

The Leaflet

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES

Keeping Your Forest Preserves Weed-Free

Animal Encounters: COYOTES



While enjoying Champaign County's forest preserves, be aware of the animals that you might encounter. Coyotes are a fairly common sight in the preserves, on the golf course, in the gardens, and on hiking paths and trails. They are an important part of the local ecosystem. Education and preventive measures can go a long way in minimizing human-coyote conflicts.

COYOTE TRAITS AND BEHAVIORS

- Coyotes live throughout Illinois and in every state except Hawaii. Their range has expanded with the human removal of their predators, such as the wolf.
- They weigh 15-30 pounds. Females are slightly smaller than males.

- Coyotes eat whatever is available, including seeds, fruit, dead animals, rodents, rabbits, garbage, pet food, house cats, and small dogs.
- They breed every year. They have two to 12 pups per litter, with an average of six. Pups are raised in a den.
- Coyotes may be seen in groups, called packs, or alone.
- Removing coyotes from one area generally results in other coyotes moving in from surrounding areas and breeding faster.

If you see a coyote there is no need for alarm, coyotes rarely attack humans. However, if you come upon a coyote or pack while in the preserves, remember, the human is dominant and must act that way.

Here are some things to remember:

- Be as BIG and LOUD as possible; use arm gestures to exaggerate your size.
- Always keep your pet on a leash; if you see a coyote, pick up your small dog and keep large pets on a short leash and under your control.
- Keep small children near you.
- If the coyote is not deterred by your voice and movements, throw small stones or sticks in its direction.
- Slowly move toward a place with people; back away slowly while maintaining eye contact. Don't stimulate their chase instinct by running or allowing your children or dog to run.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please see <https://bit.ly/2FC4YjO>.

For the Forest Preserve's Natural Resources Department,

2018 was a year for bringing in the new and catching up on the old. Turnover of three full-time staff positions in late 2017 and early 2018 meant that most of the department needed to be trained on equipment and become familiar with district properties and projects. The new staff has responded to the challenge with great energy and enthusiasm, which has helped us surpass expectations for ecological restoration management over the year. In addition, they have brought in new skills, like GIS mapping, which will help us more effectively communicate management objectives within the department and report results to others.

Since we did not have a major planting project on the schedule for 2018, we took the opportunity to catch up on invasive plant management. Areas where invasive bush honeysuckle and autumn olive have been removed require years of follow up treatment. Due to a high work load and weather conditions, such as ill-timed droughts, we had not been able to keep up with many of these acres of restoration. In

2018 we were able to actively manage all the sites that had been previously managed, ensuring longer-term success.

Weed management along the Kickapoo Rail Trail was another focus of work throughout the year. We had largely stayed out of the way of construction in the previous two years, but in the first year of open trail between Urbana and St. Joseph, a considerable amount of invasive plant management was necessary. Target plants included noxious Canada thistle, teasel, and sweet clover. Through targeted herbicide application, prescribed burning, and selective seeding, we hope to bring the remnant native vegetation back to a semblance of what it was in its prime. We hope you'll find our efforts worthwhile when you visit us in 2019!



Native sunflowers abound along the Kickapoo Rail Trail in the fall.



NR Staff Fall 2018 (L to R): Emily Steffes (Seasonal), Peter Goodspeed (Specialist), Dalton Kerans (Technician), Emily Williams (Technician)

Run for the Trail through the Charity Running Program!

Run for the Kickapoo Rail Trail and help enhance access to the KRT for individuals who use electric wheelchairs! And have a chance to win great Columbia merchandise! www.ccfpd.org/KRT



PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Details on each program and registration can be found at www.CCFPD.org

FEBRUARY

Friday, February 1

OWL PROWL: ALL AGES

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 6-7:30 p.m.

All ages. \$5 per person; children 2 & under are free. Space is limited; register by January 31 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Sunday, February 3

GARDEN SPEAKER SERIES

TREES AND INSECTS: FROM POLLINATORS TO PESTS

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

Adults. FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Monday, February 4

BROWN BAG VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON SERIES: FIRE & ITS MODERN USES

Salt Fork Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Light refreshments and beverages will be available. Please RSVP by January 31: (217) 586-3360 or volunteer@ccfpd.org.

Friday, February 8

OWL PROWL: ALL AGES

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 6-7:30 p.m.

All ages. \$5 per person; children 2 & under are free. Space is limited; register by February 7 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Sunday, February 10

1968 EXHIBIT SPEAKER SERIES: CIVIL RIGHTS IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, February 16

FROG CALL SURVEY TRAINING: BOINKS, PEEPS & TWANGS

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

There will be a follow-up optional field training session April 11. Dress for the weather, as we may go on a short hike. Ages 18 & up. FREE. Register by February 15 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Sunday, February 17

GARDEN SPEAKER SERIES ENSURING THAT ILLINOIS TREES DO NOT BECOME ENDANGERED

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

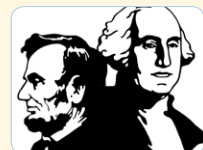
FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Monday, February 18

SCHOOL'S OUT: CELEBRATE GEORGE WASHINGTON & ABE LINCOLN!

