



## Upcoming Nature Programs



### APRIL

- April 6 - Bagels and Birds, Sweet Reads Book Club
- April 8 - Little Sprouts: Spiders
- April 8 - Homeschool: Water Cycle
- April 17 - Lunch & Learn: Dakota County's New Bison Herd
- April 20 - Earth Day Celebration
- April 22 - Little Sprouts: Earth Day Celebration!

### MAY

- May 4 - Maple Syrup Fun Run & Pancake Breakfast
- May 6 - Little Sprouts: Baby Birds, Bunnies & More
- May 13 - Little Sprouts: Shapes, Colors & Textures
- May 13 - Homeschool: Aquatic Ecosystems
- May 15 - Lunch & Learn: Wildflowers
- May 18 - Woodland Flowers Walk
- May 20 - Little Sprouts: Mud & Worms

### SAVE THE DATE

#### MAY 4

Maple Syrup Fun Run & Pancake Breakfast

#### JULY 25

Annual Meeting & Board Member Election

#### AUGUST 10

Ramble Fundraiser

### JUNE

Summer Camps all Month!

June 1 - National River's Month Celebration

June 1 - Sweet Reads Book Club

June 3 - Little Sprouts: What's in the Water?

June 8 - Big Woods Biome Hike

June 19 - Lunch & Learn: Recycling & Compost

June 22 - Storytime & Family Painting



## Volunteer for an event

Looking to volunteer, give back or have a lot of fun? River Bend Nature Center has many opportunities throughout the year for you to get involved!

**Check out volunteer opportunities at [www.rbnc.org/volunteer](http://www.rbnc.org/volunteer).**

## Summer Employment Opportunities

River Bend has a variety of ways to join our team this summer. We are offering paid, residential environmental education internships this summer for college students and young adults looking to gain valuable experience in the field through River Bend.

**For more information go to [www.rbnc.org/employment-opportunities](http://www.rbnc.org/employment-opportunities).**

# River Bend Nature Center

1000 Rustad Rd - PO Box 186  
Faribault, MN 55021

**Trail Hours:** 6am - 10pm

**Building Hours:** Fridays 10am - 4pm  
1st and 3rd Saturdays 10am - 2pm

## Board of Directors

Dustin Dienst, *President*  
Patrick Mader, *Vice-President*  
Karen Zeller, *Treasurer*  
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## Staff

*Executive Director*  
Brad Bourn  
*Associate Directors*  
Brittany Smith, Environmental Stewardship  
Molly Dulka, Programs & Engagement  
Katy Anderegg, Administration  
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Matt Johnson & Morgan Heier  
*Naturalists*  
Kate Ford, Leah Inman  
*Climate Impact Corps Members*  
Julia Gates, Dan Heinen, Caitlin Juvland,  
Randall McMeekin, Dennis Wilcox

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# SUMMER CAMP

## ADVENTURES WAITING TO HAPPEN...

### FULL DAY CAMPS FOR CHILDREN GRADES K-9

### Summer Camps

9:00-4:00pm . \$55 (\$30 for members)

Camps are open to children entering the listed grades in fall 2024

### Meadowlarks

(Going into Gr.K-2)

June 10-11 Dinosaurs  
June 12-13 Creepy Crawlies  
July 1-2 Nature Engineers  
July 8-9 Animal Ambassadors  
July 10-11 Explorers  
July 15-16 Nature Art  
July 17-18 Scales & Tails  
July 29-30 Nature Detectives

### Hérons

(Going into Gr. 3-5)

June 17-18 Survival Skills  
June 19-20 Archery & Atlatls  
July 1-2 Nature Engineers  
July 15-16 Nature Art  
July 17-18 Scales & Tails  
July 31-Aug 1 Guardians



### Adventure Is Out There: Going into Gr. 3-5 & 6-9

8:30-4:00pm . \$75 (\$50 for members)

