Fitness Walk
McKee Marsh Habitat Hike
- 19** Art at Mayslake: Exploring Watercolor Begins
Lectures at Mayslake: Winning Votes for Women
Stroller Strut
- 20** Archery: Active Adults
Forest Fitness Walk
Little Sprouts Tales and Trails
- 21** Bike With a Ranger History Tour
- 22** Fishing: Family Fishing 101
FullersBird Friday
Volunteer Restoration Workday
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 23** Sunrise Hike
Volunteer Restoration Workday
When Darkness Falls
- 24** Navigation: GPS 101
Volunteer Restoration Workday
- 25** Forest Fitness Walk
Wilderness Survival
- 26** Stroller Strut
- 27** Forest Fitness Walk
Volunteer Workday at the Nursery
- 29** FullersBird Friday

summer calendar



Active Adults Adventure Series

Four-Week Program 11688

Take part in outdoor activities from archery and fishing to kayaking and more. Equipment provided. Thursdays. Ages 50 and up. \$35 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 10 – 31	9 – 11 a.m.	Multiple
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Archery

Active Adults 11177

Learn basic techniques and safety essentials. Equipment provided. Ages 50 and up. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 23	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 6	3 – 4:30 p.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 20	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Blackwell

1890s Living

Kline Creek Farm in West Chicago

Registration is not required for these free all-ages programs. Questions? Call 630-876-5900.

BLACKSMITHING DEMONSTRATIONS

Stop by the wagon shed to see the blacksmith demonstrate the tools and techniques of the trade.

Saturdays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

Spread a blanket on the ground, and enjoy an hour of popular children's stories from the 1890s.

Through Aug. 28

Mondays 10 a.m.

FARM CHORES

Kids, learn firsthand how 1890s children helped around the house and farm.

Through Aug. 31

Mondays and Thursdays 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.

LIFE ON THE FARM HOUSE TOUR

Tour the farmhouse for a glimpse of 1890s life.

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

Families 11169

Learn basic techniques and safety essentials. Equipment provided. Ages 9 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 12, 19 & 26	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Blackwell
July 28	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Maple Grove
Aug. 2	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 9	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 20	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Salt Creek Park
Sept. 13	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 15	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Churchill Woods

Junior Achievement Series Three-Week Program 11619

Young archers, improve your skills through in-depth instruction and games. Tuesdays. Ages 9 – 17. \$35 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 18 – Aug. 1	5:30 – 7 p.m.	Churchill Woods
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Just for Kids 11617

Learn basic techniques and safety essentials. Equipment provided. Ages 5 – 8 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 8	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Churchill Woods
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Open House

Drop by this open house and try the basics with a certified instructor. Equipment provided. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Aug. 5	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Blackwell
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Art at Mayslake

Botanical Arts Summer Blooms Six-Part Class 11607

Record observations in a sketchbook and develop a finished piece in graphite or watercolor as you focus on plants at Mayslake. Wednesdays. Ages 18 and up. \$130 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

July 12 – Aug. 16	7 – 9:30 p.m.	Mayslake
Sept. 13 – Oct. 25	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Mayslake

(except Oct. 10)

Chicago Pastel Painters Workshop Three-Part Class

Join this landscape workshop. Prior work with instructor required. Ages 18 and up. \$410 – \$445 per person. Register at 708-557-0797 or tjacenkiw@chicagopastelpainters.org.

Sept. 6 – 8	8 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Mayslake
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Registering on dupageforest.org?

Here's a quick way to find your program online.

1. Visit dupageforest.org and click "Register."
2. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
3. If a program has more than one date, time or location, click "More" to find the one you want.

Exploring Watercolor Six-Part Class 11720

Explore and enhance your artistic style at this intermediate-advanced class. Tuesdays. Ages 18 and up. \$125 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Aug. 1 – Sept. 5	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Mayslake
Sept. 19 – Oct. 24	10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Mayslake

Natural Illustration Six-Part Class 11606

Use the natural world as inspiration as you learn about drawing and painting tools and techniques with a focus on water-based mediums. Mondays. Ages 18 and up. \$125 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

July 10 – Aug. 14	6 – 8 p.m.	Mayslake
Sept. 11 – Oct. 16	6 – 8 p.m.	Mayslake

Backpacking Overnight 11319

Bring your tent and sleeping bag and learn how to pack for a trip. Then, take a 4- to 5-mile hike, set up camp and make a backcountry meal before hitting the sack. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$75 per person ages 18 and up; \$60 ages 12 – 17. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 2 – 3	2 p.m. – 9 a.m.	Waterfall Glen
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Backyard Chickens 10876

Learn how to buy and raise chicks for eggs and meat as you learn about shelter, care, nutrition, breed characteristics and processing for the dinner table. Ages 18 and up. \$40 per person. Register online or at 630-876-5900.

July 29	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
Aug. 26	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm

Be a Junior Ranger! Five-Week Program 11627

Explore nature and work on leadership, navigation, first aid, geocaching and other skills rangers use. Tuesdays. Ages 6 – 12. \$45 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Ages 6 – 8		
Sept. 12 – Oct. 10	4:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Multiple
Ages 9 – 12		
Sept. 12 – Oct. 10	6 – 7 p.m.	Multiple

Bike With a Ranger 11620

Bring your bike and tour several forest preserves on a 15- to 18-mile ranger-led ride. Ages 12 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 7	9 a.m. – Noon	Cricket Creek
Sept. 14	9 a.m. – Noon	Spring Creek Res.

