



**River Bend**  
NATURE CENTER

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**River Bend**  
NATURE CENTER

Fall 2018, Volume 40, Issue 3

Helping people discover, enjoy, understand, and preserve the incredible natural world that surrounds us.

## Director's Desk By Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director

**You can help build a strong future for River Bend Nature Center!**

The crisp, cool days of autumn are here and at River Bend Nature Center, the seasonal pace changes as we welcome back visiting school students. These visits provide experiential outdoor learning, develop comfort with spending time outdoors, and foster future leaders who will value and be champions for natural places. In addition, there is an array of fall programs and opportunities to get involved, including Ramble, Bats Bones & Bonfires, and year-end giving starting in November\*. This is an important and exciting time to be a part of RBNC.

**We are in the midst of celebrating 40 years as your local nature connection**, and have enjoyed sharing this celebration with you at the Heritage Days and Defeat of Jesse James Days parades, by hosting Jivin' Ivan & The Kings of Swing as part of the Faribault Parks & Recreation Summer Concert series, and during the Annual Meeting where we enjoyed cake and scattered seed in the prairie to commemorate the organization's incorporation.

**Our dedicated, talented, creative staff and Board** are dedicated to setting the organization on pace for sustainability and will soon release a strategic plan to guide direction for next five years. It seeks to build on investments in our mission and the long term, make strides with funding educational programs and projects to steward natural resources, build foundations and systems to increase our ability to be resilient as a 501c3 nonprofit, and collaborate with community partners to increase impact.

**We are humbled and grateful to all who have provided resources of charitable donations and volunteer time.** We are committed to using your gifts wisely. Your contributions are needed so we can work toward our mission of helping people discover, enjoy, understand and preserve the incredible natural world that surrounds us.

Your investment in River Bend Nature Center and our mission is more important than ever. Here are some ways you can help:

\*Please donate generously to RBNC during this year end giving season. Can you help us by providing a year end matching challenge? Securing matching funds helps motivate others to give and is a great way to help RBNC. **We know our donors give because they care about the mission of RBNC, we also know that incentives for charitable giving are important to you, so we want to be sure you are aware of this: The MN Department of Revenue announced that taxpayers who take the standard deduction at the federal level will still be able to itemize their 2018 state income tax returns.**

Suggest RBNC's programs to your school, college, or organization's leadership. Our educational programs are aligned with Minnesota Academic Science Standards and we are also able to provide a la carte programs to meet your interests (topic-based outdoor learning, recreation, adventure teambuilding, guided walks, and more).

If you (or someone you know) loves, uses, values River Bend, **your membership is needed!** Support the mission by investing in our operation and feel good about being a supporter as you use the trails, enjoy the programs and reflect on what having RBNC means for our community and region's quality of life and well-being. Get five new members or lapsed members to sign up and receive your choice of RBNC mug or knit hat.

Invite your business to become a member, Community Partner, Event or activity sponsor, or matching donor.

Name River Bend Nature Center to be the beneficiary of gifts or memorial gifts for yourself or a loved one. Dedicate a Memorial Paver in your loved one's honor. Leave a legacy by including RBNC in your will.

Sign up for volunteer opportunities at [www.rbnc.org/volunteer](http://www.rbnc.org/volunteer) and like and share our social media posts. Thank you for your interest and involvement at River Bend Nature Center!

## Program Highlights

### October

- 1 OWLS Lifelong Learning: Dutch Oven Cooking
- 3, 10, 24, 31 Mountain Bike Club for 6-8 graders
- 6 Bagels & Birds (held outside)
- 6 **Ramble: 40 Years: Your Local Nature Connection**
- 13 Phenology Wheels
- 17 OWLS Lunch & Learn - *Wonderful World of Purple Martins, Dave Lee, RBNC Member/Volunteer*
- 17-19 Survival School
- 20 Macroinvertebrates
- 25 OWLS Lifelong Learning: Tree ID stroll

### 27 Bats, Bones & Bonfires

### November

- 3 Bagels & Birds
- 3-11 Archery Deer Management Hunt (Selected hunters ONLY) RBNC still open to the Public
- 5 School's Out Adventure Day
- 14 OWLS Lunch & Learn - *Mader Farm Wetland Restoration, by Patrick Mader*
- 15 Give to the Max / Year-End Donation Drive begins
- 22 Interpretive Center Closed
- 29 OWLS Lifelong Learning: Paper Making-Holiday Cards

