



## Summer Adventures Begin at Camp



For many of us, summer brings back memories of playing outdoors. We had over two months ahead of us where we didn't have to go to school. How would we spend our days? Catching fireflies in jars to light our rooms at night? Running through fields and wading in streams? Building forts in the woods? Playing tag and hide-n-seek with our friends until the sun went down?

Too often the children of today are far removed from the kind of outdoor adventures that we remember so fondly. Much of the entertainment in their lives depends on an electrical outlet and a screen of some sort. Studies show that children of this modern age are so dependent on external entertainment that they are losing the ability to create play for themselves. Attention deficit disorders are on the rise, and children's physical well-being is in the decline.

While no panacea exists to alleviate all the problems of childhood, we know from personal experience and scientific research that outdoor play is extremely beneficial for children's imagination, socialization, and physical health. Unfortunately, not everyone has a big field or woods nearby where kids can safely go to play all day. This is where summer camp can help.

Every summer the Dahlem Conservancy offers three weeks of Summer Outdoor Adventure Day Camp for children who are entering first through sixth grade in the fall. Each week we feature a different theme, so campers who want to attend more than one session will have new experiences. Every day is spent outside learning about nature. The kids make nature-inspired art projects, sing environmental songs, catch frogs, watch birds, study skulls and pelts, and raise caterpillars. This year, for the older campers, we are adding some "outdoor survival" skills to the mix, where they will learn how to make fire with two sticks, build debris shelters, and learn how to be comfortable when alone in the "wild."



This summer camp runs July 11-15, July 18-22, and July 25-29. Information and applications are available online at [www.dahlemcenter.org](http://www.dahlemcenter.org). Costs are \$100/week for members and \$115/week for non-members. Camp scholarships are available for families who may not otherwise be able to afford camp. These "camperships" are available in many sizes, depending on the family's need, and can help ease the cost of camp. We also have special discounts for families with multiple children who would like to attend camp. Give us a call to discuss your options!

Don't let another summer go by without the joys of summer camp creating lasting memories for your children, grandchildren, or the kids down the street.



### Visitor Center Hours

Tuesday - Friday  
9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Saturday  
10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Sunday: Noon - 5:00 pm

### Trail Hours

Trails and grounds are open  
daily dawn to dusk.  
The entrance gate opens at  
6:30 am and closes at 9:00 pm

### Contact

7117 S. Jackson Rd.  
Jackson, MI 49201  
Phone: 517-782-3453  
Fax: 517-782-3441  
[www.dahlemcenter.org](http://www.dahlemcenter.org)



## From the Director's Desk

The trees have spread their leaves quickly in the last few weeks and it is a wonderful time to enjoy the Michigan outdoors. Soon summer will be in full swing and I guess it's human nature, but we'll forget about the joy and wonder of the spring awakening when we're in the midst of a new season.

In many ways The Dahlem Conservancy is just now moved from its spring into this new season. We've published short annual re-caps of each year's activities, so past readers will certainly recognize some of this growth. But I think everyone enjoys the perspective that time-lapse videos of flowers and plants blooming and growing gives to us. It's something that realistically takes days or months but through video can happen in just a few seconds.

If you use the time-lapse video perspective – how would you look at Dahlem's changes from 2005 to 2011? The Jackson area community has helped to accomplish wonderful things in a short span of time. I hope that as a member or supporter, it makes you as proud of Dahlem as our Board and staff are.

Membership is up from 525 to 935. Public program attendance is up from 771 to 7,845 participants. Walk-in visitors now total 8,202, where before it was only 2,208. Outdoor Adventure Camp has grown from 65 to 200 children.

To better serve our community, we've completed expansion of our parking space, pavilion, offices and classrooms. We've added a patio, lighting, and the Dahlem Ecology Farm. Directly because of your support, the staff has grown from one full-time and five part-time employees to a team of three full-time and nine part-time personnel.

With the warmth of spring, this Dahlem flower has pushed up through the soil, grown its leaves and stem, and is now blossoming. Where it goes from here will be a direct result of how well it is nourished and cared for by the community. The Jackson community must have a very "green thumb!"