Bike With a Ranger History Tour 11624

Bring your bike and join a ranger on a 10-mile historical tour. Ages 18 and up. \$6 per person in advance; \$8 at the ride. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 21	9 a.m. – Noon	Waterfall Glen
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Carriages and Weather Vanes 11281

Learn about the farm's carriages and weather vanes on this guided walk. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-580-7025.

Aug. 12	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Country Fair

Experience an 1890s agricultural fair with technology, trades and blue-ribbon winners; midway games and entertainment; a Museum of Wonder and Awe; and horse-drawn hayrides. All ages; under 13 with an adult for rides. Free admission; rides \$5 per person ages 5 and up (under 5 free). No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900.

Sept. 2 & 3	10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Family Camping

Blackwell Forest Preserve in Warrenville

The campground is open Friday and Saturday nights through Oct. 1 and additional nights around the holidays. Call 630-933-7248 weekdays 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. for dates, times and permits or visit dupageforest.org and click on "Register" and "Reserve Facilities."

summer calendar



Discover Mayslake

Take a self-guided tour of the mansion, enjoy live music, dabble in art, try archery, take your camera on a photography walk and discover all of the great experiences Mayslake offers year-round! All ages; under 14 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

July 22	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Mayslake
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Evening in the Country

Pack a picnic dinner and relax on the grounds as you experience the farm at dusk. Horse-drawn hayrides begin at 5:30, 6:15 and 7 p.m. All ages; under 13 with an adult for rides. Free admission; rides \$5 per person ages 5 and up (under 5 free). No registration. Questions? Call 630-876-5900.

July 6 – Aug. 31	5 – 8 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Thursdays

Family Evening at St. James Farm

Bring a picnic dinner and enjoy the preserve and games at dusk. Tractor-drawn wagon rides begin at 6 and 7 p.m. All ages; under 13 with an adult for rides. Free admission; rides \$5 per person ages 5 and up (under 5 free). No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

July 12, 19 & 26	6 – 8 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Fishing

Catching and Cooking Catfish 11192

Get tricks for catching “Mr. Whiskers” at this hands-on clinic, and then enjoy a catfish dinner. All ages; under 16 with an adult. \$10 per person ages 13 and up; \$5 ages 5 – 12; under 12 free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 8	5 – 7 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Catfish After Dark 11193

Learn how to target catfish at the peak time — dusk — as you enjoy the lake at sunset. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 7	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 11	7 – 9 p.m.	St. James Farm

Family Fishing 101 11201

Learn ecology, identification, techniques and regulations. Ages 6 – 17 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 4	5 – 7 p.m.	Mayslake
Aug. 10	10 a.m. – Noon	Wood Dale Grove
Sept. 1	5 – 7 p.m.	Mayslake
Sept. 22	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Blackwell

Flowing Waters 11312

Discover techniques for fishing in rivers and streams at this intermediate clinic. Ages 12 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 29	10 a.m. – Noon	Fullersburg
Sept. 8	5 – 7 p.m.	Fullersburg

For Bass 11297

Try some of the most effective lures on the market on one of the county’s best bass lakes. Ages 12 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 16	9 – 11 a.m.	Meacham Grove
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For Carp 11296

Get tips for hooking one of the biggest, strongest, easiest-to-find fish. Ages 8 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 14	6 – 8 p.m.	Cricket Creek
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Golfing

Enjoy the outdoors with a round of golf! For tee times, specials and outings for all abilities visit dupagegolf.com.

Maple Meadows 18 Holes
Wood Dale • 630-616-8424

Green Meadows 9 Holes
Westmont • 630-810-5330

The Preserve at Oak Meadows
Addison • Closed for Renovations Until Summer 2017

Horse-Drawn Hayrides

Danada Equestrian Center in Wheaton

Enjoy the fall scenery on a 30-minute ride, first-come, first-served. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free. No registration. For private evening rides or questions, call 630-668-6012.

Sept. 16 – Oct. 1
Saturdays and Sundays 1, 1:45 and 2:30 p.m.



Registering on dupageforest.org?

Here's a quick way to find your program online.

1. Visit dupageforest.org and click "Register."
2. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
3. If a program has more than one date, time or location, click "More" to find the one you want.

Off the Beaten Path 11642

Join a ranger for a 2-mile off-trail hike with fishing along the way. Ages 12 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 10	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Waterfall Glen
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Forest Fitness Walk 11210

Enjoy the wonders of the preserves and get some healthy exercise on these brisk guided walks that increase in distance each week. Ages 18 and up. \$4 per person in advance; \$6 at the walk. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Aug. 16	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Meacham Grove
Aug. 23	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Maple Grove
Aug. 30	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Springbrook
Sept. 6	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Oldfield Oaks
Sept. 11	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Oldfield Oaks
Sept. 13	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Fullersburg
Sept. 18	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Wood Dale Grove
Sept. 20	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Waterfall Glen
Sept. 25	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Meacham Grove
Sept. 27	6 – 7:30 p.m.	Greene Valley

