



# Nature Programs

## Nature Center Pre-K Fridays

Fridays, January 7–February 25, 9am-12pm  
 Anita Purves Nature Center  
 Age 6 and under with adult

Kids and their families can drop by the nature center to discover self-guided activities just for little naturalists. Your adventures may lead you outdoors as weather permits, so come prepared! Themes are announced the week before each program. Call 217-384-4062 for more information or follow the Anita Purves Nature Center on Facebook. Free-will donations of \$3/child are requested.

## Forest Preschool

March 28-31, 8am-12pm  
 Anita Purves Nature Center:  
 Busey Woods & Friendship Grove  
 Nature Playscape  
 Ages 3-6, must be toilet trained



This budding program for children who have not yet attended kindergarten takes place entirely outdoors no matter the weather! Drop off is at 8am at the Friendship Grove Nature Playscape. From there kids will head into Busey Woods for themed nature explorations. Daily snacks are cooked and enjoyed around the campfire. Children must come dressed appropriately for the weather and bring a refillable water bottle daily.

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$82R/\$123NR   Mar 14	\$102R/\$153NR   Mar 21	910

## Nature Play Kids

Fridays, March 4–April 15, 10am-11am  
 Anita Purves Nature Center  
 Recommended for ages 3-6;  
 Kids under 2 years attend free  
 with registered participant  
 Fee: \$5/child

Bring your young one to the nature center for creative outdoor playtime with guidance and additional supplies from a nature play facilitator. Everyone is welcome regardless of ability. Weekly themes depend on current events in nature. To keep these programs relevant to the changing seasons, themes are announced the week before each program. Call 217-384-4062 for more information or follow the Anita Purves Nature Center on Facebook. Pre-registration is encouraged so we have enough supplies for everyone. Drop-ins are welcome, in which case the \$5/child fee is to be paid upon arrival.

Date	Register By	Code
Mar 4	Mar 3	912
Mar 11	Mar 10	913
Mar 18	Mar 17	914
Mar 25	Mar 24	915
Apr 1	Mar 31	916
Apr 8	Apr 7	917
Apr 15	Apr 14	918

Follow the Anita Purves Nature Center on Facebook for the most up-to-date program information, or sign up here to receive the nature center's monthly e-newsletter:  
[www.urbanaparks.org/e-news](http://www.urbanaparks.org/e-news)

## The Great Backyard Bird Count

February 18-21, 2022

You can be a citizen scientist from the comfort of your own home! By counting birds you see from your windows or in your yard, you will help scientists collect important real-time information. Anyone can participate—count for as little or as long as you wish! Submit your observations online to [gbbc.birdcount.org/](http://gbbc.birdcount.org/) anytime from February 18-21.

Share photos of your sightings with the Anita Purves Nature Center and Urbana Park District on social media!  
#UrbanaParks #GBBC #birdcount

## Birding Basics with Champaign County Audubon Society

Saturday, February 19, 8-10am\*

Age 10 and up

A great opportunity to learn more about the wonderful world of bird watching with local birder Roger Digges of the Champaign County Audubon Society. We will start the morning with coffee, orange juice, and discussion on common native/migratory birds. We will practice finding and identifying species before a guided hike in Busey Woods. Binoculars will be provided, but we encourage bringing your own if you have them. A registered adult must accompany children under 15. **\*Rain date: March 5.**

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$5R/\$8NR   Feb 5	\$6R/\$9NR   Feb 15	919

## Owl Prowl for All

Friday, February 25; 5-7pm

Anita Purves Nature Center

Age 6 and up

This program is a special opportunity to explore Busey Woods at night in search of wild owls. We will start with a short presentation on native Illinois owls, then hit the trail! After the hike, meet the nature center's resident screech owls, warm up with hot cocoa, and dissect a real owl pellet! Come prepared for wet/cold/slippery conditions. Participants may hike on soft, uneven surfaces. Pending weather conditions, this program may be rescheduled. A registered adult must accompany children under 15.

