

Outdoor Adventure Center Winter/Spring 2023 Newsletter

[Michigan DNR Outdoor Adventure Center staff](#)

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Hours of operation

Sunday: noon-3 p.m.

Monday: closed

Tuesday: closed

Wednesday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Thursday: closed for general admission; group visits scheduled by appointment only

Friday: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Free admission days

Our Thrilling Thursday events are taking a break for the fall and winter. They will return for the popular summer season. Until then, we will be offering Free First Sundays. Each event will feature a specific themed activity adjacent to the Critter Room, plus guests will enjoy all the regular exhibits at the Outdoor Adventure Center. When you visit, you can also earn digital badges through Detroit Public TV's Digital Adventure Program.

Complimentary admission!

Sunday, Feb. 5, noon-3 p.m.

Sunday, March 5, noon-3 p.m.

Sunday, April 2, noon-3 p.m.

Sunday, May 7, noon-3 p.m.

June through August – closed on Sundays for summer hours; we will resume Thrilling Thursdays for these months.

Thursday, June 29, 6-8 p.m.

Thursday, July 27, 6-8 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 1, noon-3 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 5, noon-3 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 3, noon-3 p.m.

Admission fees

Adults (age 13-61): \$5

Children under age 2: free

Seniors (age 62 and older): \$3

Children (ages 2-12): \$3

Annual family membership: \$50

Convenient online registration

Our online registration system will facilitate registration for all programs offered at the OAC. At <https://secure.rec1.com/MI/michigan-dnr/catalog>, you will find all options that are available for online registration. In order to register, you will need to create an account using your email address and a password. This will allow you to securely check out once you register. You will also be able to view past registrations and activities. If you have any questions about this site, please email DNR-OAC@Michigan.gov.

COVID safety

*The OAC is committed to providing visitors with a safe environment. We have implemented the following changes to our building procedures and environment:

Mask zones have been added where social distancing with staff is impeded by the activity.

Floors are washed or vacuumed daily.

CDC-approved disinfectant wipes and cleaners are used on hard surfaces (such as counters, railings, and other common touch points).

An electrostatic disinfectant unit is used daily in spaces with irregular surfaces.

Restroom doors are propped open to alleviate the need to touch door handles.

Hand sanitizer stations have been placed throughout our exhibit areas.

Staff will maintain 6-foot social distancing.

Sneeze guards are in place at the front desk.

Masks and social distancing are encouraged for guests.

*Subject to change.

Offerings for teachers

We are continuing to offer a variety of formats for a visit with our educators. We have developed the following options considering the limitations of COVID safety precautions in various districts.

Please choose from the following options to provide an engaging learning experience for your students:

Traditional field trip:

We will be open on Wednesdays and Fridays to the public and for field trips as they were scheduled pre-COVID. On Thursdays, we will schedule select groups to visit when we are closed to the public. This option has limitations based on the size of the group and classroom sessions. Visit the Field Trips page on our website to view offerings and to register.

Virtual education sessions:

Bring our educational sessions to your classroom via live instruction on Zoom. Visit the Virtual Education Sessions page on our website to view offerings and to register.

Accessibility at the OAC

Mobility

- A beautiful, new paved sidewalk allows guests a much smoother entry from the parking lot to our front door.
- Electronic-assist doors are available at the entrance and exit.
- An elevator is available to access all three floors of the building.
- Ramps are installed behind the sustainable home and behind the hunting exhibit on the second floor.
- All restrooms are equipped with an accessible stall.

Hearing

- With at least two weeks' notice, every attempt will be made to provide sign language interpreters.

Sensory inclusion

- The OAC has partnered with KultureCity to improve our ability to assist and accommodate guests with sensory needs. Our objective is to provide an inclusive and seamless experience for all guests for all events, including those with sensory needs.
- We strive to raise awareness of the needs and challenges faced by individuals with sensory processing disorders by supplying our team members with annual training.
- A family restroom is located on the second floor.
- A room with a rocking chair is available on the second floor. Any staff member can help guests gain access to this room.
- A space is designated in the gift shop/preschool area, with a soft chair and quiet activities, for guests who need a break from stimulation.
- A limited number of sensory bags – containing special KultureCity VIP badges, fidget tools, noise-canceling headphones and other resources – are available for checkout (at no cost by leaving an ID) at our front desk on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Weighted lap pads are also available upon request (at no cost by leaving an ID) at our front desk.
- A visual tour of our building is available to view at home to prepare for a visit.
- The KultureCity Sensory Inclusive App is available to view our social story to help you plan your visit. App Store: <http://bit.ly/KCiphone> or Google Play: <http://bit.ly/KCandroid>.

Family needs

- A family restroom is located on the second floor.
- A locked nursing room is available on the second floor. Any staff member can help guests gain access to this room.
- Baby-changing tables are available in all multiple-toilet restrooms. They are installed in the handicap stalls.
- The entire building is stroller-accessible, and you may also park strollers in the locker area.

Language

- Facility maps are available printed in Arabic, Spanish, German, French, Chinese and Japanese. These maps are available in the entrance lobby.

Sensory-Friendly Days

The DNR Outdoor Adventure Center welcomes friends and families with sensory processing differences to our sensory-friendly building hours!

Enjoy the opportunity to explore and experience the OAC with building sounds and ambient noises at a lower volume. During your visit, there will be a quiet room with sensory materials available to use. At noon, the

building will open to the public, with volumes returning to standard operating levels. All staff are KultureCity-certified to ensure the best possible experience.

Fee: complimentary admission.

10 a.m.-noon

DATES:

Sunday, Feb. 5

Sunday, April 2

Saturday, June 10

Saturday, July 1

Saturday, Aug. 5

Sunday, Oct. 1

Sunday, Dec. 3

Annual family membership

An annual membership can be purchased for \$50 for up to five members of the same household.

