



DISCOVER A SUMMER OF FUN

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May 2011 was a very busy month. We were booked each day, leading students in half-day or full-day hands-on lessons about science and nature. In the hour or two after the field trip programs, we were busy planning and preparing for the upcoming summer camp programs. The staff was going nonstop throughout the work day teaching and planning, but we love what we do. When you love what you do it doesn't seem like work and you don't stop when the work day is over. We would go home thinking about new activities and ways to enrich the camp experiences. We have added new speciality camps with focuses on fishing & outdoor sports, arts, and stewardship. We have expanded and added new Eco Adventure programs for teens ages 13 - 16. We have also created new activities and updated traditional Camp Discovery activities. With all of the teaching and planning we've barely had time to breathe. That's okay. We'll take a breath when September comes...but just a short one. The fall field trips will be starting before we know it!

All of our camps provide children with quality time spent in the outdoors exploring, discovering and learning about the world around them. Visit www.woldumar.org/programs.php or call (517) 322-0030 to find out more about all of the programs offered for children this summer.

We also have scholarships available for those families that may need financial assistance. Please contact Lena at (517) 322-0030 or lena@woldumar.org



WOLDUMAR
NATURE CENTER

Environmental Education & Preservation

5739 Old Lansing Road • Lansing, MI 48917
(517) 322-0030

www.woldumar.org

Welcome New Members

Terry & Brandi Brookland
Richard & Marsha Bushaw
Stan Daniels
David Errickson
Mike & Cathy Flaga
Misty Marie Flahie
Anne Hokanson
Chris & Debbie Horak
Yan Huang
Veronica Jackson
Susan Kendall
Steve Levy
Douglas & Mary McWhirter
Dianne Moore
James & Carolyn Pock
Marlene & Jody Promer
Joseph Rathbun
Craig & Marsha Rosenberger
Ling Zhu & Ruoming Shi

As new members of Woldumar, we invite you to enjoy many benefits including reduced admission to events, theater performances and concerts, free trail fees and a subscription to this newsletter. You also receive a membership card that can be used at various nature centers across the country for free or reduced admissions or other benefits. Please see our website for more details on this reciprocal membership program through ANCA.

The Visitor Center and WolduMarket Gift Shop is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 12 noon to 4 p.m. The administrative office is open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you would like to support the effort and volunteer please contact Essie at (517) 322-0030.

Buzz on Bees

By: Bruce Peffers

On a particularly warm, sunny day in February, I took a walk out to check on the hives, hoping they would be out for a “cleansing flight”. Sure enough, Queen Isabella had her workers out flying. Both the snow surrounding the hive and the exterior of the hive itself were covered in waste that the bees had been storing since the cold weather began. Gabriella’s and Francesca’s hives were not active, however, and I was a bit worried. Later the same week, on an even warmer day, I asked Lena to check on them. She reported that Francesca was also active, but still no sign of Gabriella. I began to make queries about purchasing another package of bees to replace her, fearing the worst.

We had another warm spell in mid-March, and I asked Kevin to walk out to check the hives. Later that day, he gave me the happy news that all three hives were showing signs of activity.

I checked the hives again in late April. Unfortunately, the weakest hive had died out. It is too late to order replacement packages through Dadant, so unfortunately we’ll have to wait until next year to replace the bees in that hive. If you notice any swarms please make sure to let us know so we can take action as needed.

With the addition of our own extractor we are sure to have some more delicious honey ready later this year.

Your Help is Needed

Spring and summer tend to be the busiest seasons at Woldumar. The grass is always growing, weeds are filling in the gardens, and shrubs continue to grow over the trails. More families visit during these warmer months to enjoy the trails as well as the interpretive and live animal displays in the Visitor Center. As always there are memberships, donations, and mailings to manage. The education staff is busy every second of the day with field trip programs and Summer Camp, which makes it hard to keep up with the ever increasing projects and visitors. We appreciate the support that you give with your membership dues, but also need support by volunteers. The main projects we need volunteers for this summer are Visitor Center hosting and grounds maintenance. The role of a Visitor Center host is to be a friendly face for all our visitors, answer phones, and tend the gift shop. If you have a day or part of a day that you could spend to keep the Visitor Center open for our many guests it would be greatly appreciated. If you enjoy working outside and don’t mind getting dirty or a little hard work, our grounds and trails need you to help keep them in shape. There are many gardens that will need weeding, the lawn needs mowing and the trails need to be trimmed every week. Please contact Lori or Essie at (517) 322-0030 to set up a day and time to volunteer. You can come out once or twice or set a regular schedule, any of these will be a tremendous help.