### December

- 1 Bagels & Birds
- 1 Recycled Art: T-Shirt Bags
- 8 Button Making
- 12 OWLS Lunch & Learn *Audubon Bird Feeder Count, Gene Bauer*
- 15 Christmas Bird Count
- 15 Make Birdfeeders



# River Bend Nature Center

1000 Rustad Rd—PO Box 186  
Faribault, MN 55021

## Board of Directors

Dustin Simpson, *President*  
Jane McWilliams, *Vice-President*  
Matt Carlander, *Treasurer*  
Penny Hillemann, *Secretary*  
Steve Underdahl, *City Council Liaison*  
Sara Beebe  
Dustin Dienst  
Kylan Hill  
Dirk Peterson  
Paul Stegmeir  
Mark Thacher  
Wendy Wustenberg

## Staff

Breanna Wheeler  
Executive Director  
Cindy Clayton  
Operations Director  
Molly Olson  
Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Kelly Peterson  
Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Allison Shaw  
Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Brittany Smith  
Naturalist/Program Coordinator

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## Introducing the New Naturalist

Kelly Peterson, Naturalist/Program Coordinator (Public Programs)

Kelly Peterson grew up in Woodbury, MN and studied Environmental Sciences at the University of Minnesota. She worked as a Naturalist at the Audubon Center of the North Woods in Sandstone, MN where she taught school groups in a residential setting. She is excited to meet the community and start exploring the Faribault area by its many hiking, biking, and water trails! **Stop by and say hi to Kelly!**



## Introducing New Board Members

**Dustin Dienst** is the Fire Chief / Emergency Manager for the City of Faribault. He has an AAS in Natural Resources and is a Licensed Master Electrician, Licensed Firefighter, and Licensed EMT. He has been visiting RBNC since he was a child and has been a longtime member. He brings a variety of skills to the Board, including: physical plant (buildings & grounds) and wildlife and natural resources management.

**Kylan Hill** is a Conservation Officer and performs statewide law enforcement duties for the MN Department of Natural Resources. Kylan is passionate about bringing outdoor experiences and environmental education to communities and would like to engage the community to ensure the outdoors is accessible for all ages and demographics. Kylan spent three summers working at an environmental education camp for people living with disabilities.

**Mark Thacher** is a retired Financial Advisor with experience in finance and marketing and brings planning and implementation skills to the Board. He has been a lifelong outdoorsman and enjoys camping, backpacking and hiking across the US which has helped him to appreciate what RBNC offers close to home. Mark works with the volunteer cross-country ski trail grooming crew to prepare and maintain the trails at RBNC. He wants to help maintain and grow support for RBNC.

**Welcome to new staff and Board Members, River Bend is happy to have you!**

## Thank You National Public Lands Day Volunteers!

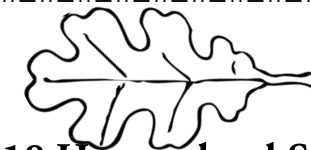
We really appreciate all of the volunteers that help and support us in various ways. Together, we are able to grow and improve River Bend Nature Center.



On September 22, we celebrated National Public Lands Day in partnership with the Minnesota Master Naturalist Program. We had volunteers pulling buckthorn, picking up trash, and creating bio-blitzes. River Bend Nature Center is unique in that the land is owned by the City of Faribault which has an agreement for River Bend Nature Center to operate it as a nature center. River Bend is a 501(c)3 nonprofit nature center and depends upon memberships and donations for operations as well as volunteers. River Bend Nature Center is not a city park, but it is open for public use.

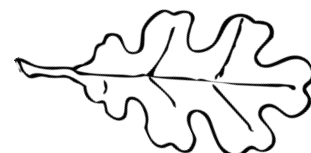
**Building Host** – We are seeking volunteers to greet visitors in the Interpretive Center, answer questions, help with clerical work and take phone calls during the week between 8-4:30 PM and on Saturdays from 9-4. If you have availability to help, please contact us!

