



# Dunes Echo

Winter 2023/2024 (December, January and February) ~ Vol. XVII, #4

Enhancing the Visitor Experience Today and Tomorrow

## FRIENDS of Indiana Dunes Updates

The FRIENDS have had a busy 2023. We started the year hoping to raise enough donations to complete the rehab of the Indiana Dunes State Park's Trail 8 and create an accessible trail through the Great Marsh. We are happy to say by early Summer 2023 the boardwalk portion of Trail 8 over the marsh with its numerous bump-outs was completed. Now a mobility challenged visitor can take an enjoyable walk or ride on a FRIENDS' purchased ATV on the Trail 8 boardwalk. There are also plenty of places to stop or pull off the trail to view the numerous waterfowl and birds that frequent the Great Marsh.

In May the FRIENDS were able to bring three Polish National Park staff to the dunes to participate in the Indiana Dunes Birding Festival. During the visit, the representative from Poland's Kampinoski National Park re-signed the sister park agreement with Indiana Dunes National Park. The FRIENDS were delighted to take part in this monumental event as 25 years earlier we sponsored the Kampinoski staff who visited for the signing of the original sister park agreement.



This year the Dunes Learning Center celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At their Annual Gala, the Learning Center recognized the efforts of their former Director Geof Benson and recently retired National Park Superintendent Paul Labovitz by bestowing upon them the Founders Award. The FRIENDS are happy to provide funding to cover the costs of their American Camp Association Accreditation as well as help provide educational and fun experiences for school children who might not otherwise have an opportunity to visit the dunes.



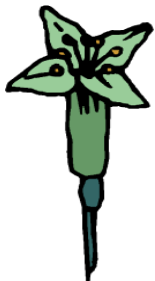
The FRIENDS continue to support animals at the Chellberg Farm. This year the FRIENDS have taken on the financial support of the resident chickens and developed an innovative fundraising program - "Adopt a Flock of Chickens" - to help cover these additional costs. For a \$50 donation to the FRIENDS, you get bragging rights to either the red or green banded flock of chickens, a personalized adoption certificate, and the satisfaction of helping to keep animals on the farm.

The FRIENDS have worked with the Indiana Dunes National Park to create a wide range of fundraising programs. To start with, we are now asking dog owners to donate \$5.00 to the FRIENDS for each Indiana Dunes National Park Bark Ranger Tag they request. Also, the wonderful vegetables grown in the Chellberg Farm Garden are placed in the FRIENDS Produce Stand located in the parking lot adjacent to our office. We suggest a nominal donation for the various items (tomatoes, peppers, squash, onions, melons, and even flowers). Lastly, the addition of Maple Syrup created from the sap collected at Maple Sugar Time is also available for a donation to the FRIENDS. This year we ran out of syrup by mid-June due to the high demand. We are hoping for a good sap run this coming March 2024.

Thank you to all who donated funds for a Chellberg Farm raised turkey. We have received numerous reports on how tasty they were. The predominately grass-fed Herefords will be available in mid-February 2024. FRIENDS members will be able to get parcels of 20 pounds of ground beef for \$7.50/pound while non-members will need to donate \$9.00/pound. If interested, please call 219-707-3617.

This November the FRIENDS offered a Basket Making Field Course at the Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center. The course was full, and all the participants wanted to know when we would be offering another. Future Field Courses are in the planning stages so watch for details in future Dunes Echo newsletters. On November 26, our Vice-Chair Paul Stofko of Running Legs Race Series hosted a 5K run and Turkey Toss at Hawthorne Park in Porter with all proceeds going to the FRIENDS. Thank you Paul for your continued support and dedication as a FRIENDS Board Member.

### Mark Your Calendars - 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Native Plant Sale – May 11, 2024



Our Annual Native Plant Sale will be held on the second Saturday in May at the FRIENDS' Office located on the northwest corner of Mineral Springs and Oak Hill roads (1000 W. Oak Hill Road) in Porter, IN. Pre-sale order forms will be mailed by March 1 to all who purchased plants the past three years.

Volunteer help is always needed for the set-up of the plants and pre-order filling on Friday, May 10 from 9:00am until 4:00pm. On the day of sale, help will be needed from 7:30am until 1:30pm. If you are interested in helping, please contact FRIENDS Chair Angel Gochee-Goins at [angel@dunefriends.org](mailto:angel@dunefriends.org).



# National Park Programs

For more information contact Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center at 219-395-1882 or [www.nps.gov/indu](http://www.nps.gov/indu)  
The programs below are sponsored by the Friends of Indiana Dunes.



