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**River Bend**  
NATURE CENTER

The newsletter is going digital! If you would still like to receive a paper copy of the quarterly newsletter, please email [rbncinfo@rbnc.org](mailto:rbncinfo@rbnc.org) or call us at 507-332-7151

Spring 2020, Volume 42, Issue 2

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

## Nature Is Necessary

By: Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director

You know the magic trick where there's a set table and the magician pulls the tablecloth off quickly and all the items on the table remain standing? I feel like we're living that in slow motion and everything is wobbly and uncertain. So, as we wait for it to play out we must live in the moment and appreciate the people, places, and things around us that really matter. More people are heading outside to escape the 24/7 news cycles and to cope with stress. And that is a really positive reaction. Scientific studies have been piling up over the past few years to show what a benefit nature has on our wellbeing. If there was ever a time we needed the stability nature can provide, it's now.

As we practice social distancing, I hope you will bring nature close to your heart and find comfort and moments of calm through nature connection. Here are some gifts I have experienced in nature recently:

- Listening to the calls of mourning doves and redwing blackbirds.
- Spring plants (prairie smoke and strawberries) popping up and greening up in the garden.
- Sparkling stars shining in a clear night sky.
- Splashing in puddles, kicking leaves out of the way of a storm gutter in the street and watching the water pour through.
- Breathing in the sweet smell of spring.

As we work our way forward, please remember that **River Bend is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and depends upon the public and community involvement to exist.** YOU power River Bend Nature Center and your help is needed now. If you use, enjoy and value the education, conservation, and recreation opportunities that River Bend Nature Center provides, please become a member or donate today at [rbnc.org](http://rbnc.org). If you're already a member and you are able, please consider making an additional donation. If you have signed up for a canceled program or event, please consider donating that money rather than requesting a refund. Donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Thank you for your continued support!

### JOIN RBNC AS A MEMBER TODAY!

(Member Promotion Valid for New Members or Membership Upgrade Only)

Basic \$40	Advocate \$100	Patron \$250	Founder \$500	Star \$1000
 Member Level Perk • Member Sticker	 Member Level Perk • Member Sticker • \$50 Voucher (Household Only)	 Member Level Perk • Member Sticker • \$100 Voucher • \$50 of your membership to scholarship fund	 Member Level Perk • Member Sticker • \$250 Voucher • \$100 of your membership to scholarship fund	 Member Level Perk • Member Sticker • \$500 Voucher • \$200 of your membership to scholarship fund

All household memberships at any of the above levels receive the following program discounts:  
\$25 off summer camps, \$10 off adventure days, \$5 off snowshoe/ski/bike rentals

No one knows what the table setting will look like when the crisis caused by coronavirus subsides. It will be different. A couple things you can depend on: you have our very sincere thanks for your interest and involvement and because of you, RBNC has made so many people's lives better through nature connection. Thank you!

## NEW DATE SEPTEMBER 19, 2020!



# MAPLE SYRUP FUN RUN

50K, 25K, 10K, 5K, & 1 MILE

River Bend Nature Center

Faribault, MN

\*NEW DATE: September 19, 2020

register at: [rbnc.org/fun-run](http://rbnc.org/fun-run)

### Program Highlights

#### April

- Bike & Hygge
- 4 Tagels & Birds
- 13 Adventure Day: H2 Oh Yeah!
- 1 Lunch & Learn: Why We Water Birds by: Al Batt
- 16 Spring Ephemerals
- 18 Girl Scout Badge Day: Eco-Friend and Trail Adventure
- 24 Homeschool Day: Spring Phenology and Talking with the Trees
- 25 Girl Scout Badge Day: Geocacher and Outdoor Art Explorer
- 30 Adult Night Out: Splatler Paint Archery

#### May

- 2 **RESCHEDULED to SEPT 19:** Maple Syrup Fun Run & Pancake Brunch
- 8 Stewardship Day: Garlic Mustard & Dame's Rocket
- 9 Girl Scout Badge Day: Trees & EcoTrekker
- 14 Spring Ephemerals
- 15 Homeschool Day: All About Plants & Geocaching
- 15 Homeschool Day: The Water Cycle & Archery
- 16 Stewardship Day: Garlic Mustard & Dame's Rocket
- 16 Girl Scout Badge Day: Animal Habitats & Flowers
- 20 Lunch & Learn: Evolution of RBNC by: Katy Anderegg
- 30 Girl Scout Badge Day: Outdoor Adventurer & Bugs

#### June

- 13 Summer Story Adventure: Pond Life
- 25 Members ONLY Book Club: "The Big Marsh: The Story of a Lost Landscape" by Cheri Register
- 27 Summer Story Adventure: What If?

