

March 2017

1. Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant – Two Options Now Available

Applications will be accepted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Division of Education through November 30, 2017, for the *Illinois Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant* program. New for the program this year are two application options. Option One will allow you to apply for a standard pollinator garden. With this option, the plant species are predetermined. You and the students must decide how best to use these species in your available space. Other items to be purchased are limited with this option. Option Two allows the applicant to determine what type of wildlife habitat to develop. You can view both options at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/GrantsSHAG.aspx>. Please use the supporting video podcasts to assist you in completing the application form. Help wildlife species while taking learning to life!

2. ENTICE Professional Development Workshops for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019

Register today at <https://www.enticeworkshops.com> for ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) professional development workshops for educators sponsored by the IDNR. ENTICE workshops provide background information, networking opportunities, hands-on lessons, supplemental resources on the topic and the opportunity to work with resources professionals on a variety of topics. Professional Development Hours are available. Shown below are upcoming workshops for summer and fall 2017. Workshops will continue to be added to the schedule as arrangements are made so check the Web site often. Experience ENTICE!

Monarch Mania!, Gardner Camp, Hull, July 18, 2017

Wetland Wonders, The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, July 29, 2017

Illinois Butterflies and Moths, Cache River Visitors' Center, Cypress, August 1, 2017

Forest Ecology and Wildlife, Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center, Willow Springs, August 3, 2017

Introducing Early Childhood Students to Nature, Dickson Mounds Museum, Lewistown, September 9, 2017

Illinois Butterflies and Moths, Burpee Museum, Rockford, September 16, 2017

Illinois Butterflies, Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago, September 23, 2017

Using Resources Trunks to Teach Next Generation Science Standards, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, September 30, 2017

Introducing Early Childhood Students to Nature, Heller Nature Center, Highland Park, October 7, 2017

Introducing Early Childhood Students to Nature, Kendall County Forest Preserve District, Yorkville, October 7, 2017

Introducing Early Childhood Students to the Nature of Fall, Giant City State Park, Makanda, November 4, 2017

Aquatic Ecosystems: Lake Michigan Ecology, Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago, November 4, 2017

3. March Kids for Conservation®: Illinois Turtles

The March edition of the IDNR's Kids for Conservation® Web page features the topic of the "*Illinois Turtles*." You can learn basic facts about these reptiles in the information section. Watch the video podcast, too. Take the quiz to test your knowledge. Educators, there are resources for you to utilize. NEW! We have developed a version of the information section specific to early childhood educators. "Kids in Action" features the students of Du Quoin Arrow Academy in Du Quoin who used STEM principles to construct bat roosting boxes and a butterfly garden on the school grounds. Visit

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/outreach/kidsconservation/Pages/default.aspx> and get started today! The April topic is the “Northern Cardinal.”

4. IDNR Mason State Nursery has Native Seeds and Plants for Sale

The IDNR Mason State Nursery has developed a seed mix of Illinois native forbs and grasses that is suitable for use in developing a monarch/pollinator habitat. One packet of these seeds will cover 1,000 square feet. The cost is \$40.00 per packet plus shipping and handling. Seeds of the following plants are included: leadplant *Amorpha canescens*, prairie coreopsis *Coreopsis palmata*, Ohio spiderwort *Tradescantia ohiensis*, purple coneflower *Echinacea purpurea*, pale coneflower *Echinacea pallida*, rattlesnake master *Eryngium yuccifolium*, prairie blazing-star *Liatris pycnostachya*, white prairie clover *Dalea candida*, purple prairie clover *Dalea purpurea*, obedience plant *Physostegia virginiana*, prairie cinquefoil *Drymocallis arguta*, yellow coneflower *Ratibida pinnata*, compass-plant *Silphium laciniatum*, prairie dock *Silphium terebinthinaceum*, smooth aster *Symphotrichum laeve*, marsh blazing-star *Liatris spicata*, Illinois mimosa *Desmanthus illinoensis*, common milkweed *Asclepias syriaca*, wild bergamot *Monarda fistulosa*, golden Alexanders *Zizia aurea*, partridge pea *Chamaechaerista fasciculata*, sweet black-eyed Susan *Rudbeckia subtomentosa*, black-eyed Susan *Rudbeckia hirta*, prairie dropseed *Sporobolus heterolepis*, little bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium* and side-oats grama *Bouteloua curtipendula*. The Mason State Nursery also has 40 species of Illinois native plants available for sale in containers. These plants are \$4.00 each, but they must be picked up at the Mason State Nursery in Topeka, Illinois. Delivery is not available for the container plants. Native trees and shrubs are also available for purchase. For more information and/or to order, contact the Mason State Nursery at DNR.MasonStateNursery@illinois.gov or 309-535-2185. Ordering information is posted at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/Forestry/Pages/Tree-Nurseries.aspx>.

5. Beall Woods State Park Programs

Beall Woods State Park near Mt. Carmel is hosting the following programs that may be of interest to educators. Registration is not required for either of these programs, and there is no admission fee. For more information contact Jacque Cullison, Natural Resources Coordinator, at jacque.cullison@illinois.gov or 618-298-2441.

Dragonflies: Life through a Lens

Saturday, March 4, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Exhibiting great patience and perfect timing with the shutter button, Norm Cline has captured amazing up-close photographs of dragonflies. His pictures reveal detailed behaviors of these winged predators that would normally be missed if viewed from a distance. Norm will show several images of these beautiful creatures while discussing his observations from behind the camera.

Woodpecker 101

Saturday, March 18, 2017, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

How many species of woodpeckers can be found in Beall Woods State Park? Which species drills holes in horizontal rows to extract tree sap? Do all woodpeckers have similar feeding and nesting behaviors? Learn the answers to these questions and many other feathery facts. The program will begin in the Visitors' Center and end with a short hike. Don't forget your binoculars!