Inside the Garden

Notes from the Moon Cabin Herb Garden

By: Sylvia Colles



There's never enough thyme

Thyme is such a versatile plant that a gardener can never have enough in their garden. In the Moon Log Cabin Herb Garden, we grow three varieties, two of which are creeping and form beautiful, robust mats that invade the paths. The third thyme is an upright variety, and it struggles to stay alive. This is not surprising since thyme is native to the Mediterranean region and likes dry, poor soils; exactly the opposite of what we have in our Woldumar garden. I'm sure the upright thyme (Common Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*) would head for higher, dryer ground just like the creeping varieties do if it could move.

Mrs. Moon would have used the common upright variety in her kitchen to flavor chicken and fish, soups and stews. Used in food, thyme is an aid to digestion and helps break down fatty foods. It is one of the main ingredients in the French seasoning bouquet garni. Thyme is a perennial that can be harvested at any time, but its leaves have the best flavor before the flowers form. Once a plant decides to flower, its energy is concentrated on the flower and seed formation, not on the leaves. To dry thyme, hang the stems upside down in an airy room until completely dry. Store away from the sun. Do not crush the leaves until you are ready to use them and want to release their flavor.

Historically, thyme had other uses beyond culinary ones. Considered to have a psychological effect on people, thyme was used as an antidote to shyness and to treat nightmares. In the fifteenth century, it was used to combat the plague, and, indeed, does have some antibiotic properties. During World War I, essential oil of thyme was used on the battlefield to treat wounds. One of the more fanciful uses of thyme was as a tea that would help you see fairies. If you are going to grow thyme, be sure to set aside a bed for the fairies. It's one of their favorite homes.

A simple and elegant way to use thyme:

Thyme and Garlic Olives: Rinse and drain 1/2 pound of black olives. Place them in jar with a tight-fitting lid. Add 3 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced; 1 to 2 tablespoons of fresh thyme leaves (or 1 to 2 teaspoons dried leaves); 1 teaspoon white peppercorns. Cover with olive oil and let marinate at least 2 days before serving. Remove the garlic after a few days so that it doesn't overpower the thyme. These olives will keep in the refrigerator for up to 6 months. Bring to room temperature before serving. After you eat the olives, filter the oil and use it in marinades or salad dressings.

Bird Houses



A great big thank you goes to Gene Wasserman of the Michigan Bluebird Society for repairing and replacing many of the bird houses throughout Woldumar's grounds and trails. The new house put up in front of the administrative building had Eastern Bluebirds moving in and out just a week after it went up. The birds will surely use the great nesting boxes, and visitors will be able to enjoy watching as the birds build nests and raise their young.

For more information about Eastern Bluebirds or nest boxes visit:

www.michiganbluebirds.org

Native Plants For Sale

We have some native plants left from the sale in May. We will be selling the leftover inventory until June 10th. Please call or visit our website for information about the plants and pricing.

Generosity in Bloom



This spring we had some very generous donations that will help improve our programs and grounds. Thank you to Rieth-Riley Construction for patching the parking lot and asphaltting the driveway to the Rotary Barn. This has improved the ease of accessibility from the parking lot as well as created a path for water to shed off the pavement into the lawn area. Kent Williamson and Kevin Schultz built the well facade with materials from Lowes. David Houseman has helped enhance programs with the donation of a canoe and worm bin. He also donated a large compost tumbler from which our gardens will benefit. Chris & Michele Shafer donated a garden tiller and Maureen Houghton donated a variety of gardening tools and fencing to help with the many garden projects. It is because of this type of generosity from our members and the community that help us continue to grow and improve. Thank you to everyone that has donated time, money or items for the benefit of Woldumar and its programs.

Calendar of Events

Call (517) 322-0030 to Register for a Program. Pre-registration required.

Please visit our website for a full listing of upcoming programs and events.

The Visitor Center and Gift Shop will be closed Saturday, July 2 - Monday, July 4.

June Events

Be a Tourist in Your Own Town

Saturday, June 4, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Take a self-guided tour of the trails in search of spring wildflowers and receive a free wildflower bookmark.

Annual Membership Picnic

Tuesday, June 7, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Annual potluck picnic, membership meeting and fundraiser sponsored by Gordon Walter. Donations will benefit a new motor for Woldumar's pontoon boat. Bring a side dish to pass and enjoy music by the Scarlet Runner String Band.

Photography Class - "Intro to Close Up/Macro Photography, Part 1"

Saturday, June 11, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Part one of a two-part series about the tools and techniques to taking fantastic close-up shots. \$45/participant. See article on back page for more details.