**Volunteer Naturalists**- We are seeking volunteers to help naturalists teach school groups. All training is provided. **Check out the upcoming volunteer opportunities at [www.rbnc.org/volunteer](http://www.rbnc.org/volunteer)** Contact Molly Olson at [programs@rbnc.org](mailto:programs@rbnc.org) for more information.



## 2018 Homeschool Science Days

For the 2018-2019 school year, River Bend Nature Center invites homeschool families and co-ops the opportunity to experience all of the seasons at the nature center. Each seasonal homeschool science day, two age-specific educational programs are offered in the morning and two age-specific recreational programs are offered in the afternoon. Sign up for one or sign up for them both! We invite you to bring a lunch and enjoy it in the Interpretive Center between programs. Students may be dropped off for both programs, including lunch.



### Changing Leaves (ages 3-7)

Practice using your senses to investigate and compare the different colors, shapes, and sizes of leaves, and even look for other signs of fall!  
October 29<sup>th</sup> from 10:30-12:00, \$8/student

### Nature Journaling (ages 8-14)

Learn about phenology and how to make scientific observations about the changing world around you.  
October 29<sup>th</sup> from 10:30-12:00, \$8/student

### Fall Art Projects (ages 3-7)

Use fall's colorful leaves to make art projects, and even decorate a mini pumpkin to take home with you!  
October 29<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-2:00, \$8/student

### Archery (ages 8-14)

Learn the basics of shooting safely and accurately with a River Bend Naturalist.  
October 29<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-2:00, \$8/student

# Generosity Spotlight: Ramble Sponsors

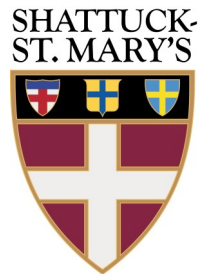
## Platinum Sponsor:



## Gold Sponsor:



## Silver Sponsors:



SUZANNE CARLSON

HENRY & LISA BUSCH

MARVIN & SARA SCHRADER



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AM DAIRY ASSOC.

## Donors:



## NEW PUBLIC PROGRAMS

by Kelly Peterson

Naturalist, Program Coordinator

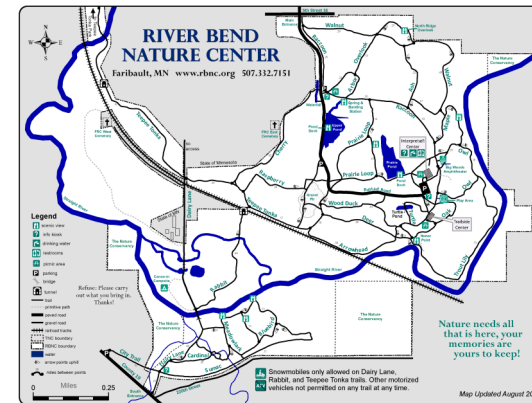
With school starting and the seasons changing, River Bend is offering a wide-variety of new public programs. Families can expect to find a mix of activities on Saturdays and school release days, many of which you can drop in at whatever time works for your family. Adults can look for an expansion of our adult programming with more hands-on activities and guided walks. As always, members receive a discount on programs, but now members can expect to find many free programs to as well!

## Importance of Staying On Trails

By Brittany Smith  
Naturalist/Program Coordinator

We hear them all the time; don't do this, don't do that, obey the rules, and so on. At River Bend Nature Center one very important rule is to stay on the maintained trails. When too many people go off trail, new paths are created; soil gets packed down, plants are disturbed, people could leave River Bend property and trespass, or even get lost.

The spread of invasive species is also higher when new paths are created. I know, many will say that there is already an invasive species problem so who cares. Yes, there is an invasive species problem but there are areas of River Bend where invasive species are not as bad and even some where there are very few if any. Invasive species are opportunistic, taking over disturbed areas and out-competing native plants.



Staying on the maintained trails also comes down to safety. There are a lot of trees at River Bend; most are healthy but not all. There are many trees that have broken limbs, dead tops, and weakened root systems that can fall without warning. Staff and volunteers try their best to look for these issues along the maintained trails and will address them as soon as they can; anything off the maintained trails will be left because that is what nature intended. The mission of River Bend helps connect people to nature, and also to be stewards of the land.