For an additional \$25, you can bring up to two guests any time you visit the OAC. Family memberships can be purchased online by clicking on the OAC Membership tab at <https://secure.rec1.com/MI/michigan-dnr/catalog>.

Benefits of membership include:

- Free admission for one year from the date of purchase.
- Exclusive, early admission to select special events.
- First glance (before the general public) at all newsletters.
- Members-only adventure packs (for use during your visit).
- Special pricing or early registration for select events.
- Early seating for popular programs.

Current member benefits:

- Early registration for Spirit of Alexandria Nature Bus and Live Animals, presented by Howell Nature Center.
- Early entry for Down on the Farm presented by Upland Hills Farm.
- Early entry for Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan.

OAC rental space

You must be tired of going to meetings where the room has no views or ambiance. You will not have that issue at the Outdoor Adventure Center! All our meeting spaces have awesome views of the Detroit River, Downtown Detroit, and Canada! You just need to up your meeting game!

At most meetings your guests are sitting at those boring oatmeal-colored tables with the matching walls. Dress up your meeting! Add some table linens, not only where the attendees are sitting, but the registration and food tables. Add a centerpiece on the table. It can be something as simple as table tents with your logo or more

extravagant with flowers. Add some spice by having food stations instead of basic buffets. Coffee stations are just one of the unique touches you can add to your meeting.

The Outdoor Adventure Center has all the tables and chairs needed for your event. We also have a list of approved vendors that offers food, beverages, linens, and more to help you up your meeting game!

Contact our promotional agent Jackie Hoskins at 1-800-622-6237 or email DNR-OAC@Michigan.gov for more details.

Scout Badge Workshops

The chart below shows the current offerings for Scout badge workshops. The sessions begin prior to the building opening on Sundays and take place both indoors and outdoors. The workshop provides your scout group with a classroom session to address the requirements listed on the chart below, an OAC patch for your brag vest and admission to the building. Dress for the weather and wear close-toed shoes. Due to limited classroom space, only the Scout leader and another responsible adult may join the badge workshop. Family members, including siblings, are welcome to join the Scouts to explore the OAC exhibits when the building opens to the public at noon.

FEE: \$10 per scout for all workshops; includes OAC patch.

Regular admission fees apply for family members, including siblings who wish to visit the building with Scouts after the program.

Level	Badge	Length	Req. covered	Other info
Brownies	Bugs	1.5 hours	All	April – August only
Brownies	Hiker	1.5 hours	1-3 and 5	Troops can pack a snack for requirement 4
Brownies	Outdoor Adventurer	1.5 hour	1-4	
Junior	Animal Habitats	1.5 hour	1-3	
Junior	Camper	1 hour	1, 2, 4	
Cadette	Archery	2 hours	All	Only 12 Scouts per badge workshop
Cadette	Trees	2 hours	1-4	Late April – October only
Tiger	My Tiger Jungle	1 hour	1-4, 6-7	
Tiger	Tigers in the Wild	1 hour	1-3	
Wolf	Call of the Wild	1 hour	1-4, 6	
Wolf	Paws on the Path	1 hour	1-6	
Bear	A Bear Goes Fishing	1.5 hours	1, 2, 4	April – August only
Bear	Bear Necessities	1 hour	1-4	
Bear	Fur, Feathers and Ferns	2 hours	1-6	
Webelos	Earth Rocks	1.5 hours	All	
Webelos	Into the Wild	2 hours	4-9	
Webelos	Into the Woods	1 hour	1-3, 5	

Reservation instructions and to request a Scout badge workshop: (The calendar feature is best viewed on a computer. Mobile devices will not show available dates.)

Step 1: Log in or create an account.

Step 2: Choose a green date - Sundays at 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. are the only current options.

Step 3: Choose a start time (this may change, when we send your confirmation, due to length of workshop and number of scouts).

Step 4: Click "Add to Cart."

Step 5: Check out.

Step 6: View or print attachments. Choose badge options and indicate number of scouts, then "Submit responses."

Step 7: Click "Complete Transaction" to submit your request.

Step 8: You will receive an email confirmation within five to seven days if your request is approved.

[Register for Scout badge workshop.](#)

PLEASE NOTE: Availability is based on several factors and is not limited to the online calendar. Your online request will be confirmed once the request is reviewed against all factors.

ScOutdoor Adventure: Cub Scouts

Saturday, March 11, 1-4 p.m.

Join us for a fun day and enjoy a series of programs that help your Cub Scout fulfill requirements for a variety of badges and patches. See details below. This is not a drop-off program; Scouts must be accompanied by an adult during the program. Preregistration required for all attendees (Scouts and family members). This event is subject to cancellation if minimum attendance is not met. A portion of the event will be held outside rain or shine; please dress for the weather.

Our educators will address components of the following Cub Scout badges (see registration links for full details):

- Tiger Scouts: Tigers in the Wild and My Tiger Jungle. Please note the Tiger Scouts program may end earlier than 4 p.m.
- Wolf Scouts: Call of the Wild and Paws on the Path.
- Bear Scouts: Fur, Feathers, Ferns and Bear Necessities.
- Webelo Scouts: Into the Wild and Into the Woods.

Please note that check-in for ScOutdoor Adventure begins at 12:30 p.m.; Scouts must complete check in by 1 p.m. or they will miss their first session. Scouts will choose between building exploration or knot-tying for their first session.

FEE: \$10 per Scout; regular admission applies to non-Scouts. Everyone attending must preregister.

Preregistration required. [Register for ScOutdoor Adventure: Cub Scouts.](#)

You should visit ... Ocqueoc Falls State Forest Campground

Situated on the banks of the Ocqueoc River, this rustic campground offers great opportunities for hiking and fishing. The park is located in Presque Isle County, 12 miles west of Rogers City.

