

»»» NEWSLETTER «««

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better." - Albert Einstein



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

QUARTERLY TOP NEWS

*Ramble
Fundraiser*

August 9, 2025

4:30 pm

»»» BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH NATURE

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

Enroll Now >



Ramble Fundraiser

August 9, 2025
4:30 pm

Scan QR
Code
for
details &
to register



Scan QR Code for
summer camp details
& to register



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

➤➤➤ JULY

July 24, 5-8 pm **Annual Meeting & Pancake Dinner**
July 26, 12:30-2 pm Family Painting: Pollinators
July 26, 3-4 pm Nature Hike at Keepsake Cidery

➤➤➤ AUGUST

Aug 2, 10-11 am Bagels and Birds
Aug 2, 11-12 pm Story Time: Pollinators
Aug 2, 2-3 pm Sweet Reads Book Club: Greenwood
Aug 5, 1-2 pm Northfield Com Ed: Geocaching
Aug 6, 9:30-11 am Little Sprouts: Shapes/Colors in Nature
Aug 9, 4:30-7 pm **RAMBLE Fundraiser**
Aug 12, 1-2 pm Northfield Com Ed: Orienteering
Aug 15, 9-2:30 pm Northfield Com Ed: Canoe/Kayak
Aug 20, 12-2 pm Lunch & Learn: Dragonfly 101
Aug 23, 3-4 pm Nature Hike @ Keepsake Cidery

➤➤➤ SEPTEMBER

Sept 6, 10-11 am Bagels & Birds
Sept 6, 11-12 pm Story Time: Orwin, the Painted Turtle
Sept 6, 2-3 pm Sweet Reads Book Club: A Book of Hope
Sept 8, 9:30-11 am Little Sprouts: Prairie Pollinators
Sept 8, 5-6:30 pm Little Sprouts: Prairie Pollinators
Sept 8, 1-3 pm Homeschool: Intro to Insects/Butterflies
Sept 13, 10-2 pm Stewardship Day
Sept 17, 12-2 pm Lunch & Learn: Life of a Fish Squeezer
Sept 20, 10-2 pm Stewardship Day
Sept 22, 1-3 pm Homeschool: Intro to Insects/Butterflies
Sept 22, 9-11:30 am Little Sprouts: Turtles & Frogs
Sept 22, 5-6:30 pm Little Sprouts: Turtles & Frogs
Sept 27, 9-12 pm National Public Lands Day

Summer Camps July

9-4 pm/AIOT 8:30-4 pm
Mon/Tue, Wed/Thur

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



RAMBLE FUNDRAISER SPONSORS

EAGLE

SPONSORSHIP



OWL

SPONSORSHIP

Dr. Richard & Nancie Huston
Dr. Karen and Simon Zeller



HERON

SPONSORSHIP

Jim & Deb Purfeerst
Emily & Robert Nesvold
Marvin & Sara Schrader



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

AS SOME OPPORTUNITIES GROW, OTHERS ARE CLOSING

By Brad Bourn

»»» EXPANDING GREEN SPACE WITH FEWER PEOPLE

Last summer, I started my article with “Summer is off to a wild start for River Bend.” Even though a year has passed, the wild ride continues. This year we are juggling new challenges while growing our community reach. On one hand, we have acquired new acreage and are expanding educational programming into new communities and school districts, while on the other, we’re trying to mitigate the loss of significant federal grants and resources.

In the following pages, you’ll read about how River Bend’s incredible staff and volunteers are rising to these opportunities and challenges. Over the last several months we’ve leveraged over \$1 million in support to acquire an additional 45 acres of green space for the nature center and have prepared more than a dozen young people to pursue gainful careers in conversation. These investments from philanthropic grants and the State of Minnesota are helping River Bend Nature Center emerge as a conservation leader in the region. We are assuring that our community has additional green space for our growing population and that Minnesota has skilled individuals to care for those resources now and into the future.

While we are moving in a positive direction in some areas, we are having to adapt to losing important resources and partnerships in the near future. For the last 3 years, River Bend has benefited from more than 10,000 hours of volunteer service from AmeriCorps members across multiple programs. These aspiring conservation and environmental educational professionals have played a critical role in resource management and delivering quality programs to the community. With shifts in federal priorities and funding, these resources are largely coming to a close in the months ahead. We are so grateful for the service of these AmeriCorps members over the years. As we move forward, we hope to gain volunteers from our local communities to help fill the large gap being left by the shuttering of so many important AmeriCorps programs. Thank you for considering lending a few extra hours of your time to River Bend in the months ahead.