Camp Open House

Sunday, June 12, 12 - 2 p.m.

A fun preview of Camp Discovery. Meet the staff, make a craft, play games. FREE

Photography Class - "Intro to Close Up/Macro Photography, Part 2"

Saturday, June 25, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Part two of this two-part series about the tools and techniques to taking fantastic close-up shots. \$45/participant. See article on back page for more details.

Community Program Day

Saturday, June 18, 12 - 4 p.m.

Invasive species program 12-2 p.m. Blacksmith demonstrations. See website for more details.

Camp Discovery: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 5-12

Camp Discovery Junior: 9 a.m. - Noon; Ages 4-6

June 20 - 24, "Super Snoopers"

June 27 - July 1, "Web of Life"

Speciality Camp: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 7-10

June 27 - July 1; "Fishing Frenzy"

Counselor-In-Training: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 13-16

Leader-In-Training: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 12-14

June 20 - July 1; 2-week training program



July Events

Camp Discovery: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 5-12

Camp Discovery Junior: 9a.m. - Noon; Ages 4-6

July 5 - 8, "Wild Child"

July 11 - 15, "Extreme Experiments & Daring Discoveries"

July 18 - 22, "Fur, Feathers, Scales & Slime"

July 25 - 29, "Wet & Wild"

Speciality Camp: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 7-10

July 18 - 22; "Arts in Nature"

Eco Adventure: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 13 -15

July 5 - 8, "Eco Survivor"

July 25 - 29, "Eco Aquatic"

Eco Adventure Trips: Tuesday-Thursday; Ages 13 -15

July 12 - 14, "Eco Expedition"

Counselor-In-Training: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 13-16

July 18 - 29; 2-week training program

Boating Bonanza

Saturday, July 17, 2 - 5 p.m.

Free admission to educational activities and trails. Pontoon eco tours \$2 per person. Canoe rentals \$5 for 1 hour, \$3 for members, up to 3 people per canoe.

August Events

Camp Discovery: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 5-12

Camp Discovery Junior: 9a.m. - Noon; Ages 4-6

August 1 - 5, "Under Our Feet"

August 8 - 12, "Rockin' Rivers"

August 15 - 19, "Choose Your Own Adventure"

August 22 -26, "Cabin Fever"

August 29 - Sept 2, "Things with Wings"

Speciality Camp: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 7-10

August 8 - 12; "Crazy for Conservation"

Eco Adventure: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ages 13 -15

August 15 - 19, "Eco Outdoorsman"

Eco Adventure Trips: Tuesday-Thursday; Ages 13 -15

August 2 - 4, "Eco Voyager"

August 23 - 25, "Eco Extreme"

Pond Pals

Saturday, August 20, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Head out with a naturalist to explore the Woodland Pond. You will use nets to dip in the pond and investigate the many organisms that make up a pond ecosystem. Cost: \$2/members, \$3/nonmembers

Used Book Sale

Thanks to Karen Rude for putting together the first used book sale, held during Wildflower Weekend this past May. Although the weather was cold and wet a few books were sold. The next sale will be September 24 & 25 during the American Heritage Festival. Donations of used books with an emphasis on nature and the environment will be accepted September 15-22 at Woldumar. Please check in the office with your contributions during those times.

Lansing Give Camp

Give Camp is a weekend-long event where software developers, designers, and database administrators donate their time to create custom software for non-profit organizations.

Woldumar was invited to be a recipient of some of this generous hardwork. The projects that were included: updating Woldumar's website to make it more user friendly and creating an online registration database for all of Woldumar's programs.

Unfortunately one weekend was not long enough to complete the new online registration, but we are looking forward to seeing the new website unveiled soon!



Woldumar Board

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Karl Hausler, Director Emeritus
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Joel Hoffman
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Lena Swehla, Education Coordinator/
Camp Director
Kevin Wernet, TRAC Coordinator
Stephaney Guild, Educator
Jerry Moran, Technology Specialist
Jessica Rogner, Educator
Kevin Feldpausch, Maintenance
Essie Solano, Volunteer Coordinator

Woldumar is a 501(c)3 non-profit.
All contributions to Woldumar are
tax-deductible.