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors, I want to express our deepest gratitude to all the volunteers, members, ambassadors, donors, foundations, businesses, trail leaders, hikers, partners, community leaders, individuals, and anyone else who has helped nurture and cultivate Dahlem's development. If you'd like to get more involved in Dahlem's work, call us at 517-782-3453. We always need more "gardeners!"

--Brad Whaley

### The Dahlem Conservancy Board of Directors

**President:** Bob Grover  
**V. President:** Myrna Berlet-Dutcher  
**Treasurer:** Gary Krupa  
**Secretary:** Kelley Emerson

**Trustees:** Kathy Clark      Todd Emmons  
 Victor Marshall      John McLaughlin, Jr.  
 Rod Melling      Steve Patch  
 Bill Sonnett      Andy Walz  
 Samuel Barnes - JCC Representative

### The Dahlem Conservancy Staff

**Executive Director\*:** Brad Whaley  
**Education Director\*:** Ellen Rathbone  
**Development Director\*:** Brenda Pilgrim  
**Office Manager:** Denise Bigham  
**Receptionist:** Linda Danley  
**Naturalist:** Carrie Benham  
**Naturalist & Stewardship Coordinator:** Gary Siegrist  
**Facilities Coordinator & Weekend Mngr.:** Mark Snedeker  
**Facilities Assistant:** Dennis Morton  
**Green School Facilitator:** Jill Butterfield  
**Ecology Farm Coordinator:** Chris Gancsos  
**Ecology Farm Educator:** Lisa Brown  
**Communications Specialist:** Anne Noble  
**Administrative Assistant\*\*:** Holly Flack  
 (\* = full-time staff; \*\* = Experience Works staff)

# The Friends of Dahlem



We had a great Earth Day April 30 at Sharp Park. What a crowd! The Friends volunteering that day were Betty Desbiens, Kathy Clark, Dorothy Dyer, Bob and Allie Mae Henning, and Irene Sonnett. We sold more than 200 bags of popcorn and gave away lots of small butterflies, frog finger puppets, snakes, bugs and more.

May was a busy month. The Work Bee was rescheduled to May 7 due to bad weather. This time the weather cooperated and the Friends made and served lunch to volunteers. The Ecology Farm folks were so involved they worked right through lunch. Dorothy Dyer, Bob and Allie Mae Henning, Janice Bauer, Mary White and Kathy Clark helped that day. The Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 70, with Shane La Porte as treasurer, is the supporter of this lunch. We thank them all.

Congratulations to Betty Dahlem Desbiens, who was chosen Grand Marshall of this year's Rose Parade in Jackson. Betty is past President of the Friends group. She is still very involved as a board member, chair of the Valentine Tea, and membership chairman. One more big thank you goes to Deborah Hartsuff, the last donator for the Valentine Tea.



Thanks to all for a wonderful year as president of the Friends of Dahlem. -- Kathy Clark

## Welcome, Brenda Pilgrim!

One of the first things Brenda Pilgrim noticed at the Dahlem Center was the atmosphere.

"It's my favorite thing," she said. "The minute you park your car and walk in, there is just that level of peacefulness that embraces you."



The Jackson resident recently joined the Dahlem staff as its Development Director. She is no stranger to this – she has served as regional development coordinator for The Salvation Army and area executive director for the American Cancer Society.

Brenda learned to fish from her father and is an avid gardener and nature lover. Working at Dahlem has ignited her "wow" factor.

"I'm learning a great deal from the naturalists here," she said. "I think it's amazing. "

A native of Moline, Ill., and a graduate of Marycrest College in Davenport, Iowa, Brenda has also worked for the Irish Hills Girl Scout Council and AWARE Inc. In 2004, she was awarded both the Susan B. Anthony Award and the Sojourner Truth Award.

"The thing I am most excited about is being able to recognize and appreciate our donors," she said, "not only for their monetary donations, but their time and compassion and advocacy."

# June/July 2011 Public Programs



## **Natural Beekeeping: Ethics in Beekeeping** Wednesday, June 1, 6:00 PM

When does beekeeping cross the line from nurturing to exploitation? Are bees here to serve us, or should we work in a partnership with these insects, helping them along, but also giving them their due? In this class, Kevin and Jessica Stellers explore the various types of bee/keeper relationships and try to determine which style of keeping, or combination thereof, is best for all.