This quaint campground nestled in a beautiful hardwood forest, offers spectacular views. It is located near Ocqueoc Falls. You can hike to the campground's crowning jewel Ocqueoc Falls along the Ocqueoc Falls

Bicentennial Pathway. Ocqueoc Falls are the Lower Peninsula's only waterfall. The pathway includes four loops from 3 to 6 miles in length suitable for hiking, mountain biking and cross-country skiing. You will take in the beauty of the falls and view towering pines and hardwoods as you make your journey.

The first pathway is the shortest and most scenic route, perfect for families with children, while the 6-mile loop offers a longer adventure. The pathway is located 12 miles west of Rogers City via M-68.

Backpacking (dispersed camping) is allowed along the pathway, as long as you are one mile away from Ocqueoc Falls state forest campground.

Visitors can enjoy accessible picnic tables and grills at the falls overlook. Visitors can access the water using either a recycled plastic deck ramp or a set of tiered rocks. Be sure to also take advantage of steelhead and trout fishing from the campground.

There are 13 sites suitable for tent and small trailer use. Camping is limited to a 15-day maximum stay. Amenities include vault toilets and potable water from a hand-pump well. Sites available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Educator's Corner

By Danielle Wilemski

I look forward to the winter season and the snow that comes with it! It brings new life to some of the activities that can be done throughout the year. One of those being hiking – your surroundings look so different. When the snow comes in, it changes your surroundings even more. It may muffle or amplify sounds in the distance. To me, the snow makes everything a little more peaceful, especially being out in the woods. This season I look forward to cross-country skiing again! Last year it became my new hobby, and I loved it. I can't wait to get back out on the trails.

The winter also brings the bitter cold, and sometimes it's a rough season. You must find that spark that keeps you going – for me the icing on the cake is my English lab. He absolutely loves the snow, and watching him zoom, dig and play in the snow makes winter all the better! We had our first snow of the season mid-November, only an inch or so, but it made his day and mine better.

There are so many options when it comes to exploring the snow, from snowball fights, sledding (traditional or cardboard!), skiing and ice fishing to snowshoeing and more! I invite you to try something new this season that you have never done before, and you may just find yourself with a new seasonal hobby! Stop by the Outdoor Adventure Center on one of our Wonderful Winter Outdoors days to try a new activity this season. I hope to see you soon!

Archery at the OAC

Welcome to the Outdoor Adventure Center's archery range!

We offer a variety archery experiences you can choose from, ranging in price from free to \$60 for a four-week session. To enhance your target practice, we offer National Archery in the Schools Program targets by Morrell, 3D animal targets, paper targets and much more! Archers will have the opportunity to practice shooting distances of from 6 to 20 yards in the advanced programs.

For all archery programs:

- Participants must be 8 years of age or older.
- Closed-toed shoes are required on the range.
- A signed waiver for all participants must be on file before accessing the range.
- Children under the age of 18 must have a waiver signed by a parent or guardian and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian in the building.
- All equipment is provided.

For Graduate Shoot:

- Outside equipment with a draw weight over 30 pounds is prohibited.
- Crossbows and broadhead arrows are prohibited. Only target-grade arrows are permitted.
- The OAC does not provide assembly or maintenance support for outside equipment.

Try-It!

This is your opportunity to give archery a try. This 30-minute program is designed as a brief introduction to archery. Participants will learn to safely handle a bow and shoot several arrows.

Preregistration is not available for this program. Participants must sign up on-site at the Outdoor Adventure Center on the day the program is offered. Sign-up will begin about an hour before the first program and is on a first-come, first-served basis.

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

Times: 1:30 p.m. and 2:15 p.m.

Dates:

Sunday, Jan. 8

Saturday, Jan. 28

Saturday, Feb. 11

Sunday, Feb. 26

Sunday, March 5

Saturday, April 8

Sunday, April 30

Archery programming at the Outdoor Adventure Center is ramping up in 2023! The archery team will offer two program tracks: target archery-focused classes and/or bow hunting-focused classes.

After each class, guests will receive guidance on how to take the next steps in their archery journey.

Our April 26 program is a sneak peek at the new bow hunting program track. See full details below. The program will begin in full in May 2023.

[Explore It!](#)

This is your chance to explore archery. This one- hour program will give participants the opportunity to learn to safely handle a bow, learn proper stance and shoot several arrows. Grow your love for archery in this fun, skill-building program. Participants could have the opportunity to practice their shot with various target faces and activities.

Fee: \$12. Preregistration required.

On-site registration is not available after the registration deadline.

Times:

6:30-7:30 p.m. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m. Range time will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. We are not able to accommodate late arrivals.

Dates:

Wednesday, Jan. 11

Wednesday, Feb. 1

Wednesday, March 8

Wednesday, April 12

[Register for Explore It.](#)

[3D Animal Target Archery](#)

Wednesday, April 26, 6-7:30 p.m.

Archers will learn the fundamentals of bow hunting. Guests will learn how to safely handle a bow, have proper stance, and ethical shot placement. Archers will shoot at 3D animal targets.

Fee: \$18 preregistration required.

[Register for 3D Target Archery.](#)

[Archery 101](#)

This four-week program will offer a more in-depth archery experience in a safe and fun environment. Each week will focus on a different part of the shot process with fun drills and games to help students learn the sport of archery in a hands-on way. The program will cover the steps of shooting, and how to retrieve arrows, and will provide plenty of shooting opportunities for students to refine their skills.

Fee: \$60. Preregistration required.

On-site registration is not available after the registration deadline.

Time: 6-7 p.m. Doors will open at 5:45 p.m. Range time will begin promptly at 6 p.m. We are not able to accommodate late arrivals.

Dates: Wednesdays (four weeks), Feb. 8 – March 1.

[Register for Archery 101.](#)

Graduate Shoot

Graduate open shoot is available to students who have taken any paid public archery program at the OAC within one year (this excludes Try-It programs). Sessions will allow returning students the opportunity to practice their skills without repeating the instructional portion of a program. Archery games may be available to archers upon request.

Fee: \$10. Preregistration required.

On-site registration is not available after the registration deadline.