## **Warm up to Winter Eastern National Bookstore and Chellberg Farmhouse**

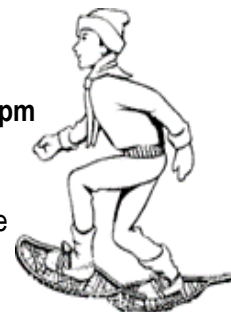
**Every Saturday and Sunday in December, January, and February 1:00pm–3:00pm**

Try out snowshoeing and wander through a winter wonderland at Chellberg Farm. Stop by the farmhouse to warm up and learn about the area's history. Snowshoes can be checked out at the Eastern National Bookstore located off the main parking lot. There are a limited number of snowshoes available and snowshoeing is dependent on the amount of snow on the ground. There is a minimum of 5 inches of snow required. Regardless of snow, however, the farmhouse will be open for hikers to stop by and enjoy. Call 219-395-1882 for snow conditions.

## **Winter Fun at the Paul H. Douglas Center**

**Saturdays, December 2, 9, 16, & 23; January 13, 20, & 27; and every Saturday in February from 1:00pm–3:00pm**

Enjoy fun, family-friendly activities at the Paul H. Douglas Center. Check out snowshoes and explore the beautiful Miller Woods in winter. You can also help feed the resident animals or explore the Center's exhibits. There are a limited number of snowshoes available and snowshoeing is dependent on the amount of snow on the ground. There is a minimum of 5 inches of snow required. Call 219-395-1824 for snow conditions.



## **Miller Woods Snowshoe Hike Paul H. Douglas Center**

**Sundays, December 3, 10, & 17 and every Sunday in January & February from 1:00pm–3:00pm**

Join a ranger and try out snowshoeing for a hike through the beautiful Miller Woods. There are a limited number of snowshoes available and snowshoeing is dependent on the amount of snow on the ground. There is a minimum of 5 inches of snow required. If there is not enough snow, the ranger will still lead a traditional hike. Call 219-395-1824 for snow conditions.



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## **Holiday Traditions at Chellberg Farm Open House**

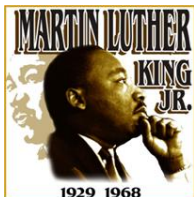
**Chellberg Farmhouse on Saturday, December 16 from 12:00pm–3:00pm**

Celebrate a traditional Swedish Christmas at the Chellberg Farmhouse. Learn more about the region's cultural history while enjoying a fun-filled afternoon with family and friends.

## **Chellberg Farm Care**

**Meet at the Chellberg Parking Lot on Saturday, December 16, January 20, and February 17 from 9:00am–12:00pm**

Meet up with a ranger and fellow volunteers to help care for the Chellberg Farm. Equipment and protective gear will be provided



## **Food Drive – Remembering Martin Luther King Jr.**

**Paul H. Douglas Center and Visitor Center on Saturday, January 13 from 9:00am–12:00pm**

In honor of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his call for service to the community, the National Park and Friends of Indiana Dunes are sponsoring a food drive. Please bring canned or other non-perishable foods to the parking lot of the Paul H. Douglas Center or the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center where park staff will collect it. Everything collected will be distributed to local area food banks. For any questions, call 219-221-7098



## **Christmas Bird Count Region-wide Saturday, December 23**

All day Join tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas for an adventure. Families, amateur birders, and scientists alike, arm themselves with binoculars, bird guides, and checklists and go out on an annual mission to count the world's bird populations. Participants need to register in advance with ranger Christine Gerlach at 219-395-1885 or [christine\\_gerlach@nps.gov](mailto:christine_gerlach@nps.gov). The count circle is Indiana Dunes National Park West (INDW). The exact location of the circle can be seen by visiting the Audubon's web site at [www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count](http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count).

## **Maple Sugar Time**

**Saturday, March 9 and Sunday, March 10 from 10:00am-4:00pm**

Enjoy a sweet taste of spring at the Indiana Dunes National Park's 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Maple Sugar Time. Self-paced tours will guide visitors through the history of maple sugaring. Eastern National will be selling Maple Sugar products. The FRIENDS will be offering maple syrup flavored snow cones to children of all ages. Want to help with this sticky sweet fund-raising project, please contact us at [members@dunefriends.org](mailto:members@dunefriends.org) or call 219-707-3617.



# State Park Programs

For more information contact Nature Center at 219-926-1390 or [www.interpretiveservices.in.gov](http://www.interpretiveservices.in.gov)

Below programs are sponsored by the Friends of Indiana Dunes. All program times are CT.