6. Flying WILD at Volo Bog State Natural Area – a Bird Workshop for Educators

Thursday, March 9, 2017 or Saturday, March 11, 2017, 9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. each day
6 Professional Development Hours available

Request a registration form by emailing dnr.volobog@illinois.gov or visiting www.FriendsofVoloBog.org. "Through activities involving language arts, social science and math experiences, coupled with community outreach and service learning applications, Flying WILD offers a whole-school approach to environmental education using birds as the focus. Targeted for the middle-school audience, though widely adaptable, Flying WILD offers practical hands-on classroom and outdoor field investigation experiences connecting real-world experiences in bird biology, conservation and natural history. Project-based classroom applications, service learning and community involvement are encouraged through sections of the guide dedicated to the planning and implementation of birding festivals." (taken from <http://www.flyingwild.org/>) Flying WILD is supported in Illinois by Illinois Audubon Society and the IDNR at Volo Bog State Natural Area.

7. Illinois Native Bees and Illinois Milkweeds Posters!

The IDNR has two new posters available! *Illinois Milkweeds* and *Illinois Native Bees* can be ordered through the publications order form at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications>. These two-sided posters are great resources that can be used in a variety of ways. Thanks to the IDNR Office of Mines and Minerals, the *Illinois Rocks and Minerals* poster is once again available, too.

8. Upcoming Programs at Dickson Mounds Museum

The following programs are being held at Dickson Mounds Museum in Lewistown in March. For more information, call 309-547-3721.

Tot Time

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Adults and their tots will have fun exploring, discovering and learning on the first Thursday of each month from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. in the Museum's Discovery Center. Spend quality time with your tot while each of you makes new friends. A different topic and craft will be featured each month. Registration is not required and admission is free. Participants will enjoy light refreshments. This program series is sponsored by Havana National Bank and G-M Mechanical of Canton. The March 2, 2017, topic is *Illinois Wild Mammals*.

Spring Gathering

Saturday, March 18, 2017, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Participate in a traditional Native American Spring Gathering. Enjoy a variety of activities and demonstrations, including storytelling, music and dancing. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. All ages are welcome at this program.

Weekend Knap-In

Saturday, March 4, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 5, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The public is welcome to view flint-knapping demonstrations during the Museum's Third Annual Weekend Knap-In. Learn about the different techniques used by several craftsmen and see their stone tool creations. Flint-knappers should call Christa Foster at 309-547-3721 for information on how to participate. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. All ages are welcome at this program.

Artifact ID Day

Sunday, March 5, 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Museum staff and other experts will be available to identify your artifacts, rocks, fossils, animal bones and perhaps anything else you may be curious about. If you don't have any items to identify, be sure to

stop in any way to see these artifacts and live demonstrations. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. All ages are welcome at this program.

9. Reporting Monarch Educational Activities

The IDNR and its partners in the monarch initiative are collecting information about educational activities related to monarch butterflies. If you conducted any activities in 2016 or 2017 related to educating people in Illinois about monarch butterflies or to enhancing or developing monarch habitat in Illinois, please send us a brief description (no more than three sentences) describing each activity. Include the date, a description of the activity, the targeted audience (if an educational activity), the organization or person leading the activity and an email address for someone who can answer questions about the activity. Submit the information to dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov. We will post the information on the IDNR Web site at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/monarchgen.aspx>. This Web site is not intended to promote upcoming activities. We want to share information about efforts that have already taken place to help monarchs and their habitat. We will continue to accept information through 2017 and beyond. Please do not send photos. Thank you!

10. Resources Trunks and Packs Support Your Lessons in Many Ways

Have you reserved any resources trunks or packs from the IDNR for your teaching, scout troop activities, or other youth programs? The topics include: amphibians and reptiles; aquatics; birds; fossils; state symbols; insects/spiders; invasive species; mammals; Native Americans; prairies; and trees. The *Field Trip Pack* is designed for exploring nature with young children. Let the IDNR's resources trunks and packs provide you with the teaching tools that you need. The trunks and packs are available at lending locations statewide. Visit <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/ItemsForLoan.aspx> for links to all of the resources trunks and packs. Several lending locations have recently changed, so be sure to check the list for updates in your area. The trunks include correlations to current national and state learning standards. Make your reservation today!

11. Biodiversity of Illinois CD-ROM Series Conversion to Web-based Format

The IDNR Division of Education is in the process of converting the information and images from the *Biodiversity of Illinois* CD-ROM series (*Volume I, Aquatic Habitats; Volume II, Woodland Habitats; Volume III, Prairie and Edge Habitats*) into a searchable, Web-based format. Files are being added as they are completed, so check back often. There will be approximately 1,500 species in this field guide when it is finished. Visit <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/Biodiversity-of-Illinois.aspx> to access the files that have been posted to date.

12. New Video Podcast

The *Illinois Turtles* video podcast can be found in the Podcasts page at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/podcasts.aspx> after February 28, 2017. This video podcast is also available on YouTube.

13. Central Illinois Educators: Fishing and Aquatic Ecology Programs Now Available from the IDNR

Educators, if you teach in any of the following counties, the IDNR can help you bring hands-on aquatic education to your students. These programs work to develop positive attitudes towards natural resources, conservation and fishing in young people. Lessons align with the state and national learning standards and are adapted to all grade levels. For more information or to schedule a program, contact Van Grissom at 217-720-3501 or van.grissom@illinois.gov.

Adams, Brown, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, De Witt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Hancock, Iroquois, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Mason, McLean, Menard, Morgan, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Vermillion

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