

Naturally Speaking

Newsletter for the friends of the LaPorte County Parks.

Spring 2021

Hummingbirds

It is that time of year to get your hummingbird feeders out and filled so they will be ready. We usually see our first hummingbirds at Luhr County Park the first week in May. I have always been fascinated by hummingbirds and they are one of my favorite birds.



Here are some fun facts you might find interesting:

- Hummingbirds drink the nectar found in feeders by moving their tongue in and out about 13 times per second. They can consume up to double their body weight in a day.
- Hummingbirds have no sense of smell. While they can't sniff out feeders, they do have good color vision. Despite this, red dye should not be used in nectar as it could harm the birds.
- Fill your feeders with a 1 to 4 part ratio. 1 part sugar to 4 parts water.
- Hummingbirds have tiny hairs on the tips of their tongues to help them lap up nectar.
- Some hummingbirds will travel over 2,000 miles twice a year during their migration.
- A hummingbird's heart beats up to 1,260 times per minute.
- Hummingbirds have 1,000 to 1,500 feathers, the fewest number of feathers of any bird species in the world.
- A typical wild hummingbird lifespan is 3-5 years, but the oldest known reached 12 years.



Administrative Office
Red Mill County Park
Open: 7am-12pm/12:30pm-5pm
Monday - Thursday
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350
219-325-8315
Fax 219-325-8317
E-Mail lparks@csinet.net
rangerjeremy@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org

Luhr Park Maintenance Facility 219-326-0524

Naturalist Office
Luhr County Park
3178 S. 150 West
LaPorte, IN 46350
219-324-5855
E-Mail natureniki@csinet.net
rangerlaura@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org

Bluhm County Park
3855 S. 1100 West
Westville, IN 46391

Creek Ridge County Park
7943 W. 400 North
Michigan City, IN 46360

(undeveloped)
Kankakee Property
Kankakee Township

Foundation Properties:

(undeveloped)
Sebert Property
Springfield Township

George R. Menkes Nature Preserve
Galena Township

Award Recipients

Outstanding Park Service Award

The Outstanding Park Service Award was presented to Jeremy Sobecki for his outstanding leadership and dedication to the staff, the Board, the Foundation, volunteers, and the LaPorte County Parks. Jeremy's calm approach to situations and issues, allows for the best solutions. It is evident in every day interactions that he treats employees, volunteers, and the public with fairness and kindness.



Volunteer Of The Year Award

The volunteer of the year award goes to Josh Alexander, Custom Earthworks, LLC. Over the past several years Josh has utilized his equipment and time to improve aesthetic appeal and wildlife habitat on the new 20 acres of ground at Luhr County Park. The partnership we've had in the past five years has been incredible and the prairie/sedge meadow at Luhr has become a beautiful addition to Luhr County Park!



Organization Of The Year Award

The 2020 Organization of the Year goes to Family Express for their continued support for our many programs and events. They are quick to lend a hand when we reach out to them. Family Express is committed to providing community service in our county and continue to be a partner with the Parks. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Programs

Each program is limited to maintain social distancing and masks are required.

Luhr County Park Nature Center Hours

Starting April 6th

Open

Tuesday - Thursday
1-4 pm
Saturday - Sunday
12-5 pm



Closed

Monday and Friday

**Masks will be required in the nature center and all visitors should practice social distancing.

Natures Tiny Tots

April 12, 26 and May 3

10 - 11 am FREE Luhr Park
max total 10 (kids & parents)

Toddlers - Pre-School age
(masks required ages 3 plus)
Call at least one week in
advance to signup & assure a
spot 219-325-8315

Come explore nature with your toddlers and preschoolers at Luhr Park. Designed for parents and grandparents to bring out the munchkins for some FUN. Enjoy music, dance with your kids, giggle, storytelling, hands-on activities, take a hike (weather permitting) and just have plain ole fun.

Parent and Child Discovery Days



6-7:15 pm
Luhr Park Morgan Shelter
Ages 3-8

\$5.00 A Child / Per Program
An adult is required to participate.

April 14 Owl Prowl
April 28 Flower Power
May 12 Timber
May 26 Scat and Tracks

Pre-registration is required at least one week in advance. Call 219-325-8315. Payment will be collected at the program.

Migratory Bird & Scavenger Hunt

April 8 Luhr Park

9 - 11:30 am or 1 - 4 pm

Stop by the Nature Center and pick up a fun spring self-guided scavenger hunt. Come outside and go on a scavenger hunt and along the way listen for songbirds and see spring flowers popping up.

Family Fishing Nights

April 12 and 27
May 10 and 25



5- 7:15 pm Luhr Park
All ages welcome

Come out to the Pond at Luhr Park for an evening of fishing. A limited number of poles and bait will be provided. No fishing licenses are required during the family fishing programs. Children must be accompanied by an adult. FREE Pre-registration is required at least one day before each program. Call 219-325-8315

Rock Painting Craft Make and Take



April 15 1 - 4 pm
Luhr Park Nature Center

Bring two of your favorite rocks in to paint them and place somewhere fun for people to find. All ages welcome and children must be accompanied by an adult. The supplies will be available to make your rock perfect while supplies last. FREE No pre-registration required.

Programs

Each program is limited to maintain social distancing and masks are required.

Diabetes Education Q & A

April 28 Luhr Park
9 - 10:30 am Free
call one week before
219-325-8315

Come meet Certified Diabetes Educator Clarise Largen about making the best choices for you and your health. Whether you have diabetes or not join us in this engaging discussion about this growing disease.