**River Bend  
Nature Center**  
1000 Rustad Rd—PO Box 186  
Faribault, MN 55021

**Board of Directors**

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**Staff**

Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director  
David Foley, Lead Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Katy Anderegg, Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Molly Olson, Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Brittany Smith, Naturalist/Program Coordinator  
Evan Pak, Minnesota GreenCorps Member

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**Become a MN Master  
Naturalist at River Bend!**

By: Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director

Join Master Naturalist instructors Breanna Wheeler, Jim Platt, Molly Olson and Katy Anderegg to watch the early summer beauty unfold at River Bend Nature Center and learn about the natural and cultural history of the Big Woods, Big Rivers biome of Minnesota.

Participants will learn about geology, plants and trees, animals, ecology, water, and human impacts on the environment as well as how to convey this knowledge to others and be a steward of the land. This is a great life-long learning and fellowship opportunity and perfect time of the year to experience the buzz of insects and chirp of birds!

All participants will work towards completing a capstone project during the course. The 40-hour course will run on Saturdays from 9 AM - 5 PM from May 30, 2020 to July 11, 2020 (no class on July 4). Daily schedules will vary and include classroom learning, on and off-site field experiences/trips, guest presenters, and a whole lot of fun. The course cost is \$295 and includes course manuals and supplies. To register, please visit <https://www.minnesotamasternaturalist.org/>

**Thank you and best wishes to Sherri Becker** as she returns to her previous job with the state. She was a great asset to the team and worked with us for the past year. She will be missed.



**RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER  
SUMMER CAMP 2020**



**WHOLE AND HALF DAY CAMPS FOR  
CHILDREN GRADES PRE-K THROUGH 7TH**

**SUMMER CAMP 2020  
Schedule at a Glance**

Week of	Camps	Grades
JUNE 15	Buggin' Out (Half Day 9am-12pm) Underwater World	Pre-K 1st-3rd
JUNE 22	State Park Adventure Sampler Settlers of River Bend	3rd-6th 5th-7th
JUNE 29	Once Upon a Time Adventure is Out There!	3rd-5th 5th-7th
JULY 13	Busy Bees (Half Day 9am-12pm) Pond Life (Half Day 1-4pm) Critter Connection	Pre-K Pre-K 1st-3rd
JULY 20	Junior Ranger Camp Ranger Camp	1st-3rd 3rd-5th
AUGUST 3	Wild About Weather Adventure is Out There!	1st-3rd 3rd-6th
AUGUST 10	River Bend Olympics Voyageur Variety Show	1st-3rd 3rd-5th
AUGUST 17	The Art of Nature Treasure Hunters	1st-3rd 3rd-5th



**Scholarships Available!**

"Pay What You Can" scholarships are available! The name says it all - pay what you can, no questions asked!  
**Visit our website at:**  
[rbnc.org/summer-camp](http://rbnc.org/summer-camp) for more information.  
*Scholarship funds available on a first come first served basis.*



**River Bend  
NATURE CENTER**

**Register today!**



[rbnc.org/summer-camp](http://rbnc.org/summer-camp)

**507-332-7151**



**1000 Rustad Road  
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**Homeschool Science Days!**

**Spring Phenology**, ages 4-14

Enjoy the spring weather as we explore the seasonal changes at River Bend. Learn about how scientists observe and record changes in nature that mark the passing of seasons. Dress to be outside. April 24, 10-11:30am, \$10/student, \$8/member.

**Talking with the Trees**, ages 4-14

As we take a walk through our "Big Woods" at River Bend, learn how to identify trees, how humans use trees, and what animals use trees as homes. Dress to be outside. April 24, 12-1:30pm, \$10/student, \$8/member.

**All About Plants**, ages 4-7

Learn about plant needs and life cycles by observing and comparing plants at different stages of their life cycle on a walk through River Bend's forest. May 15, 10-11:30am, \$10/student, \$8/member.

**The Water Cycle**, ages 8-14

Create an aquifer model to understand how human decisions affect the water cycle. Visit springs, the Straight River, and even see groundwater pollution on a walk through River Bend. May 15, 10-11:30am, \$10/student, \$8/member.

**Geocaching**, ages 4-7

Discover how geocaching works and practice using a GPS to locate geocaches at the Nature Center. May 15, 12-1:30pm, \$10/student, \$8/member.

**Archery**, ages 8-14

Learn how archery has evolved over the years. Practice your shot with an atlatl and a compound bow. Must be 8 years or older to participate. May 15, 12-1:30pm, \$10/student, \$8/member.