Time: 5:30-6:20 p.m. Range time will begin promptly at 5:30 p.m. We are not able to accommodate late arrivals. Participants bringing their own equipment must arrive by 5:15 p.m. for an equipment inspection.

Dates:

Wednesday, Jan. 11

Wednesday, Feb. 1

Wednesday, March 8

Wednesday, April 12

[Register for Graduate Shoot.](#)

Get Outside

2023 New Year-Shoe Year Hikes

Enter the drawing for new shoes! Generously sponsored by BEARPAW Shoes.

We'll be celebrating hiking in Michigan all year long! Join OAC staff members on any hike (birdwatching, Senior Strolls, Family Hikes and more), and you can enter our monthly shoe drawing. Just look for the BEARPAW logo for an opportunity to enter the raffle.

Winners will receive free pairs of shoes for the family (limit five pairs per drawing). Winners will be selected monthly in a random drawing – need not be present to win. Winners will be notified by phone and/or email and provided instructions for claiming their shoes. If a potential winner cannot be reached after seven days from the first notification attempt, they will forfeit the prize and another name will be drawn.

On New Year's Day, America's State Parks will celebrate with First Day Hike. These hikes provide a means for individuals and families to welcome the coming year in the outdoors, exercising and connecting with nature.

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[Happy New Year - Shoe Year Hike](#)

Sunday, Jan. 1, 2-3 p.m.

To kick off State Park Madness and winter recreation with the OAC, we're exploring the Dequindre Cut on New Year's Day.

We'll have a gift for one lucky participant – free shoes for the family, courtesy of Bearpaw Shoes!

Fee: This is a free outdoor program. The OAC is closed on Jan. 1.

Preregistration required.

[Register for New Year-Shoe Year Hike.](#)

Can't make it to the OAC for a hike, but still want to play? No worries! You can join the fun virtually.

To enter our Shoe Year raffle online, tag DNR Outdoor Adventure Center on Facebook: #happyshoeyearOAC #hikingforthenewyear #OACHikeswithBEARPAW.

Be sure to share great photos of you and your loved ones on the trail Jan. 1 or 2.

The lucky 28th post wins!

[Wonderful Winter Outdoor Activity](#)

Saturday, Jan. 7; Saturday, Jan. 21 and Saturday, Feb. 4, 2-3 p.m.

Join us outside the OAC for a fun winter activity. From snowshoeing to snow painting to wintertime hikes, we can do all sorts of fun activities this time of year right outside the front door, and across our state! These activities will be weather- and condition-dependent. Toss your winter gear in the car, just in case!

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

[Check our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information.](#)

[Outdoor Winter Night on Belle Isle](#)

Friday, Jan. 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

Join us at the Belle Isle Nature Center for some outdoor winter fun! We'll enjoy a bonfire, owl prowl hike and snowshoeing (weather-dependent)!

FEE: This is a free outdoor program that take place offsite at the Belle Isle Nature Center.

Preregistration required.

[Register for Outdoor Winter Night on Belle Isle.](#)

[OAC Running Club - Couch to 5K](#)

Sundays, Jan. 22 - March 19, 9-10:30 a.m. weekly

Join us for our very first Couch to 5K program at the Outdoor Adventure Center! Meet our OAC educators and special guests weekly for a brief informational session, followed by a run outdoors on the Dequindre Cut. Informational sessions will help you connect with other runners, set your fitness goals, and learn tips and tricks to enhance your performance.

This program is designed for those new to running – we will follow a Couch to 5K plan each week.

Running Club participants are encouraged to register for the 4th Annual Lumberjack Run on March 25. See Special Events section for details. This is an outdoor event held rain or shine; please dress for the weather.

Fee: \$15. Preregistration required.

[Register for OAC Running Club.](#)

Birding Belle Isle

Sunday, Jan. 29 and Sunday, April 16, 9-11 a.m.

Belle Isle is a great place for birding any time of the year! For our January and April programs, we'll focus on migrant waterfowl on the waters of the Detroit River, inland canals and lagoons throughout the island. We'll meet on the west end of the island, just west of the MacArthur Bridge, then caravan to different locations according to where the birds are! Dress for the weather, as it can be quite cold and windy near the river during the colder months. Staff will provide a spotting scope to share among guests, and a limited number of binoculars will be available for loan.

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

FEE: This is a free outdoor program that take place offsite at Belle Isle Park.

Preregistration required.

[Register for Birding Belle Isle – Jan. 29.](#)

[Register for Birding Belle Isle – April 16.](#)

Ice Fishing

Sunday, Jan. 29 and Sunday, Feb. 19 (Free Fishing Weekend – no license required), 1-3 p.m.

Fishing is not just for the warmer months! Join our educators for ice fishing at Milliken State Park. We will learn what equipment is needed and how to safely fish on ice. Equipment and guidance will be provided.

Participants 17 years or older attending the Jan. 29 program will need to purchase a fishing license prior to the program. For safety reasons, we will not be able to accommodate any late arrivals. Dress appropriately with winter boots and outerwear. All participants, even those not actively fishing, need proper outwear.

FEE: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Ice Fishing – Jan. 29.](#)

[Register for Ice Fishing – Feb. 19 \(Free Fishing Weekend\).](#)

Family Hikes – Let's Explore

Five-week series, beginning Thursday, March 23, 9-10:30 a.m.

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

Get outdoors this spring with the family and explore our wonderful Michigan state parks.

Our hiking series begins at the Outdoor Adventure Center on March 23 with a 30-minute information and discussion session, including tips and tricks for hiking Michigan's state parks with little ones. Then we'll gear up and hit the trail! After March 23, hikes will begin at the destinations listed below, not at the OAC. Preregistration required for each hike.

Participants will receive a DNR Stamp and Go Guide at their first hike, and a stamp for each park visited during the Family Hiking Series.

Week 1 – March 23 – DNR Outdoor Adventure Center and Milliken State Park in Detroit.