## **Hit the Trails**

Late spring is a great time to walk the trails at Dahlem. Join our Education Director, Ellen Rathbone, for a tour of the trails. Everything is fair game on this hike: birds, bugs, snakes, frogs, plants. We may spend time in the woods, on the prairie, or by a pond...it all depends on what crosses our path.

**Saturday, June 4, 2:00 PM**



## **The Wonderful World of Garlic**

Do you love the “stinking rose,” but have heard it is difficult to grow? Dahlem’s Ecology Farm Educator, Lisa Brown, takes the mystery out of growing this healthful plant, and shares how to use and preserve the bulbs, cloves and scapes.

**Sunday, June 12, 2:00 PM**

## **Natural Beekeeping: Shelter**

When it comes to keeping bees, is there any one hive style that is the best? What are the pros and cons of wooden boxes, and hollowed out logs? What are the biggest issues one must deal with when it comes to choosing a shelter type? These questions and more will be answered by the Stellers in tonight’s beekeeping class.

**Wednesday, June 15, 6:00 PM**



## **Hit the Trails**

It’s nearly summer. Come celebrate the solstice early with a leisurely walk along our trails with Dahlem’s Education Director, Ellen Rathbone. We’ll look for all the signs of the season and learn about some of the ancient beliefs associated with the longest day of the year.

**Saturday, June 18, 2:00 PM**

## **Natural Beekeeping: Comb**

Most modern beekeeping operations provide prefabricated combs for their bees to fill with honey, but in the wild, bees create their own combs. You, too, can follow nature’s example and let your bees build combs that suit their needs. In tonight’s program, the Stellers teach the ins and outs of honeycombs, and the role the comb plays in the life of the hive.

**Wednesday, June 29, 6:00 PM**



The Dahlem Center is proud to announce that these programs are sponsored by a generous grant from

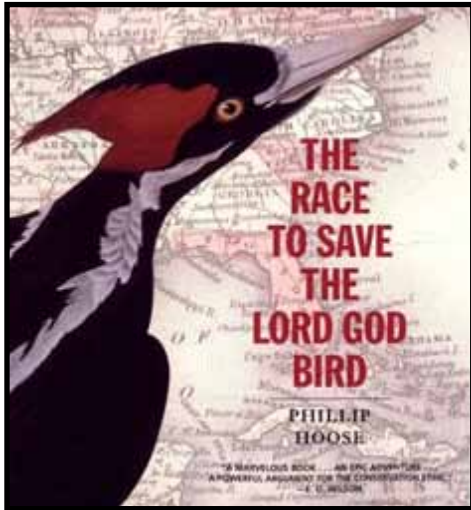


# June/July 2011 Public Programs

## Hit the Trails

**Saturday, July 2, 2:00 PM**

What better way to start the holiday weekend than to take some time to enjoy our trails! Our Education Director, Ellen Rathbone, will take you out to the field to learn about the *Insects' Fourth of July* (à la Edwin Way Teale). We'll bring along a few sweep nets and jars to see who might be out and about this summer afternoon.



## Race to Save the Lord God Bird **Sunday, July 3, 2:00 PM**

Award-winning author, musician and conservationist Phillip Hoose is probably most noted in the world of birding for his book about the ivory-billed woodpecker. The largest of the woodpeckers in North America, the ivory-billed was last seen in Cuba in 1987. In 2004 it hit the news worldwide when researchers claimed to find it once more in its historic forests in Arkansas. Hoose wrote passionately about the history, loss and possible future of this incredible bird and his book received numerous awards and praise throughout the literary, conservation and birding worlds. Join us for an afternoon with Phillip Hoose as he shares his stories and passion about the ivory-billed woodpecker.

## The Good Earth - the Science of Soil

**Sunday, July 10, 2:00 PM**

Dirt is the stuff you sweep up from the floor. Soil, however, is a living thing without which we would not survive. Most people are unaware of the dynamics of soil, but gardeners should become intimately familiar with it. Join Jim Dodge from Jackson County's MSU extension office to learn how to know and work with your soil for optimum gardening success.



## Natural Beekeeping: Seclusion

**Wednesday, July 13, 6:00 PM**

How often should one check on one's hives? Is it best to leave your bees alone all season, or do they enjoy your company? How can you monitor the health of your hive if you don't regularly look inside? Find out how much seclusion your bees actually need in tonight's beekeeping class, taught by Kevin and Jessica Steller.