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$10R/\$15NR   Feb 14	\$12R/\$18NR   Feb 21	920

## Adults Only Owl Prowl

Saturday, February 12, 5-7pm

Anita Purves Nature Center & Busey Woods

Age 15 and up

Explore Busey Woods at night in search of owls with Illinois Natural History Survey Ornithologist, Tara Beveroth. Start with a presentation on native Illinois owls, then head outside to listen for their calls. After the hike, meet the Anita Purves Nature Center's resident screech owls and warm up with hot cocoa. Come prepared for wet/cold/slippery conditions. Participants may hike on soft, uneven surfaces. Pending weather conditions, this program may be rescheduled.

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$10R/\$15NR   Jan 29	\$12R/\$18NR   Feb 5	921

## FREE! Sunday Morning Bird Walks

Sundays, March 6 – May 29, 7:30-9am

Busey Woods (meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center parking lot)

All ages (under 15 with adult)

Walk with Champaign County Audubon Society leaders and search for birds in Busey Woods and Crystal Lake Park. Learn and practice basic bird watching and identification techniques. Bring a pair of binoculars, or borrow one on a first-come, first-served basis. Check the CCAS website for more details and any COVID-related guidelines:

[www.champaigncountyaudubon.org](http://www.champaigncountyaudubon.org)



## FREE! Woodcock Walk

Wednesday, March 23, 6:45-8:15pm  
 Meadowbrook Park – Race St. entrance (meet at the Meadowbrook Interpretive Center)  
 All ages; under 15 with adult

Treat yourself to an evening performance in the prairie as we witness the “sky dance” of the American woodcock, visible only during the first few weeks of spring. Discover why this strange bird is so remarkable. We will begin with a short presentation inside the barn, then head down the accessible path to the prairie. Bring a pair of binoculars if you have them. Call 217-384-4062 by March 21 if you plan on attending. Pending weather conditions, this program may be rescheduled.

## Spring Wetland Ecology with the Society of Wetland Scientists

Saturday, April 9, 10-11:30am  
 Anita Purves Nature Center & Busey Woods  
 All ages; under 15 with registered adult

Explore Busey Woods with the University of Illinois Society of Wetland Scientists. Look for spring wildflowers and visit seasonal ponds to learn about their unique plant and animal communities – we may even see some fairy shrimp! This guided exploration will follow soft trails, so wear shoes that can get muddy.

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$7R/\$11NR   Mar 26	\$9R/\$14NR   Apr 4	922

## Winter Tree ID with U of I Extension

Saturday, January 29, 2-4pm\*  
 Age 12 and up; a registered adult must accompany children under 15

Anita Purves Nature Center & Busey Woods  
 If you have ever been curious about how to identify a tree while the leaves are off, this is the program for you! Impress your friends and family with your knowledge of form, branching structure, bud characteristics and leaf scars after this informative afternoon with educator Ryan Pankau from Illinois Extension. We will provide hot coffee/cocoa, and three lucky registrants will be drawn at random to receive a free field guide! We will be doing first-hand practice in the field, so dress for cold weather! **\*Rain date: February 12.**

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$10R/\$15NR   Jan 22	\$12R/\$18NR   Feb 6	923

## Forest School Afternoons

Wednesdays, April 6–May 4, 1-4pm  
 Anita Purves Nature Center & Busey Woods  
 Ages 5-11

This program connects school-aged children with the natural world through discovery and play in an educational outdoor setting. Drop-off is from 1-1:15pm at the Friendship Grove Nature Playscape. We will be outside rain or shine unless conditions are unsafe, so children must come dressed appropriately for the weather and bring a refillable water bottle daily. Masks are required unless we are spaced apart outdoors. Light snacks will be provided.

EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
\$112R/\$170NR   Mar 23	\$140R/\$210NR   Mar 30	924

## Shinrin-Yoku / Forest Sensory Walks

10am-12pm each date (see below)  
 Anita Purves Nature Center & Busey Woods  
 Age 15 and up

Experience the therapeutic effects of Shinrin-Yoku, the practice of immersing or “bathing” the senses in the atmosphere of the forest. Enjoy a slow, mindful guided walk through Busey Woods as you awaken your senses and reconnect with nature. Each walk will include a variety of sensory awareness activities and finish with hot tea to enjoy together outdoors. Space is limited, so register early.