Week 2 – April 6 – Maybury State Park in Northville.

Week 3 – April 20 – Proud Lake Recreation Area in Commerce Township.

Week 4 – May 4 - Algonac State Park in Marine City Week 5 – May 18 - Sterling State Park in Monroe.

Fee: \$5 per family. Preregistration required.

[Register for Family Hikes – Let's Explore.](#)

Detroit Pheasant Walk

Sunday, April 30, 8:30-10 a.m. AND 12:30-2 p.m.

Did you know that the ring-necked pheasant has been a resident species of Detroit for decades? Join OAC staff and Detroit Audubon for a walk along the riverfront and other areas around the OAC to look and listen for this beautiful Detroit grassland bird. We'll discuss how pheasants may have gotten here and why they have stayed, and we'll also look for any other migrant birds passing through for the season. Limited binoculars will be available for loan.

As an extra bonus, join us for a showing of the award-winning documentary short "Pheasants of Detroit" by Diane Cheklich and Diane Weiss at the conclusion of our walk.

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

FEE: This is a free outdoor program. This afternoon film showing takes place during regular operating hours; admission fees apply for building access.

Preregistration required.

[Register for Detroit Pheasant Walk.](#)

Grown-Up Gatherings

GNO: Archery

Friday, Jan. 27, 6-8:30 p.m.

Join us at the Outdoor Adventure Center with your girlfriends for a "girls' night outdoors" of archery and fun! This evening will feature an archery class in our indoor range. After our one-hour archery class, we will have a trivia competition with light snacks and drinks.

This event is open to those 21 and older and is sponsored by Friends of the OAC. Light snacks and beverages will be included.

The doors to the Outdoor Adventure Center will open at 6 p.m. for guests to explore the building before the program starts 6:30 p.m.

Fee: \$20. Preregistration required.

This program is subject to cancelation if minimum enrollment is not reached.

[Register for OAC GNO: Archery.](#)

Rum-Running Stories

Friday, Feb. 24, 6-8:30 p.m.

The Detroit River was a pretty busy place during Prohibition. With tremendous amounts of illegal liquor entering the United States from Canada during the 1920s and early 1930s, stories abound. Join some young “old timers” as we travel back to the era of blind pigs, rum-running and panther sweat.

Participants are urged to dress for the occasion in period-style clothing and tell a few stories of their own! Our friends from the Lake Erie Metropark Marshlands Museum are joining us to present this fascinating program.

The doors to the Outdoor Adventure Center will open at 6 p.m. for guests to explore the building before the program starts at 6:30 p.m.

This event is open to those 21 and older and is sponsored by Friends of the OAC. Beer, wine, nonalcoholic beverages and light snacks will be provided.

Fee: \$20 per person. Preregistration required.

This program is subject to cancelation if minimum enrollment is not reached.

[Register for Rum-Running Stories.](#)

Wine Bottle Hummingbird Feeders

Friday, April 28, 6-8:30 p.m.

Put your empty wine bottle to use! Enjoy a short program about hummingbirds and how you can attract these beautiful birds to your home - whether you have a huge backyard or a city balcony. Then we'll provide instruction and materials to convert your empty wine bottle to a crafty, decorative hummingbird feeder! You bring the empty wine bottle, we'll provide the drinks and snacks (including wine!).

The doors to the Outdoor Adventure Center will open at 6 p.m. for guests to explore the building before the program starts at 6:30 p.m.

This event is open to those 21 and older and sponsored by Friends of the OAC. Michigan wine, nonalcoholic beverages and light snacks will be served during the program.

Fee: \$27 per person.

Preregistration required.

This program is subject to cancelation if minimum enrollment is not reached.

[Register for Make a Wine Bottle Hummingbird Feeder.](#)

Just for Kids

Little Cub and Explorers Club!

Why not share all the fun together? We've decided to try out a new format for our former Cub Club and Young Explorers programs, inviting all participants ages 3-10 for a combined experience, with separate focus activities for the different age groups. We'll explore a different topic each month, beginning with an introductory activity for everyone, followed by two choices for age-appropriate activities – one for Little Cubs (ages 3-6) and one for Explorers (ages 7-10). Little Cubs will enjoy crafts and a story time, and Explorers will dive a little deeper into science and exploration.

Note that activities for the Explorers will last approximately 30 minutes longer than those for Little Cubs. Activities may or may not include outdoor exploration, so please come prepared for the weather!

[Little Cub and Explorers Club: Animal Tracks and Scat](#)

Saturday, Jan. 21, 10:30 a.m.-noon

Winter is a great time to look for signs that animals leave behind, like tracks and scat! We'll learn how to identify some common mammal tracks, practice our skills with some indoor activities, then check outside for local winter animal activity.

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Little Cub and Explorers Club: Animal Tracks and Scat.](#)

[Little Cub and Explorers Club: Winter Outdoor Recreation](#)

Saturday, Feb. 18, 10:30 a.m.-noon

Let's take the winter fun outdoors! Activities could include some of Michigan's finest winter pastimes – sledding, playing in the snow, looking for animal tracks, snowshoeing or ice fishing depending on weather conditions.

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Little Cub and Explorers Club Winter Outdoor Recreation.](#)

[Little Cub and Explorers Club: Busy Beaver](#)

Saturday, March 18, 10:30 a.m.-noon

Our March program will focus on the fascinating, engineering, busy, large rodent - the beaver! This mammal has made a big comeback around the Detroit River over the past several years. We'll take a look at what makes the beaver unique and search for signs of this animal at Milliken State Park.

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Little Cub and Explorers Club: Busy Beaver.](#)

[Little Cub and Explorers Club: Scales 'n Slime](#)

Saturday, April 29, 10:30 a.m.-noon

Springtime is when we first start to see or hear Michigan's reptiles and amphibians after the cold winter months. We'll take an up-close look at some of the species found in Michigan and look for some of them at nearby Milliken State Park!