## **Happy Owl-idays on Saturday, December 16 from 1:30pm-3:00pm**

Join us at the Nature Center for some OWL-iday cheer with Humane Indiana Wildlife's live owl ambassadors. Director Nicole Harmon will introduce to visitors 5 native species of Indiana Dunes. She will be showcasing a screech owl, barred owl, great-horned owl, snowy owl and barn owl and talking about their interesting adaptations and characteristics! Visitors will be able to enjoy up-close views of these nocturnal creatures. Arriving early is encouraged as space inside the auditorium and car parking is limited.

## **Creature Feature on Tuesday-Friday, December 26-29 at 10:30am**

Every weekday morning join the Naturalist at the Nature Center and be introduced to a different animal that calls the Indiana Dunes home. This is a time to get up-close views, selfies, and learn about their unique adaptations to survive in our diverse dunes' habitats.

## **First Day Hike on Monday, January 1 at 10:00am**

Strap on your hiking boots and meet the Naturalist at the Nature Center for the first hike of the year along Trail 7. During the hike, you will learn about our park's natural history. We will return along the beach trail and through the campground. Back at the Nature Center campfire, hikers will be welcomed by park volunteers with refreshments provided by the Friends of the Indiana Dunes.

## **Feed the Birds B-I-N-G-O on Tuesday-Friday, January 2-5 at 10:30am**

Join the Naturalist at the Nature Center on these weekday mornings to help fill all of the bird feeders and play this fun game at our bird feeding windows!



## **National Bird Day Hike on Friday, January 5 at 10:30am**

In celebration of National Bird Day join the Naturalist at the Nature Center to begin an easy stroll looking for different bird species and other winter wildlife. This is a great way to start off your 2024 Bird Species Checklist. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. If snow conditions allow, snowshoes will be offered for use during this program free of charge on a first come, first serve basis.



## **Full Moon Hike on Saturday, February 24 at 6:30pm**

This is a stellar special event hike to Lake Michigan and back. There will be a short presentation about our moon before heading out on a 2-mile moderate hike to learn about the stars, our moon, and the dunes at night. There will be lunar treats provided thanks to the Friends of Indiana Dunes.

## **Nature Center's Snowshoe Rentals: Daily this winter, 9:00am-4:00pm**

Thanks to the Friends of the Indiana Dunes, the Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center offers snowshoe rental for all ages! As long as there is 5 inches of snow on the ground, one can explore the dunes with this fun outdoor recreational equipment. A driver's license is needed, and the cost is \$5.00 for the entire day. Call the Nature Center with questions about snow conditions. 219-926-1390.



**Nature Center's Winter Hours:** Daily from 9:00am-4:00pm CT

Closed on state holidays – 12/24/23, 12/25/23, and 1/15/24

Our interpretive programs are designed to entertain and enrich folks of all ages.

Children under 12 must have an adult with them at programs.

## Dunes Learning Center Programs

For more information or to register, please go to: <https://duneslearningcenter.org/programs>



### **Summer Camp Registration Opens January 15!**

Unplug | Hike | Splash | Discover | Play

Explore Indiana Dunes National Park with Dunes Learning Center this summer! Day Camp and Overnight Camp options for ages 5-17. Check out all the options at [DunesLearningCenter.org/summer](https://DunesLearningCenter.org/summer)

### **Marvels of Winter Adaptations on Tuesday, January 16, 1:00pm-3:00pm**

Learn about the intricate world of winter adaptations and their profound influence on both forest ecosystems and human life. From the unique behavior of wildlife to the hardiness of trees and plants, you will gain insight into the marvels of winter adaptation.

\$10 per person, ages 8 and up. Register at [DunesLearningCenter.org/programs](https://DunesLearningCenter.org/programs)

**FRIENDS OF  
INDIANA DUNES**

P.O. Box 166  
Beverly Shores, IN 46301

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 37  
Michigan City, IN 46360

*Our mission is to enhance and foster understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the Indiana Dunes through financial and volunteer support of the state and national parks.*

**Friends Board Members**

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**Vice-Chair:** Paul Stofko      **Treasurer:** Tracey Stevens  
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Newsletter Editor: Cliff Goins  
[www.dunefriends.org](http://www.dunefriends.org)    219-707-3617

Since 1982, our organization has supported the interpretive and resource management programs of the Indiana Dunes. The Friends sponsor the kind of interpretive programs that make a visit to the Indiana Dunes informative and fun. Membership in the Friends is vital to creating this positive impact.

Please support the Indiana Dunes by joining the Friends today. Your financial contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Your support will make a difference and assure our important work continues.

**Current Friends Members will receive a renewal form in the mail when your renewal is due.**

**FRIENDS Membership Application**

P. O. Box 166 ~ Beverly Shores, IN 46301-0166

- Marram Grass      \$ 25
- Cottonwood      \$ 50
- Jack Pine      \$100
- Black Oak      \$250

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form to the address above.

Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in Volunteering \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_