FullersBird Friday 11252

Join these naturalist-led hikes to see how the diversity of birds changes from summer to fall. Ages 16 and up. \$4 per person in advance; \$6 at the walk. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Aug. 18	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Greene Valley
Sept. 1	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Kline Creek Farm
Sept. 8	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 15	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Fullersburg
Sept. 22	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Lyman Woods
Sept. 29	7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Willowbrook

Full Moon Hike 11243

Enjoy a 3-mile hike as you take in the sights and sounds of a forest preserve at dusk. Ages 18 and up. \$6 per person in advance; \$8 at the hike. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Aug. 7	7 – 9 p.m.	Waterfall Glen
Sept. 5	7 – 9 p.m.	Blackwell

Lectures at Mayslake

The CCC in the Preserves 11531

Learn about the men who lived in two Civilian Conservation Corps forest preserve camps in the 1930s. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Aug. 18	10 – 11 a.m.	Mayslake
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Establishing Our Roots 11251

Hear about the early conservation movement, including the groups that advocated for Illinois state parks and DuPage forest preserves in the early 1900s. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

July 14	10 – 11 a.m.	Mayslake
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Rediscovering Camp McDowell 11721

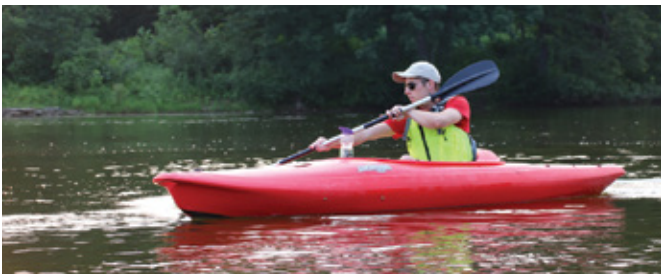
Hear about McDowell Grove's Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps camp and secret WWII communications school for the Office of Strategic Services, the precursor of the CIA. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Sept. 15	10 – 11 a.m.	Mayslake
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Winning Votes for Women 11612

Enjoy Leslie Goddard as suffragist Alice Paul, who organized parades and the first demonstrations outside the White House, lobbied politicians, and spent time in prison for women's suffrage. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$10 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Sept. 19	7 – 8 p.m.	Mayslake
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Kayak, Canoe and Boat Rentals

Blackwell Forest Preserve in Warrenville

Herrick Lake Forest Preserve in Wheaton

Canoes, kayaks and rowboats are \$10 per hour and \$50 per day. Boats with trolling motors (Blackwell only) are \$15 per hour and \$75 per day. Rentals end one hour before closing. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Through Labor Day

Saturdays and Sundays 8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Monday – Friday 11 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Open at 8 a.m. July 4 and Labor Day

Sept. 9 – Oct. 1

Saturdays and Sundays 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.



summer calendar



Little Sprouts Tales and Trails ¹¹²⁶⁷

Ignite your little one's sense of wonder as you enjoy stories, songs, movement and guided outdoor explorations. Ages 2 – 5 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

July 19 Butterflies	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg
Aug. 16 Birds	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg
Sept. 20 Animals	10 – 11 a.m.	Fullersburg

Mayslake Franciscan Era Tour ¹¹⁵⁹⁵

Learn about the Franciscan Province of the Sacred Heart, the ways it changed Mayslake, and the “mad monks” who chased away curious visitors. Ages 12 and up; under 16 with an adult. \$10 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

July 29	1 – 2:30 p.m.	Mayslake
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McKee Marsh Habitat Hike ¹¹¹⁸²

Learn about wildlife and natural wonders. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 10	6 – 8 p.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 16	9 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 18	5 – 7 p.m.	Blackwell

Music at Mayslake

Chicago Gay Men's Chorus

Rise above life's struggles at “Hitting Rock Bottom: kNOW hope,” an exciting journey from Amy Winehouse to Andra Day and everything in between. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$25 – \$40 per person. Tickets at cgmc.org.

Sept. 15	8 – 10 p.m.	Mayslake
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Picosia

Enjoy music from around the globe and a lively “meet the musicians” gourmet dessert reception. Ages 10 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$10 – \$25 per person. Tickets at picosamusic.com.

Sept. 10	3 – 5 p.m.	Mayslake
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Riding Lessons ¹¹³²¹

Danada Equestrian Center in Wheaton

Learn horsemanship and riding skills in a friendly group setting, or receive one-on-one instruction and progress at your own pace with private lessons. Ages 12 and up. \$40 – \$250 per DuPage County resident; \$50 – \$310 per nonresident. Register online or at 630-668-6012.

Sinfonietta Bel Canto

Enjoy symphonic and operatic works with a different theme each evening. Ages 10 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$18 per person; \$7 per student. Tickets at sinfoniettabelcanto.com or 630-384-5007.

July 18 – Aug. 8	7:30 – 8:45 p.m.	Mayslake
Tuesdays		

Nature Poetry Walk ¹¹²⁵⁹

Feel the connection between poetry and walks as you listen to poetry inspired by nature. Ages 13 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-580-7025.