Includes offsite fees & travel

Going into Grades 3-5 June 24-25 Wild About Animals  
June 26-27 Outdoor Sports

Going into Grades 6-9 July 22-23 Outdoor Sports  
July 24-25 Outdoor Sports



# Adventure is

# OUT THERE!

Go to [rbnc.org/summer-camp](https://rbnc.org/summer-camp)  
or scan the QR code to register





River Bend  
NATURE CENTER

Chip timing by  
Anderson Race  
Management  
Register Here

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



## Event Sponsors



## Race Day Timeline

### 25K & 50K

- Check In 6:00 am - 6:45 am
- Race Starts at 7:00 am

### 10K, 5K, One Mile

- Check-in 7:30 am - 8:15 am
- 5K & 10K Starts at 8:30 am
- One mile walk/run starts at 8:40 am - Not chip timed

### Pancake Brunch

- Starts at 9:00 am for runners & their spectators, 10:00 am for public

### Off-Site Event Parking

Located at 100 State Ave, Faribault, MN 55021

25K & 50K can park at the nature center, all other participants and spectators please park at Allina.

Get Printable Parking Information by visiting our website.

## Director's Desk

I have big spring news!

Just a few weeks ago, a bi-partisan coalition of legislators from across Minnesota introduced bills in the Minnesota House and Senate to provide River Bend Nature Center \$500,000 in pre-design and design work for rehabilitation and expansion of our interpretive center and infrastructure at River Bend.

This marks the beginning of a potential new era for River Bend. While our interpretive center has been an amazing community asset for nearly three decades, increased demand over the last several years is starting to strain our capacity. Today over 100,000 visitors from across the city, state, and nation come to River Bend every year and our environmental education programs serve over 10,000 youth and adult environmental learners. To put it simply - our interpretive center wasn't designed to meet the diversity and level of use we see today.

If approved, this investment from the legislature will help us best determine how to reinvest in our interpretive center and grounds to blossom into a truly world-class environmental learning center that can help Faribault cultivate the nation's best environmental stewards for the next 45 years.

I also hope that you'll contribute to our Spring Fundraising campaign to help send the Legislature a strong message that River Bend has the ability to match funds contributed by the state.

We'll see you outside

Brad Bourn  
Executive director



# Business Members

## Star Members

Faribault Rotary Youth Services, Inc.



## Wellness Members



## Founder Members

Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club



## Patron Members

Faribault Area Retired Educators . Mercury Minnesota  
Schroder Concessions . Sertoma Club of Faribault



## Advocate Members

Anderka Construction . Community Co-op . Donahue's Greenhouse . Erickson's Furniture  
Faribault Animal Center . Faribault Rental Equipment, Inc. . Faribault Transportation Co.  
Faribo Sno-Go Club . Frandsen Bank & Trust . Glenn's Service & Towing . HomeTown Credit Union  
Mill Town Cycles . Quality Appliance . Tom's Lock & Key



**Thank you business members for your support!**

## Enroll in River Bend's Business Wellness Membership

River Bend Nature Center's wellness program can be an essential part of helping your employees live a healthy life. When you join our wellness program today, your employees will receive membership perks and more!  
Contact Brad Bourn (bourn@rbnc.org) or Katy Anderegg (anderegg@rbnc.org) to discuss perks and enrollment.

	Bluebird	Heron	Owl
Small Employer (0-10 employees)	\$500	\$1000	\$2000
Medium Employer (11-49 employees)	\$1500	\$2500	\$3500
Large Employer (50-99 employees)	\$3000	\$4000	\$5000
Regional Employer (100+ employees or franchises, etc.)	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits

# Conservation Corner

**Delia Denis, MN GreenCorps Member serving in Rice County Environmental Services**

## Jump into Spring with Composting

Springtime is just around the corner, and with that comes spring cleaning and preparing for the great weather! Spring is a great time to start new things as we go into the summer, and composting is becoming a popular thing to try!