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Little Cub and Explorers Club: Scales 'n Slime.](#)

Camp Explore 2023

Registration begins Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 8 a.m.

Session 1: July 17-20.

Session 2: July 31-Aug. 3.

8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 2-10 p.m. Thursday.

Join us for a thrilling week of hands-on activities and classic camp games!

This four-day camp is open to rising fifth through eighth graders. Explore the one-of-a-kind Outdoor Adventure Center, fish and hike at Milliken State Park and venture down the Dequindre Cut with our enthusiastic camp counselors in a variety of on- and off-site outdoor adventures.

End the week with a lock-in and pizza party at the OAC!

FEE: \$140 per person; member discount 25%.

[Register for Camp Explore 2023.](#)

Summer Camp Preview

Sunday, March 19, 12:30-3 p.m.

Camp Explore at the Outdoor Adventure Center invites registered and prospective summer campers and their families to preview our 2023 programs. Experience exciting summer activities including archery, meet the staff and have all your questions about camp answered!

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Summer Camp Preview.](#)

Live Animals

[Spirit of Alexandria Nature Bus and Live Animals, presented by Howell Nature Center](#)

Saturday, March 4, 2:30-4:45 p.m.

Join Howell Nature Center staff as they present Birds, Mammals and Reptiles. This 1.5-hour program begins with a one-hour live wildlife presentation inside the OAC. Following the presentation, preregistered guests can explore the mobile classroom full of hands-on activities about the adaptations of native Michigan wildlife and the wonders of nature!

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required for the nature bus experience.

Only the admission fee is charged at registration.

[Register for Spirit of Alexandria Nature Bus.](#)

Down on the Farm in Downtown Detroit – Upland Hills Farms at the OAC

Sunday, April 23, noon-3 p.m. (members can arrive at 11 a.m.)

Agriculture is an important part of Michigan's past, present and future. Meet some of our farm animal favorites right here at the OAC. Our archery range will be transformed into a barn, and you will be able to get up close to cows, pigs, chickens and more! This is a popular exhibit – there may be a wait during hours of operation.

Fee: Included with the price of admission.

Active Aging Adventures

Brunch & Learn

Join us for a new monthly series! Each month we will feature a program just for seniors. Throughout this series, participants will have opportunities to meet our on-site educators, listen to guest presenters and take part in various natural resource-themed activities. All programs begin at 9 a.m. and include pastries, coffee and tea upon entry. At 9:30 a.m., presentations will begin, so sit back and enjoy your snack during an exciting and informative program, then wrap up with time to explore the OAC exhibits.

Fee: \$6 per person; preregistration required. Payment can be made for groups or individuals.

State Park History

Thursday, Jan. 19

Join us for a breathtaking view of the Detroit River as Scott Pratt of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources describes the best features of our major park properties and spotlights some hidden gems within our state park system. Mr. Pratt is an engaging speaker, and his presentation will help you plan your next trip!

[Register for State Park History.](#)

Trappers and Traders

Thursday, Feb. 9

Detroit was founded in 1701 as a fur-trading post in the wilderness. We'll explore how the abundant natural resources of the Detroit River shaped our local history and discover the roles of Native Americans and the French voyageurs during the era of the fur trade here in Michigan and the Great Lakes. Audience participation will be a big part of this presentation!

[Register for Trappers and Traders.](#)

Maple Sugar: Nature's Sweet Treat

Thursday, March 9

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

Celebrate one of Michigan's tastiest natural resources during this one-hour, hands-on program! We'll explore the adaptations that make the marvelous maple sap so sweet and learn about Michigan's maple syrup industry through history. End the experience with a tasting of local syrup. This program is indoors and outdoors – dress for the weather.

[Register for Maple Sugar: Nature's Sweet Treat.](#)

Marvelous Michigan Geology

Thursday, April 27

What natural processes gave our state its shape and abundant natural resources? Find out more about the fascinating geology of the Great Lakes State and enjoy a virtual tour of some of our most breathtaking and interesting sites. Then we'll rock through some activities and have fun with fossils!

[Register for Marvelous Michigan Geology.](#)

Senior Stroll – Riverfront Rambles

Join a naturalist for a casual stroll along the riverfront and through Milliken State Park. Every other month, we'll focus on a topic related to natural or cultural history. Wear your walking shoes and dress for the weather – we'll go out rain, snow or shine!

Fee: This is a free outdoor event. Regular admission fees apply for building access.

Enter the drawing for new shoes!

Ducks on the River

Thursday, Jan. 19. 1-2 p.m.

Many duck species, such as mergansers, will overwinter along the Detroit River if there is open water. Find out more about how they survive and how we can help them as we take a brisk stroll along the waterfront. Binoculars provided, but feel free to bring your own.

Voyageurs and Ribbon Farms

Thursday, March 16, 10-11 a.m.

After years of hard work as voyageurs, some settled along the Detroit River in what were known as ribbon farms. Explore the lives and history of the voyageurs and fur trade in this region while walking along the riverfront.

Upcoming Senior Stroll topics:

- May 18 – Songbird Migration.
- July 20 – Wild and Wonderful Wetlands.

Special Events

[Don't Move a Mussel! Or Any Other Non-Native Species...](#)

Saturday, Feb. 11, 1-4 p.m.

Join OAC staff and several guest agencies to learn about some of the invasive species common here in Michigan and the Great Lakes region, what is being done to combat them and how you can help in the effort! We'll be joined by DNR Forest Resources Division, Michigan Sea Grant, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Friends of the Detroit River and others.

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

[Lumberjack Pancake Run](#)

Saturday, March 25

9 a.m.: .5K run (just 162 feet, fun for every age!)

9:30 a.m.: 5K

Pancake breakfast follows.

This race takes place on the Dequindre Cut, starting in front of the Outdoor Adventure Center. The course is flat and fast. Race swag includes a custom medal, lumberjack buff, entry to the Outdoor Adventure Center beginning at 10 a.m. and a pancake breakfast.