Aug. 5	10 – 11 a.m.	St. James Farm
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Nature Scavenger Hunt ¹¹³⁰⁰

Learn about the critters that call the forest preserves home during a guided scavenger hunt. Ages 5 – 8 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 23	9 – 10 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Sept. 4	9 – 10 a.m.	Churchill Woods

Navigation

Geocaching ¹¹¹⁷⁸

Try a family-friendly treasure-hunting activity using a GPS unit. Equipment provided. Ages 6 and up; under 16 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 17	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Herrick Lake
July 26	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Churchill Woods
Aug. 14	5:30 – 7 p.m.	Mallard Lake
Aug. 27	2 – 3:30 p.m.	Churchill Woods
Sept. 11	4:30 – 6 p.m.	St. James Farm

GPS 101 ¹¹⁶²²

Learn how to mark waypoints, measure distances, follow routes and check elevations. Equipment provided. Ages 8 and up; under 16 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 24	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Meacham Grove
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 2. In the search box, enter the five-digit number next to the program name in this calendar.
 3. If a program has more than one date, time or location, click "More" to find the one you want.

International Geocaching Day

Join the celebration as you learn the basics of geocaching and then look for hidden caches, including ones on the water and along the shore in a kayak (300-pound capacity). All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-933-7248.

Aug. 19	10 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Hidden Lake
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Night Games¹¹²⁹⁹

Embrace your inner nocturnal animal as you explore the woods with games and adventures. Ages 8 – 12. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 18	7 – 9 p.m.	Greene Valley
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Night Hike and S'more-gasbord¹¹²⁷¹

Discover nighttime creatures on a self-guided hike, and then try one of our s'more recipes or create your own concoction by the fire. All ages; under 18 with an adult. \$7 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

July 29	7:30 – 9:30 p.m.	Fullersburg
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Oak Meadows Habitat Hike¹¹⁶⁵⁷

Explore the renovated The Preserve at Oak Meadows, from its historic trees to its newly planted native grasses, flowers and shrubs, and learn how it supports recreation, flood control and biodiversity. All ages; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 25	5 – 6 p.m.	Oak Meadows
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Paddling

Kayak Adventure Series Four-Week Program¹¹⁶⁵⁵

Learn the basics as you explore a different body of water each week. Equipment provided. Tuesdays. Ages 14 and up. \$80 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 15 – Sept. 5	5 – 7 p.m.	Multiple
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Kayaking at Sunset¹¹²⁰⁴

Look for wildlife on a calm, guided tour, and end the evening with s'mores by a fire. Equipment provided. Ages 18 and up. \$25 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

Aug. 19	7 – 9 p.m.	Herrick Lake
Sept. 9	6 – 8 p.m.	Herrick Lake

Kayaking Basics¹¹¹⁹⁶

Learn parts of the boat, paddling strokes and safety tips. Equipment provided. Ages 14 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$20 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 8	10 a.m. – Noon	Hidden Lake
July 21	6 – 8 p.m.	Herrick Lake
Aug. 2	10 a.m. – Noon	Wood Dale Grove
Aug. 18	9 – 11 a.m.	Herrick Lake
Sept. 1	9 – 11 a.m.	Herrick Lake

Kayaking Kids¹¹⁶¹⁸

Learn the basics in a friendly setting. Equipment provided. Ages 9 – 13 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 9	10 – 11:30 a.m.	Hidden Lake
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Safety and Rescue¹¹⁶⁴⁸

Learn how to ensure safe paddling and try rescue maneuvers with an American Canoe Association-certified instructor. Equipment provided. Ages 14 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$20 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 5	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Hidden Lake
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With a Ranger¹¹²⁹¹

Bring your own canoe or kayak to this free guided paddle or rent a kayak for \$20 per person. Ages 14 and up; under 18 with an adult. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 12	10 a.m. – Noon	Songbird Slough
July 30	9 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg
Aug. 11	5 – 7 p.m.	Salt Creek Park
Aug. 13	9 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg
Sept. 3	9 – 11:30 a.m.	Fullersburg

Parents Night Out¹¹²⁷²

Drop the kids off for a picnic dinner, twilight hike, classic summer games, star gazing, fireflies and time to wind down with marshmallows and a story by the fire. Ages 5 – 12. \$25 per person. Register online or at 630-850-8110.

July 14	6 – 9:30 p.m.	Herrick Lake
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Photography

Kline Creek Farm Excursion¹¹⁶⁹⁵

Explore the farm with your camera, a heritage guide and a photography instructor. Ages 12 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$20 per person. Register online or at 630-206-9566.

Sept. 16	2 – 4 p.m.	Kline Creek Farm
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Theater and More at Mayslake

Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook

FIRST FOLIO THEATRE'S *AS YOU LIKE IT*

Forced into the woods, Orlando abandons his inheritance and his love, Rosalind, not realizing the sprightly youth following him and teaching him to woo is Rosalind in disguise. All ages; under 16 with an adult. \$10 – \$39 per person. Tickets at 630-986-8067 or firstfolio.org.

July 12 – Aug. 20

Wednesday – Sunday 8:15 – 10:15 p.m.

RESTORATION-IN-PROGRESS TOURS

Learn about the past — and future — of this historic 1920s Tudor Revival-style mansion. All ages. \$8 per person. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Wednesdays 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Saturdays 9:30, 10, 11 and 11:30 a.m.