## Natural Beekeeping: Sustenance

**Wednesday, July 27, 6:00 PM**

While you don't have to purchase grain or fill bowls with kibble when you keep bees, you do have to make sure that your hives are located where the bees have plenty of foraging opportunities. Diversity and quality of pollen and nectar sources are also important. Learn from the Stellers how to keep your bees fat and happy in tonight's beekeeping class.



**All programs require pre-registration. Call 782-3453.  
\$3/person and members free, unless otherwise noted.**

## Stewardship Snippets



“Invasive species” has been a hot topic in the media for the last few years. Sometimes it focuses on insects, like the emerald ash borer, or fish, like the Asian carp, or even plants, like common buckthorn. Many people, however, still do not understand why we should be concerned about these aliens.

Dahlem naturalist Gary Siegrist works with several of our volunteers to eradicate non-native plants from the Dahlem landscape and replace them with native plants. When asked why anyone would want to take the time to try and rid the landscape to non-native invasive plants, he answers quite simply, “All I have to do is start watching Mother Nature’s equivalent of a Broadway musical, which is the spring migration of birds to know the answer.”

Without the removal of exotics, which are crowding out our native plants, we would soon have large monocultures that produce plenty of that one non-native plant species and no other plants, and definitively no native insects.

Why is it important to restore native vegetation? Without native plants, there would be no host plants for our native insects to feed on, and in turn no food sources for our native birds. “Remember,” Gary says, “even seed eating birds feed insects to their young.”

What a shame it would be if future generations miss the chance to witness a brilliantly-colored male scarlet tanager bathed in sunlight, singing from the top of a white oak with a clear blue sky behind it. No more indigo buntings, Baltimore orioles, or rose-breasted grosbeaks would brighten our days with their colors and songs. What would the world be like if we did not get our yearly fix of the warblers as they migrate through our area?

The next time you wonder if it’s worth the effort to battle invasive species, think spring bird migration; turn your thoughts to your favorite native fish; contemplate the diverse colors and shapes in an intact native forest. Would you want to see all this replaced by a handful of non-natives?

## News from the Farm



Things are happening at the Ecology Farm! The Community Garden beds are starting to sprout, with the promise of flowers and vegetables peeking above the soil. All 48 plots were reserved this year, and a waiting-list has formed.

While the Ecology Farm is indeed part of the Dahlem Conservancy, visitors don’t always feel that it is a part of the Dahlem property that they can visit. Visitors are welcome to tour the gardens and pick up tips from our Farm Educator and from the community gardeners. Not only can visitors see the gardens planted by participants, but they can also see demonstration plots tended by Dahlem staff and volunteers: native plants, monarch butterfly waystation, intensive planting techniques.

The Ecology Farm’s bee colony has increased - we now have a third natural hive set up near the other two. Bee keeping is becoming more and more popular across Michigan and the United States, and we are doing our part to spread the good word. Bee classes are offered bi-weekly at \$3/person/class (members are free). The program uses David Heaf’s book *The Bee-friendly Beekeeper: A Sustainable Approach* as it’s handbook, and this book is available in the Nutshell Giftshop.

As the summer approaches, you will likely see some construction going on at the Farm - a second hoop house is scheduled for installation as part of our partnership with Paradise Farm.

Conversations continue as we explore the possibility of adding perennial fruit and vegetable plots to the Farm’s landscape. These might include asparagus, berries, rhubarb and assorted orchard trees.

As always, Community Farm Education Programs are offered on the second Sunday of each month. In June you can learn all about how to grow garlic, and in July we are bringing in a soil scientist teach why your soil is the most important part of your garden.

## Area Schools Awarded Green School Status

The grass wasn't the only new greenery in Jackson County this spring: an impressive 30 schools were awarded Green, Emerald or Evergreen status by Michigan's Green Schools Initiative Act (MGSIA). The Green Schools program, which was started in 2005 by students and teachers in the Hartland School District, was signed into law by Governor Jennifer Granholm in 2006. In that first year, 18 schools qualified. Last year, more than 600 Michigan schools achieved Green status or better.