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 1-3 p.m.

All ages. FREE. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.



Monday, February 18

SCHOOL'S OUT: GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 1-5 p.m.

All ages. FREE. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or pleiter@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, February 20

OWL PROWL: ADULTS

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 6-7:30 p.m.

Ages 15 & up, participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. \$5 per person. Space is limited; register by February 19 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, February 23

MAPLE SUGAR DAYS

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m. or 12:30-2 p.m.

All ages. \$5 per person. Space is limited. Register for the morning session or the afternoon session. Register by February 22 at ccfpd.org. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.



MARCH

Friday, March 1

SIGN UP FOR SUMMER CAMPS!

Registration for summer camps at Homer Lake and Lake of the Woods Forest Preserves opens March 1. Sign up today for these popular programs! For ages 3-12 years old. Visit ccfpd.org for more info and to register.

Friday, March 1

NATURE PLAY PRE-K: BACKYARD BIRDERS!

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11 a.m.

FREE. Space is limited; register by February 28 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, March 2

MAPLE SUGAR DAYS

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m. or 12:30-2 p.m.

All ages. \$5 per person. Space is limited. Register for the morning session or the afternoon session. Register by March 1 at ccfpd.org. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, March 2

CREATE YOUR OWN DINOSAUR HABITAT

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

\$10 per garden. Register by February 27 at ccfpd.org. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or mmontez@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, March 6 - Wednesday, March 27

EXHIBIT: AUDUBON PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, During Regular Open Hours

FREE. All ages. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or pleiter@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, March 9

The Next Step in Letterboxing: Tips, Tricks, and Techniques

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Letterboxers are encouraged to bring a covered dish for a potluck style lunch. This training will give you the skills you need to attend our "Homerdoodle in the Woods" event in July! Bring a box to plant in the area for other avid letterboxers! FREE. Register by March 8 at ccfpd.org. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Sunday, March 10

GARDEN SPEAKER SERIES TREES AND THEIR VALUE TO ALL

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Thursday, March 14

Homeschool by the Books

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$3 per child. Register by March 7 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Friday, March 15

WOODCOCK WALK

Buffalo Trace Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 7-8 p.m.

All ages. FREE. Space is limited; register by March 14 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Monday, March 18 - Friday, March 22

SPRING BREAK AT HOMER LAKE

Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

Enjoy unique programs for the whole family at Homer Lake every day during spring break!

Monday, March 18

SPRING CLEANUP

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

All ages. FREE. Register by March 17 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or pleiter@ccfpd.org.

Tuesday, March 19

INTRO TO LETTERBOXING

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

FREE. Register by March 18 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, March 20

REMARKABLE REPTILES

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

All ages. FREE. Register by March 19 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Thursday, March 21

SURVIVAL SHELTERS

West Lake Trail (north parking lot), Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

For families and adults. FREE. Register by March 20 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or pleiter@ccfpd.org.

Friday, March 22

FIRE BY FRICTION

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

For families and adults. FREE. Register by March 21 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or pleiter@ccfpd.org.

Monday, March 18 - Friday, March 22

SPRING BREAK AT THE MUSEUM

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2-4 p.m.

Not sure what to fill your day with this spring break? Stop by the Museum for fun-filled activities every day! For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Monday, March 18

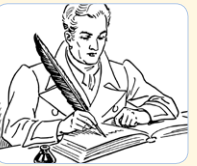
Spinning & Weaving

Want to know how cloth and textiles are produced? Come and try your hand at old fashioned spinning and weaving methods!

Tuesday, March 19

Quill Writing

Try your hand at writing with a quill feather. Take yourself back in time and write a letter like many did centuries ago!



Wednesday, March 20

Butter Churning

We need your help churning this treat! Join us as we create butter using various methods that require just a little cream and no electricity!

Thursday, March 21

Candle Dipping

During the 19th century, candles were the most common form of interior lighting. Dip a wick in some candle wax and take home your very own classic candle!

Friday, March 22

Civil War Craft & Activity Day

The Civil War was an influential time in United States history. Join us for a day of fun and learning as we provide hands-on activities to bring this period in history to life!

Friday, March 29

1968 for Homeschoolers

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 9:30-11 a.m.

Adults must accompany students 12 and under. \$3 per child. Register by March 22 at ccfpd.org. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Friday, March 29

WOODCOCK WALK

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 7-8 p.m.

All ages. FREE. Space is limited; register by March 28 at ccfpd.org; For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, March 30

ILLINOIS RIVERWATCH FULL WORKSHOP

Izaak Walton Cabin, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Minors are welcome to attend at no cost as long as they are accompanied by an adult. For more information and to register, contact the RiverWatch Coordinator, Charlie Blake at cablake@lc.edu or (618) 468-2784, or visit www.ngrrec.org. \$50 per person; must be paid in advance.