ART EXHIBITS

All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

July 26 – Sept. 15

Invasive Plants in the Midwest Landscape

Sept. 20 – Nov. 7

Chicago Alliance of Visual Artists Later Impressions

Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Plants and People 11203

Learn how people used plants for food, clothes, shelter, tools and medicine on a guided tour. Ages 13 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-580-7025.

July 8

10 – 11 a.m.

St. James Farm

Ranger Trek Jr. 11298

Learn about critters that live in the preserves as you explore different habitats on a guided hike. Ages 10 and under with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 19

10 – 11:30 a.m.

Waterfall Glen

Recipe Swap and Harvest Hike 11260

Bring your favorite recipe to share after an early fall hike through the south side of the farm. Ages 13 and up. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-580-7025.

Sept. 2

10 – 11 a.m.

St. James Farm

St. James Farm Dairy Day

Experience life on a 1900s dairy farm from making butter to seeing a hay elevator at work. Take a guided wagon ride and enjoy displays and games. All ages. Free. No registration. Questions? Call 630-580-7025.

Sept. 9

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

St. James Farm

Stroller Strut 11161

Bring your little ones and strollers for a 1-mile walk followed by a nature craft and snacks. Ages 5 and under with an adult. \$5 per family. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 5, 12, 19 & 26

10 – 11:30 a.m.

Herrick Lake

Sunrise Hike 11623

Learn about wildlife, plants, history and forest preserve features on the hill at sunrise. Ages 8 and up; under 18 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 23

6:15 – 7:15 a.m.

Meacham Grove

Sunset Hilltop Hike 11186

Take a 2-mile hike through the woods and to the top of Mount Hoy, the third-highest public spot in the county. Ages 18 and up. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 24

7 – 9 p.m.

Blackwell

Aug. 21

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Blackwell



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

Tales From the Rails and Caboose 11261

Hear about early railroad days around the fire with s'mores, and take a tour of the fully restored caboose. All ages; under 13 with adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-580-7025.

Aug. 2	6 – 8 p.m.	St. James Farm
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Team-Building Games 11650

Develop leadership skills and learn to work with a team with outdoor games, puzzles and problem-solving fun! Ages 8 – 12. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 9	4 – 6 p.m.	Churchill Woods
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Trek Sawmill Creek 11320

Hike with a ranger and discover what lurks in and around the creek. Ages 6 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Aug. 12	9 a.m. – Noon	Waterfall Glen
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Volunteer Restoration Workday 11670

Help improve a 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. Groups of five or more and students fulfilling requirements must register by phone 10 days in advance.

July 8	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
July 15	9 a.m. – Noon	W. Chi. Prairie
July 22	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Woods
Aug. 5	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
Aug. 12	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Woods
Sept. 2 & 9	9 a.m. – Noon	Churchill Woods
Sept. 8	9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Danada
Sept. 9	9 a.m. – Noon	Maple Grove
Sept. 16	9 a.m. – Noon	W. Chi. Prairie
Sept. 16, 23 & 24	9 a.m. – Noon	Springbrook
Sept. 22	9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Danada

Volunteer Workday at the Nursery 11625

Help weed, water, or collect and clean 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. Groups of five or more and students fulfilling requirements must register by phone 10 days in advance.

July 8, 14, 19 & 24	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Aug. 2, 11, 19 & 28	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell
Sept. 6, 11, 16, 22 & 27	8 – 11 a.m.	Blackwell

When Darkness Falls 11621

Hike the dark woods with a ranger and learn how to use your senses like a nocturnal predator. Ages 6 and up; under 16 with an adult. Free. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 23	6:30 – 8:30 p.m.	Waterfall Glen
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Wilderness Survival 11200

Learn the essentials as you build an emergency shelter and fire and perform other vital survival skills. Ages 7 and up; under 18 with an adult. \$5 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

Sept. 25	4 – 6 p.m.	Herrick Lake
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Women in the Woods Four-Part Program 11725

Experience outdoor recreation for women taught by women while you join a ranger for hiking, biking, learning archery and kayaking. Tuesdays. Equipment provided except bicycles. Ages 18 and up. \$89 per person. Register online or at 630-933-7248.

July 13 – Aug. 3	9 – 11 a.m.	Multiple
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Tractor-Drawn Wagon Rides

St. James Farm in Warrenville

Learn about the buildings, natural areas and equestrian roots of this preserve on a 30-minute covered-wagon ride. All ages; under 13 with an adult. \$5 per person ages 5 and up; under 5 free.

Join us one of two ways!

Just stop by. Rides on Fridays and Wednesdays are first-come, first-served and don't require registration.

July 5 – Aug. 30 **Fridays and Wednesdays**
Sept. 6 – 27 **Wednesdays**
11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Register in advance. Register for Sunday rides online (program 11592) or at 630-580-7025.

July 2 – Sept. 24
Sundays 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.



Lunch Break Loops

by **CHRISTINA ADCOCK**, RANGER, COMMUNITY SERVICES & EDUCATION

Summer is here, bringing with it hours of extra daylight. But it can still be a struggle to find time to get to your favorite forest preserve, even though research shows that 20 minutes outdoors can reduce stress, improve your mood, enhance your memory and help you maintain a healthy weight. Fortunately, the Forest Preserve District offers lots of short trails that can help you get your daily dose of nature even during lunch!