Please stay on the maintained trails and have a safe time at River Bend Nature Center.

# School's Out Adventure Day!

Adventure Days is replacing Science Club

School is Out Adventure Days are two day-long camps open to Faribault Public School students and other students on staff development days, providing students with outdoor recreation and activities to interact with, discover, and understand nature. Compared to their shorter, academically-focused school visits, students will have a wider range of ways to explore and experience the nature at River Bend. Environmental education and recreation will be the focus of the day.

## November 5 Survival Day

Come learn about how animals survive the winters we have at River Bend, and learn some survival techniques of your own! Shoot archery, play games, and build survival shelters.

## March 4 Animal Tracking

Come learn about different ways we can track animals. Learn how to tell apart footprints of animals, and become a detective as we try to figure out who walks through our woods.



The program runs from 9AM to 3:30PM, with optional childcare before starting at 7:30AM and after ending at 5PM for an additional fee. It is \$50 for the day, with optional childcare for \$20. Scholarships are available.

For more information and to register visit [www.rbnc.org/adventureday](http://www.rbnc.org/adventureday)

# News & Notes

## Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting was held on July 26 where the 2017 Annual Report was released and three new board members were elected. River Bend welcomes Dustin Dienst, Kylan Hill, and Mark Thacher to the Board of Directors. At the end of the meeting, the participants performed a prairie seed cast.



2018 RBNC Board Members seed casting

## 40th Anniversary Happenings

In our celebration of the 40th Anniversary of River Bend, the nature center staff walked in Northfield's Defeat of Jesse James Days Parade and Faribault's Heritage Day's Parade. It was great to see everyone get excited about River Bend! We hope to see you out on the trails and encourage you to become a member to help support this place you love by visiting [www.rbnc.org/membership](http://www.rbnc.org/membership)

**River Bend** is a new art installation created by artist Michele Gutlove and displayed in a dormitory at Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf. She used RBNC as inspiration, creating fish under a river and birds flying through the sky. We are even lucky enough to have one of her birds flying over our front desk at River Bend. Next time you stop by, check it out.



River Bend hosted a concert in the park on August 23 in partnership with Faribault Parks and Recreation. Jivin' Ivan and the Kings of Swing performed to a crowd of about 200 people. Community Cathedral Café provided complimentary root beer floats. It was a great night with beautiful weather.



## NEW NATURE CENTER MEMBER BENEFITS!

There are BRAND NEW member benefits that all current, renewing, and new members now receive! First, **all Saturday public programs are Free for members** unless there is a supply fee. We have also created exclusive access to our Naturalist Notebooks and online versions of the newsletter. Ask us for the password, or look for it in our e-Blast!

Members and donors are important to River Bend Nature Center because River Bend is not a city park and does not receive any regular government funding through taxes. We now have **sustainable memberships** available that can be auto pay as a ACH from your bank account each month. Monthly giving can be easier on your budget, and it helps River Bend operations year-round. Please become a member or encourage someone you know to join today at [www.rbnc.org](http://www.rbnc.org)