Lastly I wanted to remind you that while summer is a very busy time for River Bend staff, it’s also our favorite time to reconnect in person with neighbors and members like you. This summer River Bend is hosting our annual meeting and pancake dinner on July 24th at the Nature Center and our yearly Ramble Fundraising Dinner on August 9th at Shattuck St. Mary’s. Both of these evenings are fun ways to connect with your fellow River Bend supporters and RBNC staff to learn more and share our successes of the last year while simultaneously coming together to meet the challenges ahead.

We’ll see you outside!

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting &
Pancake Dinner

Thursday, July 24, 2025

5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

1000 Rustad Road,

Faribault, MN 55021

RSVP at

www.rbnc.org



LIGHTING UP THE SUMMER SKY

NOT WITH ARTIFICIAL LIGHTS, BUT NATURE'S LIGHTS

By Matt Johnson

»»» AS SUMMER ARRIVES WITH WARMTH, MAGIC SHINES IN THE NIGHT

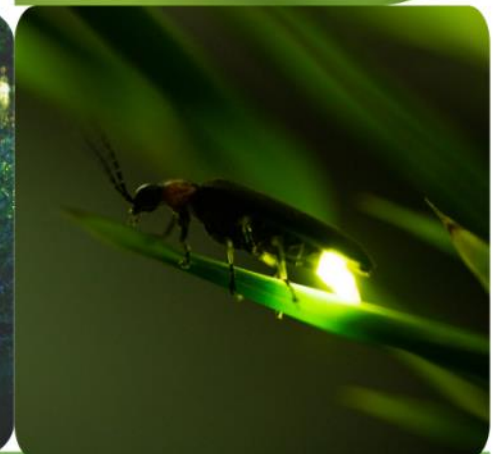
The warmth of summer in this part of the world provides us with many short-lived natural wonders. Among these, few things can compare to the illumination of the night sky by one of nature's smallest curiosities. Fireflies, or lightning bugs, exhibit one nature's most fascinating spectacles, the creation of light. So how and why do fireflies create this light?

Fireflies and their ability to produce light was a mystery for much of human history. Observations of this phenomenon date back centuries and were described in early natural observations. It wasn't until the late 19th century that our understanding of this process, known as bioluminescence, began to expand significantly. The discovery of the chemical compound luciferin and the enzyme luciferase, help to explain what was causing this light producing event. Fireflies flush oxygen into their abdomens, causing a reaction with these agents. Fireflies are able to control this oxygen intake which allows them to make specific light patterns. Amazingly, this light generation is also incredibly efficient, as it creates no heat.

So why do fireflies emit light signals? It is commonly understood that light signals are used as a form of communication. There are actually many different species of fireflies, so each species has unique patterns that help to distinguish them. Most often, these signals are used to attract mates. Males will attempt to catch the attention of females with their light display. If impressed, females will then respond with their own signal. Males must be careful however, as some larger female species of carnivorous fireflies will actually mimic the light flashes of other species. Instead of finding a mate, they find themselves as dinner.

Fireflies truly provide our summer sky with an amazing show. This show is best seen right around sundown and the hour or so after. Try looking for natural areas, where larvae remain undisturbed in leaf litter and plant material until they emerge as adults. You can also make your own backyard more firefly friendly by having native plant vegetation and turning off any unnecessary light pollution.

**FIREFLIES NEED
DARKNESS TO
LIGHT UP,
YOU CAN HELP
BY TURNING
OFF ANY
UNNECESSARY
LIGHTS**



NATURE BASED EDUCATION IS MORE THAN JUST FUN!

THANK YOU TO OUR INCREDIBLE AMPACT MEMBERS! >>>

By Molly Dulka

As the service year comes to a close, River Bend Nature Center would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our six amazing AMPACT members who have dedicated the past year to supporting environmental education and natural resource work at our center.



