

»» NEWSLETTER ««

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER

"Some old-fashioned things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat." — Laura Ingalls Wilder



THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Programs	2
Outdoor Career Training	3
Woodpeckers	4
Spring Has Sprung	5
Conservation Corner	6
Business Members	7
RBNC Info / Ramble	8

*River Bend Nature Center
inspires curiosity, respect,
and care for nature.*

QUARTERLY TOP NEWS



»» CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE TODAY

Register today and get a FREE t-shirt & pancake breakfast while supporting the nature center. You'll also receive a coupon for 20% off \$75 or more at Burkhartzmeyer Shoes!

Register at www.rbnc.org/fun-run

START YOUR NEW CAREER PATH ««

Enroll now in our 12 week paid career training program, earning \$18/hour. Participation in the program is contingent on meeting eligibility requirements established by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. See Page 3 for more details.

Apply Now at www.rbnc.org/outdoordiversitypaths

SUMMER OUTDOOR CAREER TRAININGS

Begins Monday, June 23



Scan QR
Code
for
details &
to register



Scan QR Code for
summer camp details
& to register



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

»»» APRIL

Apr 5, 10-11 am	Bagels & Birds
Apr 5, 11-12 pm	Story Time: April Showers & May Flowers
Apr 5, 2-3 pm	Sweet Reads Book Club
Apr 7, 9:30-11 am	Little Sprouts: Animal Homes
Apr 12, 10-12 pm	Stewardship Day: Invasive Species
Apr 14, 9:30-11 am	Little Sprouts: Weather
Apr 14, 1-3 pm	Homeschool: Reptiles & Amphibians
Apr 16, 12-2 pm	Lunch & Learn: Geological Society of MN
Apr 19, 12-2 pm	Little Sprouts: Play Time Weather!
Apr 19, 8:30-4 pm	FREE Public Chainsaw Training, Level 1
Apr 26, 9-2 pm	Earth Day: Stewardship, Family Painting
Apr 28, 9:30-11 am	Little Sprouts: Baby Animals

»»» MAY

May 3, 6-3 pm	Maple Syrup Fun Run
May 10, 10-12 pm	Stewardship Day: Invasive Species
May 12, 9:30-11 am	Little Sprouts: Worms and Mud
May 12, 1-3 pm	Homeschool: Water Cycle/Spring Ephemerals
May 17, 10-1:30 pm	Scout Badge Day: Birds
May 19, 9:30-11 am	Little Sprouts: What's in the water?
May 21, 12-2 pm	Lunch & Learn: Big Woods State Park
May 31, 10-11:30 am	Stewardship Day: Invasive Species
May 31, 12:30-2 pm	Family Painting: Spring Flowers

»»» JUNE

June 7, 10-11 am	Bagels & Birds
June 7, 11-12 pm	Story Time: Rivers!
June 7, 2-3 pm	Sweet Reads Book Club: Entangled Life
June 14, 10-12 pm	Stewardship Day: Native Plants
June 21, 12:30-2 pm	Family Painting: Rivers
June 28, 10-12 pm	Stewardship Day: Native Plants

Summer Camps June & July 9-4 pm/AIOT 8:30-4 pm Mon/Tue, Wed/Thur

June 9 & 10	Forts & Fires
June 11 & 12	Animal Ambassadors
June 16 & 17	Nature Art
June 18 & 19	Nature Engineers
June 23 & 24	AIOT Outdoor Sports
June 25 & 26	AIOT Spots, Stripes & Scales
June 30 & July 1	Explorers
July 7 & 8	Nature Art
July 9 & 10	Dinosaurs
July 14 & 15	Guardians of River Bend
July 16 & 17	Nature Detectives
July 23 & 24	Outdoor Games & Puzzles
July 28 & 29	AIOT Outdoor Sports
July 30 & 31	AIOT Survivor Camp



MAPLE SYRUP FUN RUN SPONSORS

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CHIROPRACTIC & NUTRITION CENTER

b BURKHARTZMEYER SHOES
A Family Tradition Since 1949



RELIANCE BANK

SOUTHERNHEIGHTS
DENTAL GROUP



SUMMER CAMPS

Save \$25 per camp when
you're a member of
River Bend Nature Center

Register Today!

www.rbnc.org/summer-camp

\$35 Members, \$60 Non
AIOT: \$60 Members, \$85 Non
For kids entering K-9th grade
in Fall of 2025

SUMMER OUTDOOR CAREER TRAINING

m EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



BEGIN YOUR NEW CAREER MONDAY, JUNE 23



**ENROLL TODAY AT
WWW.RBNC.ORG/OUTDOORCAREERS**

Have you ever wanted a career in the environmental, conservation, or land management sectors? In this 12 week program you'll gain hands on experience, certifications and training to kick off your new career path.

Join us Saturday,
April 19th
FREE Public Program
Level 1 Chainsaw
Training
8:30 am - 4 pm
@ RBNC



WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Tree Planting
- Tree Inspector Certification
- MN Master Naturalist Certification
- Earn Chainsaw Certification
- Trail Restoration/Maintenance Training
- Career Coaching & Job Search Assistance
- Environmental Justice



ENROLL NOW!