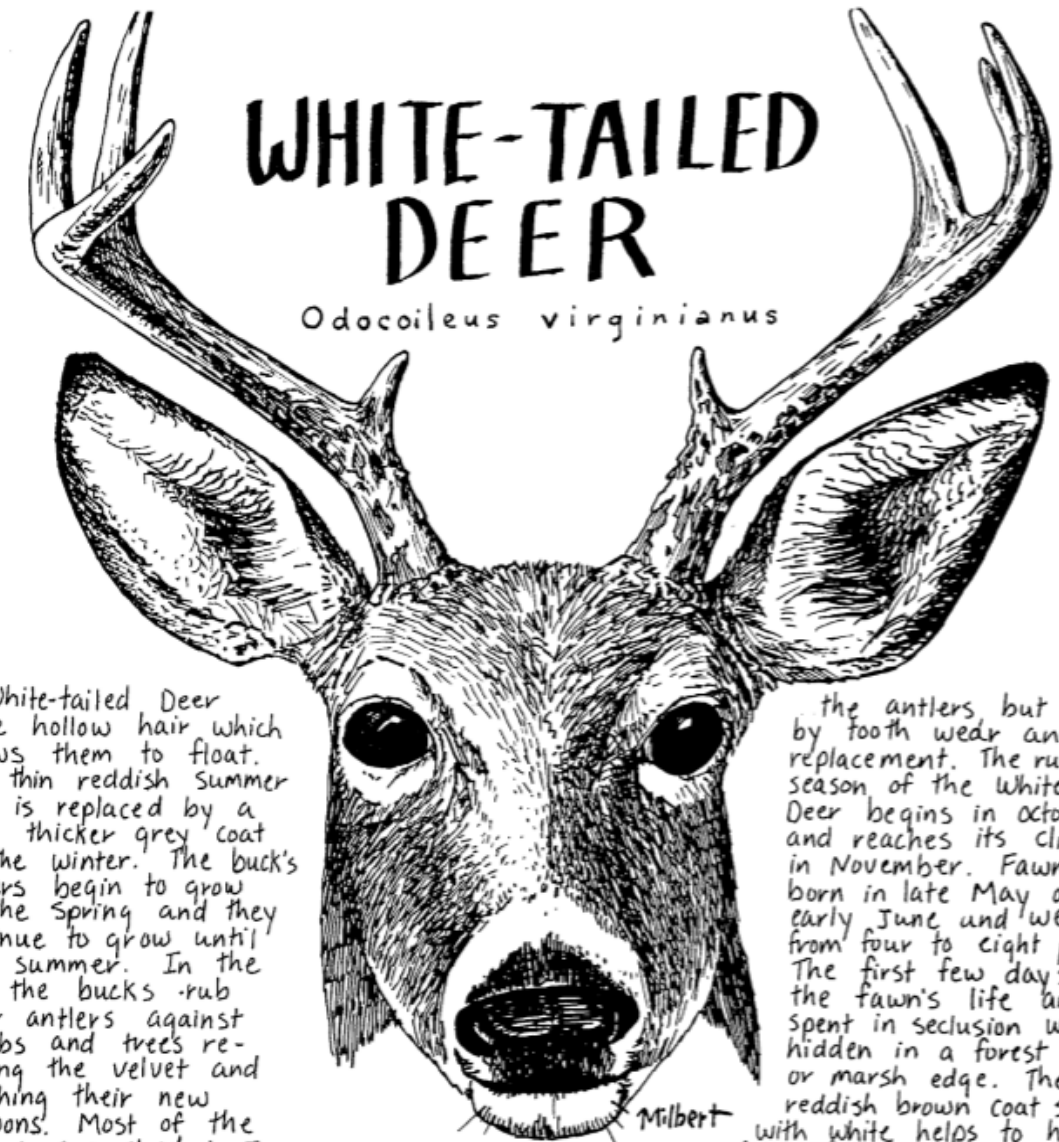
## Congratulations Tales of the Trails Winner Penny Hillemann!

Congratulations to Penny Hillemann for being the closest guess for the Tales of the Trails animal, a Green Heron. Next time Penny comes into River Bend, she will be awarded with cool River Bend Swag.

# Naturalist Notebook from The Archives

## River Bend Naturalists Notebook

Presented by: RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, Faribault, MN 55021



## WHITE-TAILED DEER

*Odocoileus virginianus*

White-tailed Deer have hollow hair which allows them to float. The thin reddish summer coat is replaced by a much thicker grey coat in the winter. The buck's antlers begin to grow in the Spring and they continue to grow until late summer. In the fall the bucks rub their antlers against shrubs and trees removing the velvet and polishing their new weapons. Most of the antlers are shed in January and February. The dropped antlers are soon eaten by rodents for their supplementary food during the winter, and for that reason are seldom found.

The age of deer isn't determined by the number of points or tines on

the antlers, but rather by tooth wear and replacement. The rutting season of the white-tailed Deer begins in October and reaches its climax in November. Fawns are born in late May or early June and weigh from four to eight pounds. The first few days of the fawn's life are spent in seclusion well hidden in a forest glade or marsh edge. The reddish brown spotted coat with white helps to hide a fawn from prying eyes. The fawn grows rapidly and at three weeks of age is nibbling on the soft new growth of shrubs. Gradually its spotted coat is shed and is replaced by one of longer, heavier and darker hair that is full grown by November.