The 82-acre Maple Grove Forest Preserve in Downers Grove is the area's only remaining remnant of a maple forest, an ecosystem categorized as globally endangered. The crushed limestone trail that runs the length of the preserve is a 1-mile round trip, but if you don't like to set foot on the same place twice, turn right when you reach the wood-chip trail. You'll end up circling the heart of the preserve instead of walking alongside it. It's the perfect place to go if you want to get "lost" in the woods and escape the sun on a hot summer day.

Don't let the small parking lot on Hobson Road at Goodrich Woods Forest Preserve in Naperville fool you. This preserve packs a punch. A 0.5-mile wood-chip loop takes you through 14 acres of woodlands with plenty of shade and a small creek, which cuts the preserve in half. If you're lucky, you might spot a red-

tailed hawk in the treetops looking for its next meal. Remnants of the original homesite are at the trailhead, so after a few loops you can rest on one of the benches and imagine what life would have been like in the late 1800s.

The parking lot on Gary's Mill Road at West DuPage Woods Forest Preserve in West Chicago is your gateway to Elsen's Hill. With 2.5 miles of grassy trails, you can pick your own route and distance for the day. Interested in hiking along the West Branch DuPage River? Take the Hickory Trail down the hill, which takes you past one of the county's few fens, a rare wetland fed by calcium-rich groundwater. Elsen's Hill is also a birding hot spot. Warblers, green herons and great horned owls all call the preserve home, even if only for a short time, so grab your binoculars. You just might spot a green heron looking for its next meal by Turtle Pond!

Established in 1917 as the county's first forest preserve, the 71-acre York Woods Forest Preserve in Oak Brook is filled with towering trees. Oaks over 100 years old form canopies over a 1-mile asphalt loop, one of the few asphalt paths in the preserves. After your hike, you can enjoy a bite to eat in the oldest picnic grove in the county, which boasts 3 acres of mowed grass and shade trees and a picnic shelter built by the Civilian Conservation



© iStock.com/Luca15

When it comes to any hike, staying hydrated is important; even a short walk at lunchtime can lead to dehydration under the right conditions. Bring water not only for your walk but also for the ride back to work, and consider packing sunscreen, bug spray and a light snack, too. Of course no matter where you hike, remember to follow all posted rules and regulations, especially in state nature preserves, which have stricter requirements.



▲ Shady maples of Maple Grove



▲ Green heron hunting at West DuPage Woods



▲ Salt Creek Greenway Trail at York Woods



▲ Great spangled fritillary at West Chicago Prairie

Corps in the 1930s. If you're in the mood for more than a mile, a 0.6-mile section of the greater 25-mile Salt Creek Greenway Trail cuts through the preserve. Head north about 17 miles and you'll end at Ned Brown Preserve in Elk Grove Village; 8 or so miles south and you'll be at the gates to Brookfield Zoo!

With 3 miles of trails ranging between 0.1 and 0.6 mile, the 358-acre West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve in West Chicago lets you mix and match several short but significant walks through the state-designated Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve. The preserve is one of the most biologically diverse sites in northeastern Illinois, containing over 600 different kinds of plants and animals. The half-mile West Loop circles through the center of the nature preserve, but any of the trails will carry you through prairie, upland oak savanna or wetlands. Footpaths bring you face-to-face with nature on a truly personal level, especially with the variety of butterflies that rely on the preserve's native blooming plants. (Just make sure to check for ticks when you finish your walk!)

So are you ready for a lunchtime trail trek? Find forest preserve maps showing trails, drinking water and restrooms online at dupageforest.org. Just click "Places to Go" and "Forest Preserves" and get outside! •



A “Slough” of Songbirds

by **JAYNE BOHNER**, COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Say the word “slough,” and some people picture a stagnant marsh filled with snakes and alligators, but there’s nothing murky about Songbird Slough Forest Preserve. Quite to the contrary, Songbird Slough brags one of the most popular destinations for area birders.

The southern 14 acres of Songbird Lake are remnants of a natural “slough,” a shallow lake formed thousands of years ago by the Wisconsin Glacier. As the glacier retreated to the northeast, a large shelf of ice broke off and became partially buried in sediment. As the ice melted, it left behind a depression that filled with meltwaters, the beginnings of the slough.

Over time, small fish and aquatic insects attracted migrating and nesting water birds, including pie-billed grebes, black-crowned night herons, black terns and least bitterns. Today, of the more than 200 different kinds of birds recorded at the preserve, almost one third are on state lists: 13 endangered, two threatened, and 61 of special concern or in greatest need of conservation. Within the past five years alone species such as savannah sparrows, American woodcocks, marsh wrens, spotted sandpipers, warbling vireos, bobolinks and hooded mergansers — all on one state list or another — have used Songbird Slough as breeding grounds.

Confirmed reports like these were one reason this past October the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, a part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, recognized the area for its potential to help with the re-establishment of state-listed species.

They also explain why the 35,000-member Bird Conservation Network considers the preserve a birding “hot

spot” and why the Forest Preserve District moved to change the name of the forest preserve from Campbell Slough to Songbird Slough in the late 1990s.

