



River Bend
NATURE CENTER

PO Box 186
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Faribault, MN
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www.rbnc.org

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River Bend
NATURE CENTER

Spring 2021, Volume 43, Issue 3
July, August, September

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

Director's Desk: How Are You Doing?

By: Breanna Wheeler

As we emerge from the distance of the past year and reunite with family, friends, and acquaintances, I've noticed a question people ask (and I ask of others): "How are you doing/how have you been?" This makes my mind skitter through the ups and downs that have occurred since I last saw the person and imagine their mind is doing the same thing in reaction to my question.

When it comes to the "how are you doing" question about RBNC, my mind does the same thing. Where do I start? I'm going to try and summarize what you might be wondering about here. If you are looking for more, join us at the RBNC Annual Meeting on Thursday, July 22 at 6:30 PM.

RBNC has held steady through the pandemic. How?

- Your/the community's generosity with increased memberships and donations – THANK YOU
- When staff members voluntarily resigned, we juggled duties among existing staff and did not rehire due to continuing uncertainties. In January 2020, RBNC employed 6 full-time employees. Today, RBNC employs 4.6 full-time employees.
- From April 2020 – April 2021, all staff work hours/salaries were reduced by 20%. As we return to more programs to deliver, we are back to full-time/pay. THANK YOU

What are some of the major activities of the past year?

- Adapting programs. All but one of the schools we had contracts with renewed during the 2020-2021 school year. Transformed curriculum for virtual learning and developed and delivered online activities. We did small group and timed activities such as Moonlight Snowshoe, Adult Night Out, and summer camps.
- Piloted a new Field Biology Internship course co-taught by Faribault High School and RBNC.
- Applied for COVID related relief grants and increased proposals for grants from foundations
- Invasive species removal, tree planting, maple syringing

What changes might I notice?

- The Interpretive Center will be open to the public on Fridays from 10-4 PM and some intermittent Saturdays. The building will be open other times for prescheduled programs or by appointment. At this time, because the majority of our participants are under age 12, we require masks for indoor activities. Trails remain open 6 AM – 10 PM every day.
- We will have a new entrance sign and the round sign carved by Ivan Whillock will be moved into the IC as part of a new history exhibit. We will be redesigning the exhibits at the IC to reflect what makes RBNC unique and use the space we have wisely.

How can I help?

- Be an advocate and ambassador of RBNC – tell people about us, that we are a 501c3 nonprofit and depend on the community for operation. Become a member, donate, volunteer, book an education/recreation program!
- Be a volunteer greeter at the Interpretive Centers on Fridays 10 AM – 4 PM, also intermittent Saturdays.
- Share your passion for nature with school students as a Volunteer Naturalist.
- Bring your family or work/organization group to volunteer with an outdoor project.

Thanks for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

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

Upcoming Programs

JULY 22– Annual Meeting

AUGUST 16-20– Ramble Week

River Bend NATURE CENTER
RAMBLE
A week to renew, restore, & raise funds for River Bend Nature Center
August 16-20, 2021
Tickets at rbnc.org/ramble
1000 Rustad Road, Faribault MN 55021
507-332-7151
NATURALIST TOURS, CAMPFIRE TRIVIA, MUSIC ON THE PRAIRIE, WINE/BEER RAFFLE, AUCTION & DINNER

River Bend NATURE CENTER
BATS, BONES & BONFIRES
S'MORES, GAMES, EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, & MORE!
COSTUMES OPTIONAL
OCTOBER 30, 2021
2PM-6PM
RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER
1000 RUSTAD RD. FARIBAULT, MN
CAPACITY MAY BE LIMITED DUE TO COVID GUIDELINES REGISTER AT WWW.RBNC.ORG/BBB

River Bend Nature Center

1000 Rustad Rd—PO Box 186
Faribault, MN 55021

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Katy Anderegg, *Naturalist/Administrative Coordinator*
Molly Olson, *Naturalist/Marketing Coordinator*
Kevin Mattson, *Naturalist*

Inside this Issue

Director's Desk	1
Goodbye David	2
Welcome Kevin	2
News & Notes	3
Natural Resource Updates	4
Naturalist Notebook	5
Business Members	6
Ramble	7

Farewell David

David was a Naturalist at River Bend for the past year and a half, coordinating programs, camps, and helping transition to virtual programs. Thank you David for your work at River Bend, and good luck in your future endeavors.