In 2010 The Dahlem Conservancy, in partnership with Recycling Jackson, hired Jill Butterfield as its Green Schools Facilitator. Since then, Jill has contacted and visited most of the schools within Jackson County to explain the Green Schools program and to help them work toward making their buildings and operations more environmentally friendly.

This spring Jackson County alone had 30 schools

qualify, up from 21 last year. At 47 percent, this was a higher percentage of participating schools than several of the bigger, neighboring counties.

Jackson's Miller Elementary School earned 20 points and was awarded the prestigious Evergreen status by going above and beyond the standard qualifications. Miller students have become experts at recycling everything, including glue bottles, juice pouches, plastic bags, ink cartridges, and sports clothing and equipment. The school's cafeteria staff initiated a unique way of not wasting lunch leftovers by packaging leftovers each day and sending them to families in need, and their janitorial staff recently switched to Green Seal cleaning products.



Green School status is awarded at three levels: Green, Emerald and Evergreen. Participating schools follow guidelines established by MGSIA. There are four basic categories: reduce/reuse/recycle, energy, environment, and miscellaneous. Schools must meet two qualifying points in each category and an additional two in any category of their choice to reach the minimum total of 10 points for Green status. Schools are designated Emerald status for 15 points and Evergreen status for 20 points.

Each qualifying Jackson County school was honored at an awards ceremony in April and presented with a white pine tree seedling, a certificate signed by Governor Rick Snyder, and an official Michigan Green Schools flag. Michigan Green Schools is a non-profit agency dedicated to assisting all public and private K-12 Michigan schools in achieving environmental goals and saving taxpayer dollars and natural resources.

The Dahlem Conservancy and Recycling Jackson could not offer this program without the generosity of Consumers Energy Foundation, The Hurst Foundation, Jackson County Community Foundation, James A. and Faith Knight Foundation, Sage Foundation, and the Speckhard-Knight Charitable Foundation.

### Community Notes

#### Jackson Audubon Programs

- **Breeding Birds of Waterloo Field Trip**  
June 18, 6:45 AM For more information, call Lathe Claffin at 517-522-3949
- **Garden and Bird Carving Field Trip**  
July 9, 10 AM For more information, call Connie Spotts at 517-529-9031

[www.jacksonaudubon.org](http://www.jacksonaudubon.org)



#### GREAT Trips Grand River Environmental Action Team

- **Paddle Stony Lake** 31 Herdale Place, near Napoleon, June 12, Noon
- **Paddle the Kalamazoo River** from King Road to Hannah Street, Albion - May 22, Noon

*\*\* to reserve a boat, call 517-416-4234\*\**

Cancellations posted at [www.great-mi-org](http://www.great-mi-org)

## Naturalist's Niche



All of us have had encounters with wildlife large and small darting from the roadsides in front of our cars. It can be very difficult to avoid hitting a squirrel, rabbit or deer that is in motion. Turtles, on the other hand, move very slowly. They don't dash out in front of our cars, and neither can they hustle out of the way when our vehicles bear down on them as we rush to work, home or the store.

Every spring and summer female turtles make their way from the woods and waters to find just the right soil in which to dig their nests and deposit their eggs. Most of these eggs never get a chance to hatch, for they are sniffed out by eager scavengers (foxes and raccoons) who readily make a meal from any nest they can find. Those fortunate few turtles who mature and hatch must then find their way into the woods and waters their ancestors called home, live long enough to reproduce, and try to leave enough progeny behind to not only replace themselves, but also, hopefully, to increase the population a bit.

Because the life of a turtle is slow-paced and reproductive success is low, it pays for us to do what we can to help turtles along. If you see a turtle trying to cross the road, pull over and give it a hand (if you can do so without putting your own life at risk). Small turtles can be picked up by their sides and carried across the road (in the same direction they were heading). Snapping turtles, however, are less appreciative of our assistance and should be encouraged across with a box or shovel gently shooing them along. Never pick a turtle up by its tail!

It doesn't take much to help a turtle. Keep your eyes open as you drive the roads this season, and if you see a slow-moving speed bump, consider stopping and helping it cross to safety.

Return Service Requested

The Dahlem Conservancy  
7117 S. Jackson Rd.  
Jackson, MI 49201  
www.dahlemcenter.org

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