Teachers / Groups Scout Leaders



Free Environmental Education Programs are offered to groups throughout the year. The programs last one hour or longer depending on the group size and age. Programs can be scheduled at Creek Ridge, Luhr, Bluhm or Red Mill Parks. Call the Nature Center at 324-5855 or email natureniki@csinet.net for information or to make reservations.

Pinecone Bird Feeders Make and Take Craft

May 4 inside Nature Center
Luhr Park 1 - 4 pm

Stop at the nature center to make a pinecone feeder. All ages welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult. The craft will be available while supplies last. FREE No pre-registration required.

Healthy Lifestyles

A delightful social club committed to help improve your quality of life. Come relax, enjoy nature, and have coffee or tea on the Parks with your new circle of friends. What is even better, its FREE. Luhr County Park from 9 - 10 am on Wednesdays
Call at least one week in advance to signup & assure a spot.
Call 219-325-8315

May 12 - Soil Health, Garden tools and pruning 101 by Sacha Gee-Burns, Solid Waste District

June 9 - GERD; new treatments for relief of heartburn & acid reflux by Dr. Conn, Gastroenterologist

July 14 - Nutrition, food groups and labeling, by Stephanie Thomas, Registered Dietician

August 4th - Sleep disorders and their effects on your health, by Mindi Whittaker, Northwest Health LaPorte

September 1st - fall garden cleanup & separating your plants with Sacha Gee-Burns, Solid Waste District

October 6th - Pulmonary Health, Patti Solona, Respiratory Therapy Manager Northwest Health LaPorte

November 3 - Understanding Medicare, Parts A, B, C and D as well as the upcoming Annual Enrollment Period. Even if you're not on Medicare yet, becoming familiar will enable you to make educated decisions. By Megan Rogers, Specialist for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

Under the Shady Tree Story Time

May 10 FREE
10 am Luhr Park



Hey Pre-school - Elementary age kids, come to Luhr for story time at the Park. Siblings are welcome to join in the fun. Bring a blanket to sit under the shady tree for some fun. Afterwards, stick around for self-guided playtime or bring a snack for family time. All children must be accompanied by an adult. No pre-registration required.

Programs

Each program is limited to maintain social distancing and masks are required.

Kids Fishing Fun Day

June 5
9 - 11am
Luhr Park
All Ages



Children must be accompanied by an adult. Co-Sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Steelheaders. Home Run Hot Dog Concessions will be at the event. **No pre-registration required. Free**

Attention Formal Educators Reptiles and Amphibians Oh My!



If you teach 1st or 2nd grade students in a school that is in LaPorte County, your computer screen, outdoor space, or classroom could have a visit from a park naturalist, along with reptiles and amphibians. Programs can be set up for individual classes with visits to each room, outdoor space, or zoom meeting, lasting 45 minutes each. Length of program may vary depending on method of presentation. Social distancing will take place and masks will be required when distancing is not possible. These programs are free and meet Life Science Standards. Email- natureniki@csinet.net or call 219-324-5855 to schedule your classroom visit.

Birds

H M L O E R N A I R T E I Z R O A T N O E D H L I
A O K P W O C R S M N O U R F E L E S F K R E B A
D E K P O W H U P K P U L N E I L S A L D O N S O
A D W U O E I A A D N I B O R D N C F H I O N V D
W A I R D N C L R L W G R A E H I C I E R K B U R
R Z L P P O K P R L O O K U O V V P H E L L U K L
O L M L E C E K O W L N R N L U Y N H E U G C T F
N W H E C K N I W X N A I C W L A J A E S U A K L
O C F M K R I O S A T I W R H T A A J W D A M E C
O K E A E E P O O A H P A R A U E A D E S K U E A
L O S R R T M C A R D I N A L R Y W H W B O N A Q
C G O T D P E L I C A N M H L E N N M E L U A N B
I K O I N W A A D R I B G N I M M U H S W K W M V
K N G N E F R F L A M I N G O B L C R N O C E L P
N A R D N R R W L W I L G J M P R C N N R I A L W

WORD LIST

ROBIN	BLUEJAY	WOODPECKER
CROW	CARDINAL	OWL
FINCH	HUMMINGBIRD	SPARROWS
EAGLE	HAWK	PURPLE MARTIN
VULTURE	HERON	PELICAN
FLAMINGO	LOON	GOOSE
DUCK	SWAN	CHICKEN



Pioneer Days

September 25 & 26
10 am - 4 pm
Creek Ridge County Park
\$2 for Adults
\$1 Child or Seniors
(4 and under are free)

Step into the past, visit with historically clad re-enactors and vendors. Bring the whole family and experience outdoor cooking, crafts, candle dipping, wagon rides, food, and much more. No pre-registration required.



Visit our website for more
park information:



www.laportecountyparks.org

Regulations of the U.S. Department of Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility; or who desires further information regarding Title VI or subtitle A of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Pub. L. 101-336, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities should write to:

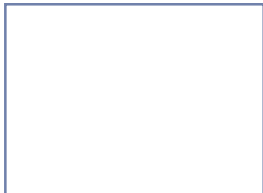
LaPorte County Parks
Attn: Superintendent
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350

National Park Service
Attn.: Director Equal
Opportunity Program
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Receive this newsletter by email

To receive this newsletter by email send us a message at natureniki@csinet.net. Please include Naturally Speaking in your subject. In the message please include your full name and email address you would like to receive the newsletter at.

**All the Parks are
Open 7am to
sunset daily.**



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