Welcome Kevin

Kevin is River Bend's newest Naturalist. Kevin grew up in Dayton, Minnesota spending time in the woods and at local nature centers learning about wildlife. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Ecology from Saint Cloud State University. Kevin has previously worked for Three Rivers Park District and the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. His favorite part about his work is sharing nature with others and creating positive experiences in the outdoors. In his free time, he enjoys hiking with his fiancée and dog, cooking, and geeking out about cars.



A RAMBLE TO RENEW & RESTORE RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER

AUGUST 16-20, 2021

Your Ticket Includes:

Friday, 8/20, Main Event at The Inn at Shattuck

5:30 pm Social Time

6:15 pm Dinner

7:15 pm Program & Auction

8:15pm Wall of Wine/Beer Raffle

Distance options

Pickup your meal to-go

Join program online starting at 7:15 pm

PLUS Access to the following:

Monday & Tuesday, 8/16 & 8/17

9am-12pm, 4pm-8pm

An hour Walk/Ride & Learn with a Naturalist at RBNC, select your time

Wednesday, 8/18, 7pm-9pm

Campfire Trivia at RBNC

Thursday, 8/19, 6pm

Music on the Prairie:

Jivin' Ivan and the Kings of Swing at RBNC



Online Auction starts Monday, 8/16 @
<https://rbnc.cbo.io>

Please RSVP with the enclosed card or online at
rbnc.org/ramble by August 6, 2021.

Watch the website for updates.

Tickets are non-refundable.

Raffle tickets are now for sale, there are four chances to win— 2 prizes of 20 packages of beer and 2 prizes of 20 bottles of wine. \$10/ticket, cash or check only. Call or stop by the interpretive center to purchase.

There is an online silent auction open for the whole week. There are great prizes, so bid early and often!

Thank You Ramble Sponsors:

Platinum

The Putrah Family Foundation

Gold

Dr. Karen and Simon Zeller



Silver



Allina Health



Jason D. Reher
Financial Advisor

Bill & Wendy Wustenberg Family



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STAR



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PATRON



- Erickson Furniture
- Parker Kohl Funeral Home
- Valentyn Builders LLC

Become a Business Member today at rbnc.org/membership

- For more information on:
- How to sponsor 2021 events (Fun Run, Camps, Ramble, or Bats Bones & Bonfire)
 - Group volunteering
 - Team building programs
 - How to match employee donations
 - How to buy memberships for your employees

Contact us at rbncinfo@rbnc.org or call 507-332-7151

THANK YOU!

News & Notes

Welcome Summer Interns Lillian and Aga

Welcome to our summer Environmental Education Interns, Aga (left) and Lillian (right). Lillian is an Environmental Studies Major at St. Olaf College. Her favorite Minnesota native flower is bloodroot and her favorite animal is the little brown bat. She is excited to be working our summer camps and meeting lots of folks that visit RBNC! Aga studied biology and education and she volunteers with a number of habitat restoration and conservation organizations. She finds joy in observing natural cycles and changes in nature while recreating outdoors. If you see them around make sure to stop and say hello!



Welcome New Board Member Laura Isenor

Laura lives in Wanamingo, MN, with her husband and three kids. She spends her free time chasing them around and teaching them science experiments and making crafts. Laura and her oldest, Jack, are volunteer Site Supervisors for a nearby Scientific and Natural Area for the DNR. They also all enjoy taking walks and participating in activities at the River Bend Nature Center. Laura is a graduate from the College of St. Catherine and Hamline University School of Law. She works as an Assistant County Attorney with Steele County.



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 work with you to construct a custom program based on your organizational goals. Contact us for more information.

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, 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.

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! Visit rbnc.org/membership for more information and to join!

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 lives on in the experiences of all the children and families who participate in River Bend's programs. For more information email rbncinfo@rbnc.org or call 507-332-7151

Natural Resource Highlights

By: Brittany Smith

Faribault High School Field Biology Internship at River Bend Nature Center-Wrap Up

This past year has been anything but normal. However, it was a great year to immerse one's self in nature and that is what some seniors from Faribault High School did. They took a chance on a new program opportunity, a partnership, between Faribault High School Biology Department and River Bend Nature Center. With the leadership of Peter Jacobson, FHS Field Biology Instructor, and myself, the students gained experiences such as plant and animal identification, natural resource management techniques, collecting and analyzing data, and conducting individual field biology projects. The students spent their final day of class presenting their projects to family and staff.



