

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Division of Education offers educational materials and programs for teachers. Below you will find a list of items for possible inclusion in your upcoming newsletter. Feel free to use any of the information.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. I appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

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1. New Posters!

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (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.

2. Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant – Applications due by January 31, 2017

The application deadline for the 2017 *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant* program is fast approaching. Applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2017. You can find the application form and instructions at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/GrantsIBFTG.aspx>. Teachers in Illinois schools (prekindergarten through grade 12) and home-schooling educators in Illinois (prekindergarten through grade 12) can apply. Be sure that you read and follow the instructions. Video podcasts to help you complete the application form may also be accessed on this Web page. Funding for the *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant* program is donated by the Independence Tube Corporation in Bedford Park and the Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation in Skokie. The program is administrated by the IDNR and the Illinois Conservation Foundation. NEW! Correlations between natural resources-related field trips and Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards have been posted at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/GrantsIBFTG.aspx>. Take your students on a field trip to explore the vast natural heritage of our state!

3. Earth Day in the Parks 2017

Earth Day in the Parks is a program to involve students in natural resources stewardship at Illinois state parks. Applications may be submitted starting January 1, 2017. Visit <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/EDITPinstruct.aspx> for the application form and instructions. Only two state parks are participating this year: Goose Lake Prairie State Park in Morris; and Argyle Lake State Park in Colchester.

4. 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 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!

5. Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant: Correlations to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards

Can taking your students on a field trip help you to teach them Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards as well as Next Generation Science Standards? Yes! For suggestions in doing so, see the correlations at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/GrantsIBFTG.aspx>. Do not be limited by these suggestions. Use them as a starting point for developing the best field trip to meet the needs of your curriculum. Apply for an *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant* to help fund your field trip! See the details at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/GrantsIBFTG.aspx>. Applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2017, for the 2017 grant awards.

6. 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. Workshops will continue to be added to the schedule as arrangements are made so check the Web site often. Experience ENTICE!

7. January Kids for Conservation®: Feeding Birds in Winter

The January edition of the IDNR's Kids for Conservation® Web page features the topic of "*Feeding Birds in Winter.*" You can learn basic facts about feeding birds in winter with 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 Minooka Community High School District 111 in Channahon who have worked over the course of several years to develop a prairie in an area they are reclaiming from nonnative invasive plants. Visit <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/outreach/kidsconservation/Pages/default.aspx> and get started today! The February topic is the "*Eastern Fox Squirrel.*"

8. Illinois Conservation Foundation Scholarship Applications are due in January

Applications are now being accepted by the Illinois Conservation Foundation (ICF) for the 2017 Conservation Achievement Scholarship program. The ICF annually awards scholarships to outstanding high school seniors in Illinois who demonstrate effective, voluntary, long-term dedication to the preservation, protection or enhancement of the state's natural resources. Up to three scholarships of \$2,000 each are available for the current school year. The applicant must be an Illinois resident and a

senior in an Illinois high school. Applications must be received by the ICF by January 15, 2017. Detailed instructions and the 2017 application form can be accessed through the ICF Web site at <http://www.ilcf.org/portal/sponsorship-opportunities>. Please contact the Illinois Conservation Foundation at 217-785-2003 or dnr.icf@illinois.gov for more information or to make a donation to support the Conservation Achievement Scholarship program.

9. Nine New *Illinois Wild Mammals* Trunks Added – Several Lending Locations Add Trunks

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 have just been updated to include correlations to current national and state learning standards. Nine new *Illinois Wild Mammals* trunks have been placed with lending locations in Geneseo, Wilmington, Lewistown, Centralia, Clifton, Columbia, River Forest, Chicago and Collinsville. Kaskaskia College Library in Centralia, Frank Holten State Recreation Area in East St. Louis, Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation in Dundee, Concordia University in River Forest, Dickson Mounds Museum in Lewistown, Forest Park Nature Center in Peoria Heights and Matteson Area Public Library District in Matteson are all also recipients of new trunks for their locations.

10. *Illinois Prairies Coloring Poster*

The popular *Illinois Prairies Coloring Poster* has been reprinted and is now available through the online publications Web page at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications>. Only teachers in Illinois and Illinois residents may order this item. Quantities are limited so order soon.

11. *Biodiversity of Illinois* CD-ROM Series Conversion to Web-based Format – More Files Posted

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 are approximately 200 files posted. 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. Visit Our Web Page for a Wealth of Resources

The IDNR Division of Education's Web page offers a great variety of educational resources and information for teachers, nonformal educators, scout leaders, youth-group leaders and other people interested in learning about Illinois' tremendous natural heritage. The "A to Z" button will allow you to access a list of topics. You'll find basic information, lessons, activity books, grants, educator professional development, correlations to learning standards, video podcasts (with open captioning), trunks and packs for loan and many other items. Let these supplemental resources support your teaching or just learn something new! Updates are made regularly so visit often! <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Education>

13. New Video Podcast

The *Feeding Birds in Winter* video podcast can be found in the Podcasts page at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/podcasts.aspx> after December 31, 2016. This video podcast is also available on YouTube.

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