All participants are encouraged to wear their best flannel apparel and sport their best lumberjack beard. Prizes will be awarded.

Fee: \$22. Preregistration required.

General admission rates apply for supporters, plus \$5 for breakfast.

[Register for supporter for Lumberjack Pancake Run.](#)

[Register for participant in Lumberjack Pancake Run.](#)

[Lumberjack Day](#)

Saturday, March 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

After our Lumberjack Run, join us for special programming and activities that will include a maple syrup infusion, DNR Forestry info table and Michigan lumber history table.

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

[Homeschool Hangout: An Academic Adventure](#)

Thursday, March 2, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Bring your young scholars to the Outdoor Adventure Center for a fun and educational experience! This event is designed as an opportunity for homeschool students grades Pre-K through 8th to enjoy the Outdoor Adventure Center while participating in programs by grade level. During this event, the building will be closed to the public. Preregistered students and their families may explore the Outdoor Adventure Center exhibits and participate in programs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Children must be registered as “students” under the appropriate grade categories to be eligible to participate in programs designated for that grade level. Individuals registered under the “non-student” category will not be admitted to programs due to space constraints but may still enjoy the OAC exhibits for the duration of the event. Programs for this season’s Homeschool Hangout will focus on birds.

Fee: Included with the price of admission. Preregistration required. Only the admission fee is charged at registration. Preregistration required.

Members: Email DNR-OAC@Michigan.gov to register.

[Register for Homeschool Hangout: An Academic Adventure.](#)

Community Open House

Thursday, May 11, 6-8 p.m.

Come on down to the Outdoor Adventure Center for the Community Open House! This is an opportunity for you to meet our area community groups while learning about many social, leisure and educational programs they offer.

Fee: Complimentary admission.

Featured Interactive Exhibit

State Park Madness

Jan. 2-29

It's State Park Madness! The four-week tournament kicks off Jan. 2 – join us on Facebook or at the OAC to check each park's stats, learn about winter recreation opportunities and vote for your top pick each week!

Brackets will be updated weekly on Saturdays. The winning park will be announced Jan. 28 during Michigan's 186th birthday celebration at the OAC.

Remembering Dr. King

Saturday, Jan. 14, 2-3:30 p.m.

Join us as we explore Dr. King's involvement in environmental science.

Squirrel Appreciation Day

Sunday, Jan. 22, 1-2 p.m.

Love a squirrel today by learning about squirrel life and making fun crafts and drawings.

Random Acts of Kindness

Saturday, Feb. 18, 2-3:30 p.m.

Join us as we take time to show our appreciation and kindness by making a kindness card or painting a friendship rock.

Wildlife March Madness

March 1-31

It's Wildlife March Madness! The four-week tournament kicks off March 1 – join us on Facebook or at the OAC to check each animal's stats and vote for your top pick each week!

Brackets will be updated weekly on Wednesdays. The winner will be announced at the end of the month.

The More You Know

Reading Month Guest Author – Barbara J. Barton; *Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan*
Sunday, March 12, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Member benefit early seating: 1:20-1:30 p.m. Open seating: 1:30 p.m.

Celebrate “March is Reading Month” and Michigan’s natural and cultural heritage with us! Barb Barton, local author and singer-songwriter, will share her experiences as an artist, scientist and wild food forager through story and song. Barb’s focus will be the ecology, role and importance of our native wild rice beds and the uncertain future of this amazing plant.

In her presentation *Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan*, Barb will introduce us to the history, culture, biology, economics and spirituality surrounding this sacred plant. She begins her story in the days before European colonization and travels in time through the logging and industrialization eras. Barb explores the worlds of the Anishinaabek and the colonizers as she contrasts their different perspectives and relationships with manoomin. The audience learns about Michigan’s historic wild rice beds, why many of them vanished and how both tribal and nontribal people have sought to restore and protect manoomin across the landscape. Attendees will also learn how manoomin is harvested and processed.

Barb Barton is the author of the books “The Amazing Adventures of a Midwestern Girl” and “*Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan*,” which traces the interwoven stories of the Anishinaabek tribe, European colonizers and the role native wild rice has had in shaping their shared histories. Barton also travels the state as a public speaker – and sometimes folk musician – continuing the oral traditions that have informed her research and writing. Barton has a master’s degree in ecology from Eastern Michigan University and a bachelor’s in wildlife management from Michigan State University. “*Manoomin*” won a 2020 Choice Outstanding Academic Title (American Library Association), a 2019 Michigan Notable Book Award and a 2018 Michigan History Award in the University Press/Commercial Press category.

“Digging into the past, reviving a plant species, sharing in Native traditions – this is Barb Barton’s fascinating look at wild rice in Michigan! The cultural awareness that Barton brings to her research lends itself to show a more well-rounded view of her subject. Part science, part history, part adventure, Barton’s book on *Manoomin* is a fascinating read and should not be missed! And her story is even better when you hear it in person!”

~Emily Clare, program director, Cheboygan Area Public Library

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

Science Olympiad Workshops

Each Science Olympiad workshop will cover the basics of the topic. The program is open to Science Olympiad team members, their coaches and/or parents. No siblings, please.

Amazing Arthropods

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6-7:30 p.m.

After a brief introduction, be prepared to rotate through mock event stations to practice your competition knowledge and skills! No insect collection specimens will be needed for this program. Teams are encouraged to bring their 8.5 x 11-inch note page if they have it started.

Fee: Complimentary admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Amazing Arthropods.](#)

Weather or Not

Tuesday, Feb. 14 and Thursday, Feb. 16, 6-7:30 p.m.

This workshop will include topics such as fronts, air masses, relative humidity and the formation of thunderstorms, tornadoes and hurricanes. Every effort will be made to cover the major topics within the event. The workshop includes a presentation and a practice test.

Fee: Complimentary admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Weather or Not – Feb. 14.](#)

[Register for Weather or Not – Feb. 16.](#)

Wildlife Safari

Thursday, Feb. 16, 6-7:30 p.m.