**12 WEEKS
FULL TIME
\$18/HOUR**

For questions, email
Quanda Arch at
arch@rbnc.org



Participation in the program is contingent on meeting eligibility requirements established by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

The State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) funded (or funded in part) this training through a grant. The grant recipient created this training. DEED does not endorse this publicity or training or make guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability or ownership of the information herein or elsewhere."

DON'T JUDGE A WOODPECKER BY ITS COVER

LOOKS CAN BE MISLEADING ...

By Matt Johnson

>>> SPRING HAS ARRIVED WHEN BIRDS SING & WOODPECKERS PECK

As the snow begins to disappear, signs of spring are all around us. A walk through the woods on a warm sunny afternoon is always filled with the sights and sounds of the season. One of the surest signs of spring is the familiar sound of a woodpecker busy at work drilling holes in a tree, looking for larva that will soon emerge. While Minnesota has many different species of woodpeckers, two of our most commonly seen are the Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*) and the Hairy Woodpecker (*Leuconotopicus villosus*). These birds share a striking resemblance and for many novice birders, prove difficult to distinguish. Oddly enough, while these two may look nearly identical, they are far less related than one might think.

DOWNY WOODPECKER VS. HAIRY WOODPECKER

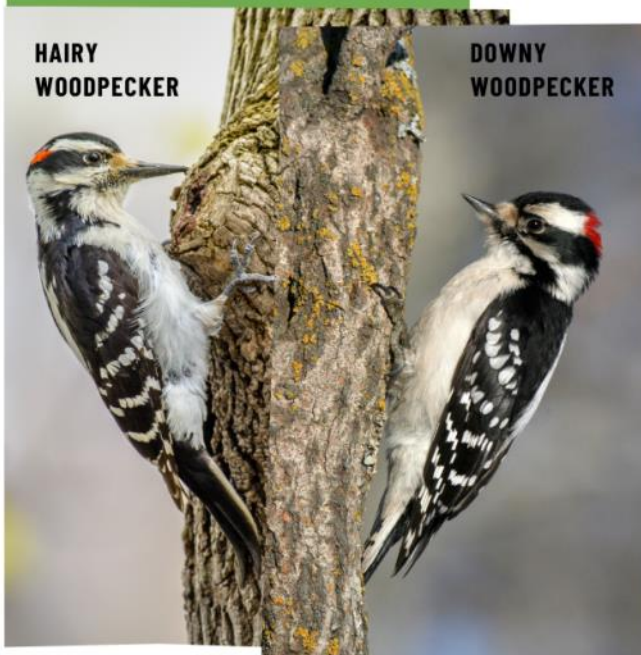
"A more surefire way to tell the two apart is by looking at the beak."

Hairy and Downy woodpeckers are only distantly related genetically. They both share more of their DNA with other woodpeckers species. In fact, it has been hypothesized that their similar appearance is not due to inherited traits from a closely shared common ancestor. It is more likely that they either developed similar traits through convergent evolution, a process where animals develop similar characteristics independently of one another, or through another process known as biological mimicry.

Biological mimicry is a rare and fascinating natural phenomenon that exists to benefit an organism through the development of similar features to resemble another species. In the case of the Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, it has been theorized that like humans, other birds also have a difficult time telling the two apart as well. This could be quite beneficial to the smaller Downy, as a case of mistaken identity could lead to less competition for things like nest sites and territories from larger birds, including Hairy Woodpeckers.

There are however a few differences that help to separate these two species. The most obvious difference is their size. The Hairy is larger when compared to the Downy. If you were to ever see these two side by side on the same branch or feeder, you would notice the Hairy is about twice as large. While this may seem like an obvious tell, the challenge is that you need a good frame of reference. If you simply see a small black and white bird on a large tree in the distance, it can be challenging to estimate size. A more surefire way to tell the two apart is by looking at the beak. Hairy's have a beak length roughly equal to the length of their head. The Downy features a much less prominent beak, usually about half the length of the head. You may also notice that you see far more Downy's if you are observing birds in a more suburban/urban setting. While the ranges of these two do overlap, you are much more likely to see the Hairy in less developed areas with more mature forests.

As you seek out the source of those familiar tapping sounds this spring, see if you can distinguish which of our small woodpeckers you are observing. Over time, as you encounter these two out in the wild more, it will become easier to tell them apart. And remember, even though they look almost identical, looks can be deceiving.



>>> HAIRY WOODPECKERS ARE LARGER THAN DOWNY WOODPECKERS

SPRING HAS SPRUNG AT RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER!

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BE INVOLVED? LOOK NO FURTHER!

By Molly Dulka

River Bend is a hub for environmental education, conservation, and community engagement. As the weather gets warmer, more people seem to be getting out and about. We offer opportunities for people of all ages to connect with nature, learn about wildlife, and contribute to protecting the environment. Getting involved not only benefits the center and the environment but also provides a rewarding experience for individuals who want to make a difference. We hope to see you at River Bend and help support our mission to inspire curiosity, care, and respect for nature.