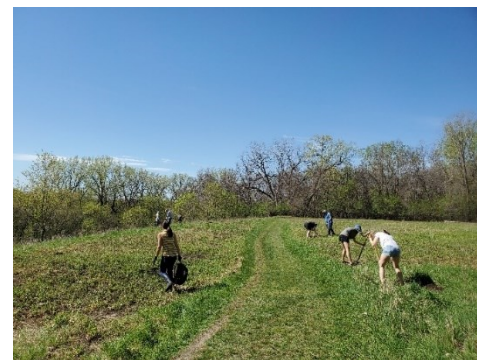
Arbor Day Tree Planting-A True Community Forest

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Arbor Day Tree Planting a success this year. Thank you to all the volunteers that came out on that very warm Saturday to start the process of planting over 600 trees! Thank you, Faribault Parks and Rec Department for providing the tree tubes and stakes. Thank you, Faribault Fire Department for providing all the water needed to get the trees off to a good start. Thank you, MN Department of Corrections for granting access to move and store equipment and water needed to the planting site. Thank you, MN Department of Natural Resources Forestry, for donating tree seedlings for Faribault High School Field Biology Internship students to plant. And thank you to Dave Lee, who not only helped to plant the trees, but came back to water them throughout the following month. This project wouldn't have happened without the support of the Faribault Community!



2021 Deer Management Archery Hunt

River Bend will be hosting another archery-only special hunt in October. The purpose of the hunt is to reduce the deer herd to reduce pressure on other native species and help limit the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Any information regarding the hunt and how to apply can be found on our website <https://rbnc.org/deerhunt> starting mid-July.



Land and Trail Volunteer Opportunities

Are you interested in helping with natural resources or trail work at River Bend Nature Center but the pre-scheduled opportunities don't work with your schedule? No worries, we would be more than happy to provide information and training on things River Bend could use your help on and can do on your own time, from picking up trash to removing invasive plants. Volunteers are needed for seasonal items like ski trail grooming, making maple syrup, and mowing. Please email smith@rbnc.org for more information.

Naturalist Notebook

By: Katy Anderegg

The Bumble Bee has a busy life humming and buzzing from flower to flower. In the spring a lone female, or Queen Bee, emerges from its nest to start foraging for pollen and nectar. She has a lot to accomplish. A queen bumble bee is impregnated with eggs from the fall. She alone will start a new colony of bees, building a nest, laying eggs, and foraging for food until the first generation of worker bees are born and take over the work of collecting food and tending to the nest.



Photo of *Bombus affinis*, Queen on thistle by Katy Anderegg

Worker bees are all female and are born in the spring and early summer. Males are called drones and are born in the latter part of summer along with a new generation of queen bees. The new queen bees fly far away from the colony in search of a mate before they hibernate for the winter. Only the queen survives winter to begin a new colony in the spring. Bumble bees can live underground or above ground in nest boxes, log piles, or grasses.

Twenty-three Bumble Bee species live in Minnesota out of the known 45 species in North America. Populations of certain species are decreasing due to habitat loss, climate change, pesticides, and pathogens. *Bombus affinis*, also known as the Rusty Patch Bumble Bee, was the first bumble to be put on the US Fish and Wildlife Services endangered species list. Minnesota is one of the few places you can still find *B. affinis*. A queen *B. affinis* does not display the rusty patch on the abdomen like the female workers or males do. Instead, she has solid yellow hair on the first two segments of the abdomen, followed by black hair on the remaining portion of the abdomen. Other features are a short, round head, and short hair that looks velvety.

B. affinis can be found at River Bend Nature Center, but should never be handled or disturbed due to its protective status. In 2019, the rusty patched bumble bee became the state bee of Minnesota. Please help these fuzzy little pollinators by planting pollinator-friendly plants in your yard. Every little bit helps. Here are some varieties *B. affinis* is attracted to Coneflower, Prairie Clover, Bee Balm, Milkweed, and Blazing-star to name a few. For more information go to: <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/insects/rpbb/plants.html>