According to the EPA, composting began gaining traction in the 1990s, with compost being where about 2.2% of the waste had gone and it has doubled in size since then. Composting is a great way to divert waste from landfills that are filling up. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), about 27% of what is put into landfills in Minnesota is compostable. Reducing this compostable material in landfills can reduce overall methane emissions in the U.S. by 17%. Methane is a greenhouse gas 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, with a large impact in increasing climate change. The more people that try composting, the bigger difference we can make!

Composting is a great way to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions and landfill waste, but you can also get well-fertilized soil out of it! Starting a compost is great for those who garden and even for those who don't. There are many resources on how to start composting at home, but there are a few things that all composts need.

A backyard compost needs some access to air. It can't be sealed in. Because composting is an aerobic process there should be more than just food in a compost.

Most food added to composts is carbon-based, and composts need a 1:3 ratio of nitrogen-rich materials and carbon-rich materials. Nitrogen-rich materials like leftover produce and grass clippings are most common. Carbon-rich materials can come from dead leaves, sticks, and shredded paper. Also, it's suggested to have a cover on your compost to prevent animals from getting into your compost.

When looking for a compost bin, consider looking for one with less plastic, if any at all, so that the compost bin is sustainable. Bins made out of natural materials like metal or wood are better. However, there are many different types of compost bins, and the act of composting itself is enough.

If backyard composting isn't an option for you, consider subscribing to a composting service! Depending on where you live, there may or may not be options, but it's a great way to still have your compost be diverted from the landfill without having to be in charge of tending to a compost.

There are some really great resources for composting, and a great place to start if you live in Rice County is the Rice County food waste page. I'd consider beginning here: [www.ricecountymn.gov/657/food-waste](http://www.ricecountymn.gov/657/food-waste) . If you have any questions, please reach out to me at [Delia.Denis@RiceCountyMN.Gov](mailto:Delia.Denis@RiceCountyMN.Gov) .

Consider starting to compost today!

## New Program Partnership

**River Bend Bounty with Judy Saye-Willis, Paradise Center for the Arts**

With the sun, prairie, and woodlands of River Bend Nature Center you can bring new life to your creative work.

If you are a knitter, quilter, painter, artist wannabe, and/or naturalist join us to identify colors you can extract from plants, trees & minerals using it to dye natural fibers during the August Course at River Bend Nature Center (RBNC). (For Ages 55+) Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning August 1 from 9AM-11AM with a concluding event August 29th. Time tbd for the final event. Tuition: Member: \$120, Non-Member: \$144. (Scholarships available.) If you are a member at RBNC, contact the Paradise to receive the membership tuition price! Please register through the Paradise Center for the Arts to attend this program.



*Molly Dulka, Associate Director of Programs & Engagement*

## Telling the Stories of the Land

River Bend is excited to announce that we are embarking on a multi year certified interpretive plan and implementation project to tell the history of the land that is now River Bend Nature Center. From the geological formation of the lands to indigenous people and later European settlers in the region, including its more than a century of history as the Faribault Regional Center (Minnesota's first and largest institution for people with developmental disabilities), we seek to tell the complicated story of River Bend's lands in an inclusive and accessible way through research, improved wayfinding, and historical displays.



River Bend serves the community of Faribault and surrounding communities within a 50-mile radius. Visitors are able to enjoy year-round access with no entrance fees to 743 acres of forests, prairies, wetlands, and the Straight River. Besides participating with professional naturalist-led programs, visitors also have access to ten miles of multipurpose trails that are available for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing. We hope that this project offers visitors another way to engage with nature, through understanding the history of the land that is now River Bend and pay homage to those who used the land before.

River Bend has many partners in this project, including Rice County Historical Society, Minnesota Historical Society, and Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges, where students are already diligently

working on projects that will be woven into the interpretive plan. Initial funding for this project is provided by Minnesota Historical Society and the Department of Human Services, Aging Friendly Initiative.