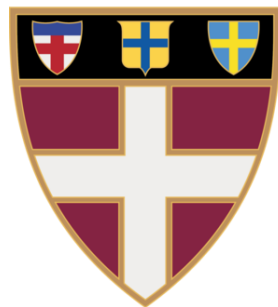
# RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER BUSINESS MEMBERS

# News & Notes

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Bauer Restoration

Cannon River STEM School

Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club

Faribault Rotary Youth Services

Mercury Minnesota

Sertoma Club of Faribault



**Advocate**

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- Anderka Construction
- Angell's Images
- Boldt Funeral Home
- Cable Connection & Supply Co., Inc.
- Cannon River Watershed Partnership
- Cedar Lake Electric
- Champion Sports

- Community Co-Op
- Country School Financial
- Donahue's Greenhouse
- Erickson Furniture
- Faribault Area Retired Educators
- Faribault Public Schools
- Faribo Sno-Go Club

- HealthFinders Collaborative
- HomeTown Federal Credit Union
- Krause Feeds & Supplies
- Metro Sales, Inc.
- Parker Kohl Funeral Home
- Quality Appliance
- Tom's Lock & Key

**New and Upgraded Membership Promotion**

If you enjoy the trails, interpretive center, programming, or just observing nature from your car on a drive down Rustad Road, consider becoming a member or upgrading your membership. Nature is important for our physical and mental wellbeing. To ensure River Bend is here for you now and in the future, please join or donate today!

**JOIN RBNC AS A MEMBER TODAY!**

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**Honor Point Memorial Bricks**

Honor your loved ones, living or deceased, at a gorgeous overlook on the Straight River. Honor Point serves as a way to recognize people's contributions that support programming and other environmental education initiatives at River Bend. Memorial contributions such as this help advance River Bend's mission of helping people discover, enjoy, understand and preserve the incredible natural world that surrounds us. Not only are your loved ones remembered by all who visit Honor Point, but their legacy is also imbedded in the smiles of all the children and families who participate in River Bend's programs. For more information call us at 507-332-7151

**Leave a Legacy at River Bend Nature Center**

There are many ways you can help your favorite nonprofit nature center that not only help today but into the future. Besides memberships and donations and memorial or tribute bricks at Honor Point, you can also write River Bend Nature Center into your will or estate plan. Please contact us for further information should you be interested in cash or noncash donations now or in the future.

**Maple Syrup Fun Run RESCHEDULED for September 19, 2020!**

The Maple Syrup Fun Run is rescheduled for Saturday, September 19, 2020. Registration is open at [rbnc.org/fun-run](http://rbnc.org/fun-run). Enjoy the scenic views as you run/walk the trails around River Bend. Afterwards, join us for a delicious pancake breakfast served at the River Bend Nature Center Interpretive Center. Each runner receives a complimentary admission to the pancake breakfast and a Fun Run reusable bag. For more information visit our website at [rbnc.org/fun-run](http://rbnc.org/fun-run)

**Team Building Programs**

Looking for a fun way to build team chemistry and productivity in your organization or company? Then book a team building program at River Bend Nature Center. These fun, hands-on programs help teams build stronger relationships, effective communication, and develop problem solving strategies. These skills all lead to better results, job satisfaction, and happy employees. River Bend staff construct a custom program based on your organizational goals. Contact us for more information.

**Apply to be an Environmental Education or Natural Resource & Land Management Intern**

Applicants are sought for environmental education internships for Summer 2020 which can be tailored to the needs of the applicant. Through the experience, interns will help plan and implement summer camp lessons, learn environmental education practices and techniques, and work with varying age groups and people of diverse cultures to understand the natural world. In addition, interns will work with volunteers and receive a good introduction into the operation and needs of a nonprofit nature center. Natural Resource and Land Management interns are sought for Summer 2020. Interns will gain hands on experience with habitat restoration practices and techniques. They will also gain experience with trail management. Applications considered on a rolling basis [www.rbnc.org](http://www.rbnc.org)

**Donation Requests**

Can you help by providing:

- ◆ Bird seed
- ◆ Heavy-duty children's winter gloves
- ◆ S'mores makings
- ◆ Scholarship Fund Donations

# Natural Resource Updates

By: Brittany Smith, Naturalist/ Program Coordinator

As you take your stroll along the trails at River Bend Nature Center you will most likely notice a few major changes since the fall. Areas that were dense with buckthorn are now opened up. You will notice this spring and into the summer a vast green layer in those areas starting to flourish. Yes, all those small green saplings coming up are buckthorn and yes, this is what is supposed to happen. Buckthorn seeds are viable in the soil for a very long time. What you are seeing is what happens when all the larger trees that were once shading the ground are removed and the sun is able to reach the ground. The seeds that have been lying dormant for so long now have all the resources they need to start growing.