After a brief introduction, be prepared to rotate through mock event stations to practice your competition knowledge and skills! Stations will include photographs, furs, tracks and/or skulls. Bring your Mammals of Michigan field guide!

Fee: Complimentary admission. Preregistration required.

[Register for Wildlife Safari.](#)

[Paddlesports and Water Trails in Metro Detroit](#)

Sunday, March 19, noon-3 p.m.

One thing's for sure – here in metro Detroit, we're surrounded by water! Visit the OAC today to learn more about how you can take advantage of the many canoe and kayak opportunities that are available in our area. During your OAC visit today, we'll have guests from Friends of the Rouge, Friends of the Detroit River and others here to share information about local water trails, guided trips, livery services in the area and more!

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

[Paddle to the Sea](#)

Sunday, March 26, 1-3 p.m.

Join us for a fun activity to honor one of our favorite stories centered around our Great Lakes – “Paddle to the Sea!” We'll have a scavenger hunt and other hands-on activities related to the characters and themes of this beautiful children's story. Participants will also have the opportunity to enter to win their own copy of “Paddle to the Sea” to take home with them.

FEE: Included with the price of admission.

[Wild Science Saturdays](#)

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

There's always more to nature than meets the eye! We'll take an in-depth look at the science behind natural phenomena with hands-on activities one Saturday each month.

Fee: Included with the price of admission.

Let It Snow!

Saturday, Jan. 21

Is it true that no two snowflakes are alike? Find out and learn more "cool" things about snow!

Outstanding Owls

Saturday, Feb. 25

Owls are amazing! Their adaptations for the "night life" have inspired all sorts of new technology. With activities and games, we'll explore how owls survive.

Animal Architects

Saturday, March 18

Animals build structures for many reasons. What can we learn from these clever architects? Create your own building with some secrets from our wild neighbors.

Recycling, Nature's Way

Saturday, April 15

Nothing is ever wasted in nature. Design a recycled craft as we explore the ways nature reuses and recycles. This program will take place outside, so dress for the weather!

Certification Programs

Hunter Education - Field Day

Saturday, March 18, 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m.

The main purpose of the hunter education field day course is to provide an alternative to the traditional course. This course is the same as the traditional hunter education course; however, the classroom portion is completed by enrolling in the online training session. In order to purchase a hunting license in Michigan, an individual born on or after Jan. 1, 1960, is required to successfully complete an approved hunter education course. The online course is fee-based and can be taken at www.hunter-ed.com/Michigan. Students completing the online course followed by the field day must present a copy of their certificate of completion (voucher) the online course at the start of the field day. All participants must have successfully completed the online hunter education course prior to registering for the field day

About the Field Day:

- Four-hour course.
- Written test (80% or better to pass) and practice assessment (pass/fail).
- No minimum age requirement; however, students under 18 years of age should be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or other adult approved by parent or legal guardian.

Fee: Free for participants. Regular admission fees apply for building access by nonstudents.

[Register for Hunter Education – Field Day.](#)

Boater Safety

Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

This is a no-cost event being hosted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division and the Wayne County Sheriff Department at the Outdoor Adventure Center.

No meals will be provided at this event. We recommend bringing a bag lunch. All other course materials and supplies will be provided. The main purpose of the boater safety education course is to train knowledgeable, safe and responsible boaters. Topics covered include general boating and water safety, navigational rules, causes and prevention of crashes, operation and fueling techniques, environmental concerns and reporting responsibility.

Any motorized boat operator born after June 30, 1996, is required by law to pass an approved boater safety course and to carry a boater safety certificate. In addition, boater education is also required for all personal watercraft operators born after Dec. 31, 1978. Michigan's boater education course is taught by a dedicated corps of certified volunteer instructors, sheriffs' deputies and Michigan conservation officers.

About the class:

- In-person, traditional classroom setting.
- Written test (75% or better to pass).
- No minimum age requirement; however, students under 10 years of age must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or other adult approved by parent or legal guardian.

Fee: Free for participants. Regular admission fees apply for building access by nonstudents.

[Register for Boater Safety.](#)

Recreation Passport

Cost, where to purchase and details (increases effective March 1, 2023):

- Vehicles: \$13 when purchased with your license plate registration renewal through the Secretary of State.
- Vehicles: \$18 when purchased at state parks, DNR customer service centers (cash or checks only) or at the Secretary of State outside your license plate registration renewal cycle. (Recreation Passport fee + \$5 convenience fee = \$18).
- Motorcycles: \$7 when purchased with your license plate registration renewal through the Secretary of State.
- Motorcycles: \$12 when purchased at state parks and DNR customer service centers (cash or checks only) or at the Secretary of State outside your license plate registration renewal cycle (Recreation Passport fee + \$5 convenience fee = \$12).
- Moped: \$7 when purchased at state parks.
- Commercial daily pass \$20 when purchased at state parks (24k+ lbs and/or seating capacity of 16+).
- A resident Recreation Passport cannot be purchased online.
- The purchase of a separate Recreation Passport is required for any hitched or unhitched towed vehicles.

The \$5 convenience fee will not be applied to purchases made at/for:

- Belle Isle Park.
- Non-street-legal vehicles at the Silver Lake State Park ORV area.
- Non-annual renewing vehicles (i.e., historical/authentic, street-legal moped, tribal government, dealer, temporary, manufacture, non-profit organization (Y) plates).
- Mopeds (a moped Recreation Passport is not available for purchase at the Secretary of State, so the \$5 convenience fee does not apply).
- Commercial vehicles.

Thank you for supporting your state parks by purchasing your Recreation Passport and by visiting our beautiful state parks.

Outdoor Adventure Center

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This newsletter is posted on our website and is available by email.

Visit Michigan.gov/OAC and scroll to the bottom of the page to sign up for email alerts, including this triannual newsletter.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to Michigan.gov/DNR.