Date	EB Cost   Deadline	Cost   Deadline	Code
Mar 19	\$10R/\$15NR   Mar 5	\$13R/\$20NR   Mar 17	926
Apr 2	\$10R/\$15NR   Mar 19	\$13R/\$20NR   Mar 31	927

## Shinrin-Yoku by Request

February 7 – April 30: Available weekdays 1-8pm & weekends 9am-8pm | Busey Woods  
 By appointment only; call 217-384-4062 or email [dasubers@urbanaparks.org](mailto:dasubers@urbanaparks.org)  
 \$25 per group; for up to 8 people age 6 and up

Experience the therapeutic effects of Shinrin-Yoku, the practice of immersing or “bathing” your senses in the atmosphere of the forest. This 90-minute, slow-paced walk will awaken your senses and uplift your spirits.

## FREE! Health and Sustainability Workshop Series



Saturdays, March 26, April 16 and May 7, 10am-12pm;

Age 10 and up; a registered adult must accompany children under 15

Collective efforts as good stewards of our environment and community are vital in the fight against climate change, and often have positive benefits to human health. This program series is designed to support additional learning in new areas with help from local experts. *The April 16 workshop will include a short discussion on the food-farm-health nexus in collaboration with CRAFH, the Coalition of Regenerative Agriculture, Food, and Health. CRAFH work is supported through the Illinois Regenerative Agriculture Initiative at the University of Illinois.*

### **March 26: Intro to Bicycle Maintenance**

Learn about proper tire pressure, how to fix a flat tire, adjusting brakes, weight distribution, and more with the University of Illinois Campus Bike Center.

### **April 16: Health and Sustainability in the Kitchen**

Find out tips for local sourcing/purchasing practices, eliminating single-use plastics, and tasty eco-friendly recipes with Ann Swanson of Hendrick House Farm. Also in collaboration with physician Japhia Ramkumar and dietitian Erin Meyer with CRAFH.

### **May 7: Composting Methods and Practices**

Explore home composting, troubleshooting, soil health, and available resources with Courtney Kwong, City of Urbana Recycling Coordinator.

Date	Location	Deadline	Code
Mar 26	Phillips Recreation Center	Mar 19	932
Apr 16	Phillips Recreation Center	Apr 9	933
May 7	Anita Purves Nature Center	Apr 30	934

## FREE - Volunteer Programs

See how you can make a difference during volunteer opportunities at District Natural Areas. Pre-registration is required for groups of 8 or more people. Call 217-384-4062. Clubs, scouts, and other groups may request their own private workday by calling the number listed above.

### **Natural Areas Stewardship Day -**

#### **Spring Equinox**

**Sunday, March 20, 8am-5pm**

**Meadowbrook Park - park at the Race St. entrance and meet at the Meadowbrook Interpretive Center**

Come and go any time between 8am and 5pm!

Projects will include seed collection, nuisance plant removal, trash pick-up, and trail maintenance.

### **Wednesday Workdays**

- **10am-12pm, January-February**

- **9am-11am, March-April**

Locations are announced weekly. Follow the Urbana Park District on social media. During these two-hour sessions you might plant trees or flowers, collect or scatter seed, remove nuisance plants, maintain trails, and pick up trash as needed.



## Organic Gardens: Community Gardening in Meadowbrook Park

*Growing Season: March 6-November 6, 2022  
Meadowbrook Park - Race St entrance  
Age 18 and Up*

Garden at the oldest local organic community gardens! Since 1975, the Meadowbrook Organic Garden program has supported healthy bodies and a healthy community. We provide space, water, hoses and wheelbarrows. You supply tools, plants, labor, and optional fencing. A garden supervisor will assist with questions or concerns. Garden plots are rented in "as is" condition and participation is at your own risk. This is a community garden and interaction with the general public is expected and encouraged. For more information, call Chelsea Prahl at 217-384-4062 or read the garden manual at [www.urbanaparks.org/parks/meadowbrook-park/](http://www.urbanaparks.org/parks/meadowbrook-park/).

### To Register for a Garden Plot:

- Register by calling 217-367-1544 or completing the registration form on page 75. **Online registration is not available.**
- In addition to the plot rental fee, gardeners pay a \$30 deposit. The deposit is returned at the end of the growing season if the gardener abides by the Urbana Park District's published guidelines. Returning gardeners in good standing earn a discounted deposit.
- New gardeners will receive an orientation email once they are registered. This is when plot selection will take place.