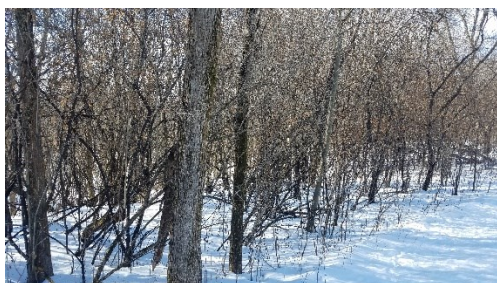
The next step for this project is to use herbicide and foliar treat those saplings in the fall. The fall time is the perfect time for this kind of treatment; the native plant species have gone dormant and the buckthorn will start pulling nutrients and the herbicide down to the roots preparing for winter. The herbicide used is selective to species being treated. This project is in the very beginning stages and will need buckthorn management for a minimum of 10 years.

Sights or sounds you may encounter associated with the large-scale buckthorn project are a skid steer with a grinding head, chainsaws, and herbicide spraying. If you hear or see the skid steer please stay back. This machine will throw debris a long distance and it is for your safety and the safety of the operator to stay back. Obey signs for trails closed, there is a reason.

The way in which non-native invasive species are managed are based on many things. Not all management techniques are appropriate for every site. Goat are a tool for buckthorn control but are not part of the management plan for these areas at River Bend.

There is a lot of natural resource work happening at River Bend and there will be for years to come. Help is always needed and greatly appreciated. If you are interested in natural resource work or have a group that is wanting to do a service project don't hesitate to reach out.

*Before Buckthorn Removal*



# Stewardship Days

By: Brittany Smith, Naturalist/ Program Coordinator

Stewardship Days are days where volunteers are welcome to come help on natural resource related projects throughout the nature center. They will run through the end of the summer, every-other week. These events are free, however, we ask that people pre-register online at least 48 hours in advance so staff can plan accordingly. Groups are encouraged!

## **Garlic Mustard & Dame's Rocket**

Friday, May 8, (4-7pm)

Saturday, May 16 (12-3pm)

Help River Bend remove invasive garlic mustard and dame's rocket from the woodland floor and help Minnesota's native plants flourish.

## **Buckthorn & Bratwurst**

Tuesday, June 16 (5-7pm)

Thursday, June 18 (5-7pm)

The primary focus will be working on reducing the amount of buckthorn invading the woods at River Bend. Activities include pulling, cutting, and piling buckthorn. Wear pants, bring gloves, safety glasses, and a water bottle. Recommended age group: 8 years and older. *Brats/Hotdogs and chips will be provided to those who are pre-registered.*

## **Persnickety Parsnip**

Tuesday June 30 (5-7pm)

Thursday, July 2 (5:00pm-7:00pm)

Come learn about wild parsnip and the problems it poses to Minnesota's native habitats and the safety of those who spend time in nature. Help pull and clip the seed heads.

**\*\*WARNING: wild parsnip sap can cause blisters if sap is present on the skin and exposed to sun light. Must wear pants, closed toed shoes, long sleeve shirt, and gloves\*\***

Recommended age group: 16 years and older

*After Buckthorn Removal*



# Naturalist Notebook

By: Katy Anderegg, Naturalist/Program Coordinator

Illustration by: Moe Brand

## **Dutchman's Breeches** *Dicentra cucullaria*

Family: Papaveraceae

Order: Ranunculales



Meteorological Spring starts March 1st, but true spring or the spring equinox is March 19th this year. Either way, it is welcomed and winter can say goodbye. Bring on the warmer, sunny days and the beauty that brings joy as we look forward to the next few months of warmer weather. Signs of spring start appearing more frequently as we move through March. Robins are arriving, birds are singing their spring songs, the snow is melting, and the first plants of the season begin to grow.

There are many spring ephemerals, short-lived perennials, that carpet the forest floor beginning to bloom in March. Dutchman's Breeches is a pretty plant related to the bleeding-heart so commonly found in greenhouses. The common name of these plants describes the shape of its flower. Dutchman's Breeches are pantaloons or upside-down pants. This native woodland plant grows about 10 inches tall, has fern-like leaves and a bear stalk with a row of white flowers. The bloom time is April-May, going dormant during the summer months. In the fall, the plant develops small buds underground ready to bloom the following spring.

Native bumble bees are the main pollinator of Dutchman's Breeches which is important to the success of not only the plant, but to the population of native bumbles. The bumble bee proboscis is long enough to reach the nectar inside the flower, the food they require to survive. As they are feeding, pollen is transferred from flower to flower, eventually leading to the development of new seeds. The seeds are carried away by ants to their underground nests where they consume the fleshy parts, called elaisomes. After the elaisomes are consumed, the ants discard the seeds, which are left to grow into new plants.

Lookers beware, come and admire this spring ephemeral here at River Bend Nature Center and take some pictures, but touching this plant can cause skin irritation and is toxic to animals. We hope to see you out here on the trails this spring. Stop in and get a brochure of spring ephemerals found here at the nature center and enjoy your journey of scouting out these spring beauties.