Left to Right: Caitlin, Evelyn, Dan, Andrew, Nick. Not Pictured: Autumn

>>> BACK TO SCHOOL, BACK TO NATURE: FALL FIELD TRIPS THAT INSPIRE

As backpacks are packed and classrooms fill up again, the nature center also gears up for one of its most exciting seasons: fall field trips. Designed to align with educational standards and complement classroom learning, these trips give students a hands-on science experience that textbooks just can't match. Each field trip is led by trained educators who guide students through interactive learning stations, nature walks, and inquiry-based experiments. Teachers receive pre- and post-trip materials to extend learning into the classroom.

>>> WHY NATURE-BASED LEARNING MATTERS

Studies consistently show that time spent in nature improves attention, boosts mood, and enhances academic performance. By offering immersive, nature-based education, River Bend helps people make meaningful connections between science concepts and the real world—connections that can spark lifelong environmental stewardship.

>>> PLAN YOUR VISIT

Whether you're looking for a memorable summer experience or an enriching start to the school year, the nature center is ready to welcome you. Programs can fill quickly, so early registration is encouraged. For more information on program dates, pricing, or how to book a school trip, visit rbnc.org/programs

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

DAN HEINEN
CAITLIN JUVLAND
NICK SMOCZYK
EVELYN ROSAS
ANDREW FLICEK & AUTUMN POZNIAK

Your passion, energy, and commitment have made a lasting impact on our programs, our trails, and the thousands of visitors who've had the chance to learn from and alongside you.

From leading engaging school groups and public programs, to restoring habitats and supporting conservation efforts across our site, you've each brought unique strengths and a shared dedication to environmental stewardship.

We are incredibly proud of all you've accomplished and grateful for the time, heart, and hard work you've given to River Bend. Thank you for being part of our team, and best of luck on your next adventures!

SCHEDULE A FIELD TRIP

For a listing of program offerings, visit our website www.rbnc.org/programs or email education@rbnc.org

CONSERVATION CORNER

LAND ACTION: WHAT CHANGES ARE HAPPENING AT RIVER BEND?

By Brittany Smith

>>> MINIMIZING INVASIVE SPECIES, PROMOTING NATIVE SPECIES

River Bend Nature Center has been fortunate that through dedicated members, supporters, and multiple grant sources, we have been able to secure funding to conduct habitat restoration activities across more than 200 acres to improve native habitat. A combination of management techniques will be implemented over the next couple of years to control invasive species, reduce the effects of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), and promote native plant growth and biodiversity.

RBNC is currently focusing on buckthorn, honeysuckle, dames rocket, garlic mustard, and wild parsnip control. A combination of mechanical work, herbicide applications, and goats will be used as tools in different areas of the nature center.

Yes, goats will be at River Bend during the next two summers to help control buckthorn and honeysuckle in select areas. Please remember, these goats are contracted and paid employees conducting important conservation work; enjoy watching them do their work and respect their space.

Invasive work will be conducted throughout forest and prairie habitats followed up by native plantings of forbs (wildflowers), grasses and trees, in their respective habitats. Efforts to reduce the effects of EAB will include selectively removing dead ash trees and planting a variety of native trees in their place.

>>> RECYCLING & BIOCHAR

What are we planning to do with all the trees being removed?

A majority of the trees will be "recycled" through different means. Depending on species, some will be recycled into wood chips to be used throughout RBNC's trail system while others will be used as firewood for our maple syrup production in the spring. RBNC is excited to begin implementing the practice of biochar production, through a newly awarded grant. RBNC will be utilizing primarily buckthorn and honeysuckle to produce biochar.

Want to learn about biochar? Educational programs and demonstrations to come starting Winter 2026!



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Save the Date
Saturday, September 27, 2025



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



>>> PATRON MEMBERS

Faribault Area Retired Educators . Schroder Concessions
Sertoma Club of Faribault



>>> ADVOCATE MEMBERS

Anderka Construction . Community Co-op
Donahue's Greenhouse . Faribault Rental Equipment, Inc.
Faribo Sno-Go Club . Glenn's Service & Towing
Mill Town Cycles . Pamela Rezac Real Estate
Quality Appliance . Tom's Lock & Key

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

	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

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

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Kate Ford, Leah Inman

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Dan Heinen, Caitlin Juvland, Andrew Flicek, Evelyn Rosas,
Nick Smoczyk & Autumn Pozniak



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



SUMMER OUTDOOR CAREER TRAINING

mn EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ENROLL NOW, SPACE IS LIMITED



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.

Fall cohort dates will be announced soon.
Stay Tuned!



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

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

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



ENROLL NOW!



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."