»»» ATTEND PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

River Bend hosts a variety of programs, talks, and special events throughout the year. These events are designed to educate the public on topics related to conservation, wildlife, and sustainability. By attending these events, you can deepen your knowledge of environmental issues, meet others with similar interests, and get outside.

- **May 3rd, Maple Syrup Fun Run and Pancake Breakfast:** There are distances for every level of runner/walker, and it celebrates the end of the syruping season
- **Free Saturday Programs** offer guided walks and activities for all ages to learn about the natural world.
- **Little Sprouts** Programs are for families with young one(s) at home. This program is great for structured nature play based learning.
- **Lunch & Learn** talks are geared towards adults and provide an opportunity to learn from experts about various environmental topics.
- **Visit our website** for more learning and event opportunities! www.rbnc.org

»»» VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

Volunteering is one of the most common and impactful ways to get involved. Volunteers help with a wide range of tasks, from assisting with education programs to habitat restoration. Here are some volunteer opportunities you might encounter:

- **Educational Programs:** Volunteers can assist with children's educational programs, day camps, and school field trips, helping to inspire the next generation of nature enthusiasts.
- **Habitat Restoration:** River Bend hosts Stewardship days to restore native habitats, remove invasive species, or plant native plants.
- **Front Desk/ Greeter:** Many times the front desk is a busy place, and it's helpful to staff to have a dedicated front desk volunteer, especially on Saturdays.
- **Special Events Volunteers:** We have a few special events throughout the year where we call on volunteers to help make it happen!
- **Subscribe to our volunteer email list** to get monthly volunteer updates.

Getting involved at River Bend Nature Center is a fulfilling way to contribute to environmental conservation while learning more about the natural world. Whether you choose to volunteer, attend events, or support financially, your participation can make a meaningful difference. So, **take the first step today and email Morgan Heier at heier@rbnc.org.**



CONSERVATION CORNER

SPRING BABIES: SHOULD I LEAVE THEM ALONE? SHORT ANSWER: YES

By Brittany Smith

>>> BABY ANIMAL TIPS

The sun is getting stronger, days are getting longer, and the temperature is getting warmer! River Bend will really start coming alive as not only plants and animals will come out of dormancy, hibernation, and migrate through, so will people. As the months continue through spring, many baby animals will be brought into the world. We are all captivated by how cute and cuddly they look, however, that is not what they are here for.

River Bend is home to so many different animals, you are bound to see some of the babies. You may come across baby ducks, geese, fox, birds or bunnies, but more commonly, you may see baby deer called fawns. All the new life that spring brings is wonderful and River Bend is a good natural habitat for them to be safe. As a visitor of the nature center you can help us keep them safe by keeping a few things in mind when you come across a baby:

- **Leave all baby animals** as they are and enjoy them from a distance.
- **Do Not Touch, Handle or Move** the baby animals as this may cause undue stress on them.
- **Mom is near by even if you don't see her.** Don't assume the baby has been abandoned. The mother will leave her babies in a safe place while she goes off to feed or will lead predators away from their young.
- If you **know for sure** an animal has been abandoned or is injured please call the **Wildlife Rehab Center (651) 486-9453 for instructions.**
- River Bend **Can Not Take Animals**

>>> OTHER TIPS FOR YOUR SAFETY

- Please stay on designated trails.
- Respect all plants and animals you come across.
- Please keep your pets on a leash and in your control at all times for both their safety and others.
- Please pick up after your pet.
- Please use caution on the trails as conditions may remain slippery well into the spring.

MN WILDLIFE REHAB CENTER

If you know for sure an animal is injured or abandoned, please call the MN Wildlife Rehab Center

(651) 486-9453



BUSINESS MEMBERS

AS FARIBAULT BUSINESSES SUPPORT US, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SUPPORT THEM!

>>> STAR MEMBERS

Faribault Rotary Youth Services, Inc



>>> WELLNESS MEMBERS



>>> FOUNDER MEMBERS

Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club



RELIANCE BANK



>>> PATRON MEMBERS

Faribault Area Retired Educators . Mercury Minnesota
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LEARN HOW TO BECOME A BUSINESS MEMBER

Becoming a member is easy!

Visit our website, email or call!

www.rbnc.org/members
rbncinfo@rbnc.org
507-332-7151

>>> ADVOCATE MEMBERS

Anderka Construction . Community Co-op
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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

	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

Scan the QR
Code to
Join Today!





River Bend
NATURE CENTER

PO Box 186
1000 Rustad Rd
Faribault, MN
55021
507.332.7151
www.rbnc.org

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River Bend
NATURE CENTER

1000 Rustad Rd - PO Box 186
Faribault, MN 55021

Trail Hours: 6 am - 10 pm

Building Hours: Mon 8 am - 7pm

Tues-Fri 8 am - 4 pm

Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm

**SAVE THE
DATE**

Ramble

August 9, 2025
4:30 pm

**Building
Community
through Nature**
Fundraiser