One way River Bend has already taken steps to be more inclusive and accessible to all, is through posting trail descriptions on our website for visitors to know ahead of time the trail surface type and gradient so they can take trails that fit their needs. River Bend also recently purchased a track chair for people to use free of charge to explore the trails. The chair can go on any terrain and even in snow! It is the same brand and model that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources uses at state parks. Reservations for the chair are open now, for use on April 1st and beyond. Happy trails!

**Visit our website [www.rbnc.org/accessibility](http://www.rbnc.org/accessibility) to reserve your spot today!**



Image Source: <https://actiontrackchair.com/models/action-trackchair-st/>

# Naturalist Notebook

*Matt Johnson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator*

## A Bird's Journey in a Changing World

In many ways, birds act as nature's most obvious timekeepers. It seems as though we often announce the arrival of our seasons by the appearance of our migratory birds. There is no better time of year to witness this than spring. However, it's clear that the weather is becoming more unpredictable in the face of climate change. A typical season seems to be the exception, not the rule. It can be hard to imagine that undertaking a long journey with unpredictable weather could be beneficial to survival in this day and age. So how are birds adapting?

An interesting migration behavior that has been recognized for some time is that male birds tend to arrive earlier than females. This is believed to be due to the fact that male birds want to establish territories, allowing themselves a better chance at breeding. However, recent studies seem to indicate that many male birds are beginning their migrations even earlier, widening this gap. It is believed that this earlier migration may allow these birds to be more aware of changing weather patterns in their breeding range, instead of simply flying into the unexpected.

Another interesting development starting to be studied involves physical changes in migratory birds. Most birds tend to undergo some physiological changes during the process of migration. For example, we know that many birds' organs will both increase or decrease in size during migration, in order to handle such a demanding journey. But interestingly, we are starting to see evidence of even more changes. There is some recent research that concludes that some birds are decreasing in mass, while growing longer wings. Why would this be happening? It is recognized in evolutionary biology that smaller animals are able to shed heat more efficiently, so we can assume that as the earth's climate warms, smaller birds would be able to survive warmer conditions more easily. Similarly, longer wings would likely assist in flight if migrations become longer. However, it is

important to note that these changes aren't being observed universally. More importantly, there are numerous factors that may be contributing to these changes and there is still much to be learned about how this relates to migration in an ever changing world.

Something to remember about migration, is that it is ever-evolving. While it's understood why many birds migrate, for reasons such as food, water and habitat; it is less clear how these migrations have changed throughout history. In most cases, it is assumed that migrations started more gradually and have since expanded to longer lengths. Yet, some birds only migrate a short distance, while others travel thousands of miles. There are even occasional disruptions in typical patterns. A group of birds may be knocked off course and end up somewhere new, or they may decide to stick around a certain area and forgo migration altogether. These patterns, like anything in nature, revolve around survival and will continue to change over time.

The ability to travel long distances is a significant evolutionary adaptation that allows birds to survive a wide range of environments. Large scale migrations allow birds to actively seek out what they need in order to survive. As environmental factors change, so must migrations. This fascinating natural phenomenon is giving us real time insight into the earth's changing climate.





# River Bend NATURE CENTER

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507.332.7151  
www.rbnc.org

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**Return Service Requested**



**Join our community of  
donors to keep nature  
in your backyard,  
donate now.**

*Ramble*



*Save  
The Date!*

## **Building Community through Nature** *Fundraiser*

**August 10, 2024 | 4:30 pm**

The Inn at Shattuck  
1000 Shumway Ave  
Faribault, MN 55021

RSVP or donate  
by August 2nd  
[www.rbnc.org/ramble](http://www.rbnc.org/ramble)

**About Us**

Providing nature and  
nature based educational  
opportunities to people of  
all ages and abilities.

**Our Mission**

Inspiring curiosity, respect,  
and care for nature.