Although the slough has been part of the landscape for centuries, the northern 15 acres of Songbird Lake are a mere 30 years old. In the 1980s surveys revealed fishing was a favorite activity for DuPage residents but anglers felt there weren’t enough places in the forest preserves to enjoy it. So in 1989 the Forest Preserve District excavated a fishing lake with depths up to 25 feet along the northern edge of the slough. To limit any negative effects the lake might have on the ecologically valuable slough, the District submerged earthen berms to partially separate underwater habitats. It also restricted fishing along the southern shore to protect vital breeding grounds.

The Forest Preserve District stocks Songbird Lake with largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, crappie and northern pike, and as with all forest preserve waters, anglers 16 and older need to carry valid Illinois fishing licenses to try their luck. Mowed grassy footpaths, some more hidden than others, lead to the water. At the main parking lot near the shelter and at a smaller lot along the entrance drive, metal signs declaring “Be a Hero Transport Zero” (reminders to help stop the spread of zebra mussels and other invasive species) mark two of the entry points.

Footpaths around the lake range from wide turf margins to strips of dirt that thread through dense shrubs. Along many, a shaking leaf at your feet can show where an American toad landed after bounding ahead of you; a path closer to the

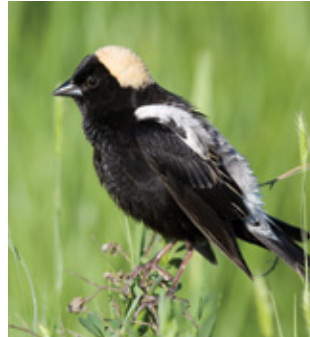


© Don Miller

▲ Black-crowned night heron
(*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

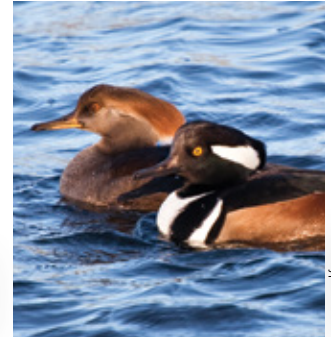


▲ Spotted sandpiper
(*Actitis macularius*)



© Greg Lasley

▲ Bobolink
(*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*)



© Calypso Orchid

▲ Hooded merganser
(*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

water can bring you within feet of a great blue heron doing some fishing of its own. Heavy rains can flood these informal trails, but the muddy patches that remain when the water recedes capture raccoon, muskrat and mice tracks, letting you investigate what walked by before you did. These isolated openings in the vegetation not only give anglers access to the water but also present inviting pockets where you can unfold a chair and watch the wildlife show.

For visitors looking for better footing, a 1.1-mile asphalt trail separating pedestrian and bicycle traffic from the road runs along the main entrance drive. It's an especially convenient way for local residents to reach the heart of the preserve, one with informal shady rest stops and natural log benches along the way.

Visitors who want to make a day of it can reserve the forest preserve's 50-person picnic shelter with unobstructed westward views of Rosinwinkle Meadow, named unofficially for one of the families who owned land in the area a century ago. The Forest Preserve District's natural resources crew has been cutting brush and seeding the meadow to knock back invasive nonnative plants and bring back a native prairie landscape. The restoration process will be ongoing, but little bluestem, Virginia wild rye, New England aster, black-eyed Susan and swamp milkweed are already starting to take hold.

So don't let the name fool you. Songbird Slough offers one of the county's rare birding experiences with ample fishing to boot. Grab your field guide, binoculars or fishing license, and then get maps and driving directions at dupageforest.org. •

Quick Look at Songbird Slough Forest Preserve



For a detailed map of Songbird Slough, visit dupageforest.org.

directory



GENERAL *Contacts*

HEADQUARTERS

35580 Naperville Road
Wheaton, IL 60189

The office is open Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and is closed on
Saturdays, Sundays and select holidays.

Website

dupageforest.org

Email Address

forest@dupageforest.org

Main Number

630-933-7200

TTY

800-526-0857

CONSERVATIONIST SUBSCRIPTION LINE

630-933-7085

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

630-871-6400

LAW ENFORCEMENT

630-933-7240

VISITOR SERVICES

630-933-7248

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

630-933-7233

GOLF *Courses*

GREEN MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

18W201 W. 63rd St.
Westmont, IL 60559
630-810-5330

MAPLE MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

272 S. Addison Road
Wood Dale, IL 60191
630-616-8424

THE PRESERVE AT OAK MEADOWS

Closed for Renovations Until 2017
900 N. Wood Dale Road
Addison, IL 60101
630-595-0071



PRESERVE *Hours*

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

ACCESSIBILITY

Individuals with accessibility needs or
concerns should contact the District's
ADA coordinator at 630-933-7683 or
TTY 800-526-0857 at least 48 hours
before their visit.

EDUCATION *Centers*

DANADA EQUESTRIAN CENTER

35507 Naperville Road
Wheaton, IL 60189
630-668-6012

The center's office is open Monday –
Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and is closed on
Saturdays, Sundays and select holidays.

FULLERSBURG WOODS NATURE EDUCATION CENTER

3609 Spring Road
Oak Brook, IL 60523
630-850-8110

April – October the center is open daily
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. but is closed on select
holidays. November – March hours
may vary.