Plot Size	Fee
Raised Plot*: 11' x 3'	\$20R/\$30NR
Half Plot: 17' x 15'	\$30R/\$45NR
Full Plot: 17' x 30'	\$50R/\$75NR

*\*Raised Plots are ADA Accessible*

[www.Solidarity-Gardens-CU.org](http://www.Solidarity-Gardens-CU.org)



#NeighborsFeedingNeighbors

## Solidarity Gardens CU

Solidarity Gardens was launched in June of 2020 by Cunningham Township in collaboration with Urbana Park District, Sola Gratia Farm, Channing Murray Foundation, Urbana Free Library, and other community partners. By providing seeds, tools, knowledge and distribution, Solidarity Gardens addresses food insecurity by supporting local residents in growing food for themselves as well as their neighbors in need. They encourage individuals and organizations to work together to create gardens throughout the Urbana-Champaign area, and to donate seeds, garden supplies, labor and expertise. Visit the Solidarity Garden website for more information: [www.solidarity-gardens-cu.org/about](http://www.solidarity-gardens-cu.org/about).

### Is your club or group interested in volunteering?

Solidarity Gardens CU is looking for groups to "adopt" garden plots in local community garden spaces to plant, maintain and harvest produce to be donated through the Solidarity Garden CU initiative. Interested? Email Chelsea Prahl at [ckprahl@urbanaparks.org](mailto:ckprahl@urbanaparks.org).

# Outdoor Learning Opportunities

**Teachers** - Bring your class for a **School Tour** through Busey Woods, Meadowbrook Park's Spomer Prairie, or Weaver Park. Programs at Busey Woods include time to explore the nature center's Field Station. Or, invite a **Naturalist in the Classroom** to visit your school. An environmental educator will bring hands-on materials, interactive lessons, and as related to the topic, a live owl, turtle, worms or snake to your classroom. Virtual Naturalist in the Classrooms are available!

All programs meet grade-specific Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. Teachers receive supplemental activity ideas to connect the real world to the classroom. The Nature Connections Brochure with tour information is available for download at [www.urbanaparks.org/programs/nature-programs/](http://www.urbanaparks.org/programs/nature-programs/).



## Custom Programs

Are you looking for a program to compliment a unit or lesson you are teaching? We can work with you to develop a special request environmental education program to fit your specific needs. Requests must be made at least four weeks in advance.

## Nature Items You Can Borrow

The Urbana Park District offers a variety of education loan items at the Anita Purves Nature Center such as natural history specimens and reference materials. Call Chelsea Prahl at 217-384-4062 for more information on what is available!

## Teach with a Turtle

Borrow the *Reptiles and Amphibians* loan box and have a live turtle in your classroom for up to two weeks! This kit includes supplemental activities involving turtle care and feeding instructions and standards-based reptile and amphibian lesson plans. This hands-on kit delivers an unforgettable experience for you and your students.



# Adopt an Education Animal



The nature center houses a number of education animals that demonstrate the variety of wildlife living in Illinois. Most have injuries that would compromise their survival in the wild, or were captive-bred. All of the animals are on exhibit and featured during educational programs with schools, scouts and the public.

**You could be part of their lives!** Your financial contribution, or “adoption,” goes directly toward the animals’ medical care, housing and food. This is a great way to support local environmental education.

### When you adopt you receive:

- Adoption certificate
- A fact sheet with the animal’s history and photographs
- Your name on the Animal Adoption exhibit in the Field Station for the period of the adoption



Animal	Cost/Month	Cost/6 Months	Cost/Year
Turtle	\$15	\$80	\$150
Snake	\$30	\$160	\$300
Owl	\$50	\$260	\$525

Help us feed the wildlife that visit the center’s habitat gardens by donating birdseed!



Call 217-384-4062 or visit [www.urbanaparks.org/facilities/anita-purves-nature-center/](http://www.urbanaparks.org/facilities/anita-purves-nature-center/) for an adoption form and additional information.

## Adoptions make great gifts!