KLINE CREEK FARM

1N600 County Farm Road
West Chicago, IL 60185
630-876-5900

The farm is open Thursday – Monday
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and is closed on Tuesdays,
Wednesdays and select holidays.

MAYSLAKE PEABODY ESTATE

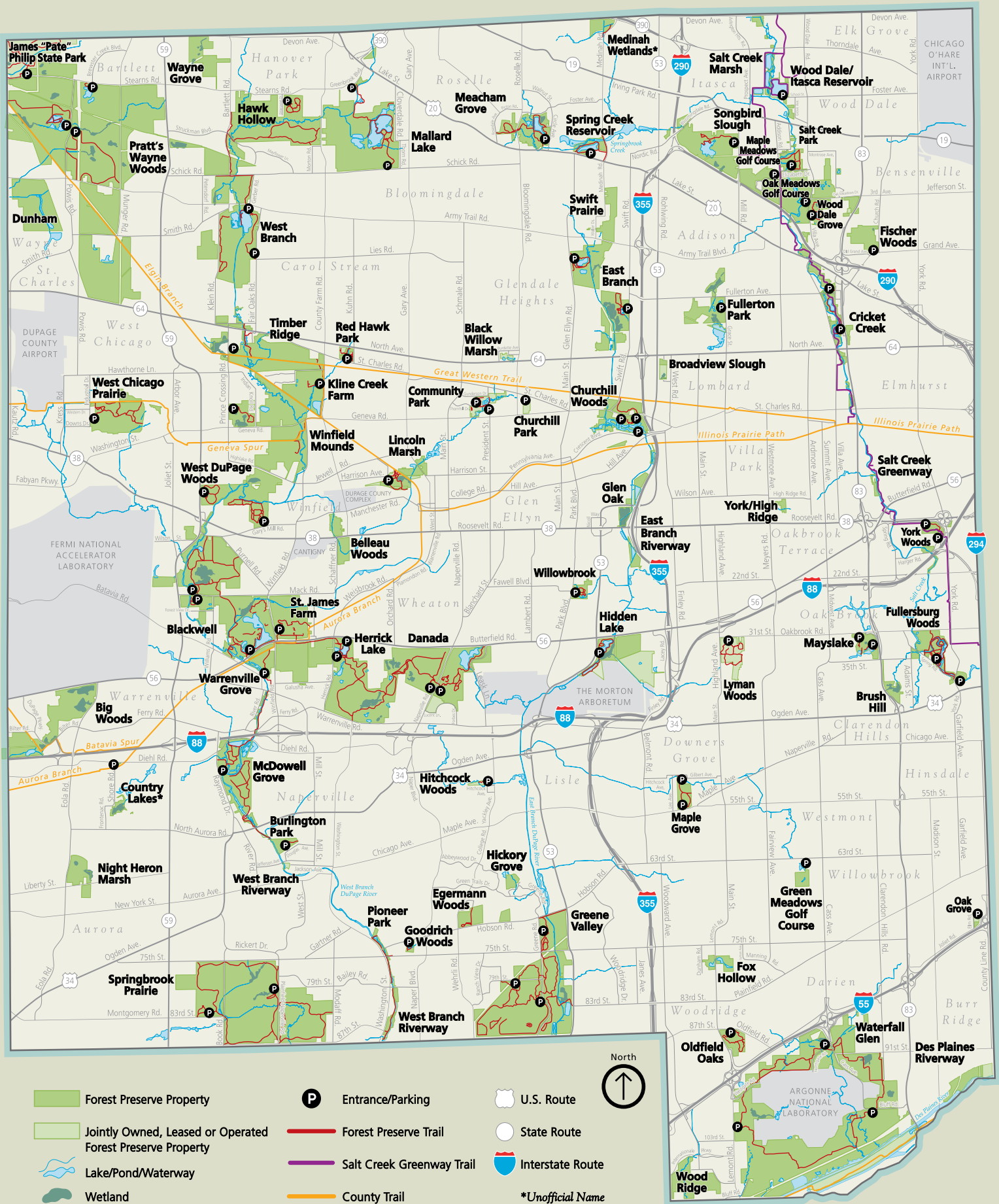
1717 W. 31st St.
Oak Brook, IL 60523
630-206-9566

The estate is open only during scheduled
programs and events.

WILLOWBROOK WILDLIFE CENTER

525 S. Park Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
630-942-6200

The visitor center and the surrounding
Willowbrook Forest Preserve are open daily
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. The animal admittance
area is open 8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. All areas
are closed on select holidays.





P.O. Box 5000
Wheaton, IL 60189-5000
630-933-7200
dupageforest.org

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the Conservationist

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The graphic for the "Take5" photo contest features a central blue camera icon with the word "Take5" in white. The camera is partially covered by a large green leaf. To the left of the camera is a photo of a dragonfly on a branch. To the right is a photo of yellow flowers. Below the camera is a photo of two children petting a horse. The background is a light yellow with diagonal stripes and large green leaves at the bottom.

Take5

DuPage Forest Preserves
PHOTO CONTEST

5 MINUTES IN A DUPAGE FOREST PRESERVE CAN MEAN A ...
HEALTHIER BODY SHARPER MIND HAPPIER YOU

AND REALLY COOL PRIZES!

Sept. 1 – Oct. 27
Visit dupageforest.org/take5 for details.