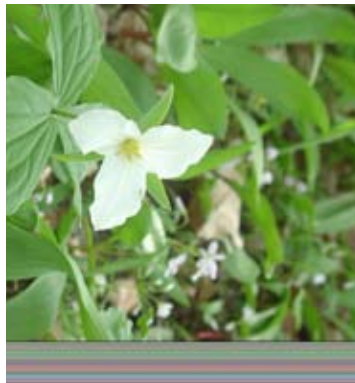
Tales from the Trails

By: Anne Hokanson

We hope you made it out to Woldumar this spring. We received a ton of rain, it was cloudy and windy, and the temperatures fluctuated between 30 degrees and 80 degrees in just a few weeks in April. The weather wasn't ideal for most people, but the plants and animals at Woldumar loved every second of it.



On a walk in late April I enjoyed all that spring has to offer. The first thing I noticed is that the river was very high, some of the park was wet, and even where there are boardwalks my feet got a little muddy. But, this is exactly why we go to Woldumar - because we want to be in nature, and we secretly love to get just a little muddy. I made sure to not just pass by these wet areas, because in these areas there is an abundance of life happening. If you look closely, you might see a frog or two leap into the puddle at your feet just as you walk by, you will probably see some fish spawning in the shallow cove of the river, and you may even see a snake sunning himself in the path. You will see iris leaves sprouting along the river bank, sedges and rushes popping up through the muck, and if you're really lucky even a heron or egret fishing near the shore.



As I wandered up the slope just a little ways, I kept my eyes low to the ground, and watched for the abundance of spring ephemeral flowers! Most of them are small and short, so if you aren't looking you could easily miss them. I saw Sharp-lobed Hepatica (a lovely and very fuzzy little pale purplish flower with three-lobed leaves), Spring Beauty (pale white flowers with pink veins in the petals), Trout Lily (bright yellow, tiny down-turned lilies with funny blotchy colored leaves), some of the first blooms of Trillium for the year, some early May-Apples in bud, and I'm pretty sure I even spied the first sprouts of Jack-In-the-Pulpit. Even if you aren't a plant person, it is thrilling to discover how many of these tiny, 4-6 inch tall flowers are out there in beautiful, miniature bloom after a long winter.

Summer is right around the corner, so we can all get excited for lush green ferns, big green Maple trees, sunning turtles, little ducklings, and beautiful butterflies. I can't wait to get back out this summer to check out the new beauties. Don't forget to check out the Prairie area at Woldumar too - the very unique and rare Prairie species come up in summer, and many of them bloom late and even into fall, so we have all of these to look forward to!

~ Hug trees, kiss frogs, and howl at the moon! ~

Newest Board Member Comes Full Circle



Woldumar's newest board member is giving her time and talent to the place she attended camp as a child. Anne Hokanson comes to the board armed with the skills of a wetland ecologist and the memories of playing at the nature center two decades ago when she was a student at Elmhurst Elementary School in Lansing.

Now a scientist with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, the 26-year-old runner and kayaker remembers those childhood days and wonders why more of her generation don't do more for the 178-acres of woodland, prairies, river shoreline and pine forest.

She intends to grow the number of youthful volunteers while serving on the public relations committee. Her goal is to help the nature center develop more community partnerships, and collaborate with other environmental groups to make Woldumar their meeting place of choice. She's hoping in time to develop a species management committee that will attend to invasive non-native species such as honeysuckle and Japanese barberry.

Her dreams for Woldumar are big but as an environmentalist, she knows that small things can yield much, too. We welcome Anne to our family of naturalists.

Wildflower Weekend

It's hard to believe that Wildflower Weekend has already come and gone again. Unfortunately it seems that each year we are plagued by dismal weather for what should be a beautiful spring event. Although the flowers still bloomed and the music still played, the temperature and rain was less than permitting for the outdoor activities. We had plenty of artist booths, music, demonstrations, and food available indoors to enjoy. We would like to say a special thank you to all of our vendors and demonstrators, old and new, who joined us this year. Your presence was appreciated and enjoyed by all! Woldumar was also glad to have the opportunity to host Sound Check, a Lansing jazz and funk band that really knows how to jam! Thank you again to all of our volunteers and staff who put forth an immense effort to organize this event. Our wonderful nature center relies on fundraising events, such as Wildflower Weekend, in order to continue fulfilling its mission of environmental education and preservation. Woldumar provides a beautiful refuge for many people within the Lansing community and is an invaluable place to learn about and appreciate our local environment. We hope you'll consider supporting and attending Woldumar's many events and programs! Don't forget to mark your calendars for the American Heritage Festival coming up September 24th and 25th!

Birdseed Sale

Thank you Bonnie Eckhardt for working so hard to continue the birdseed sales as Vi and Ken Kortge had done for 20 years. It has not been without hiccups, but she has been able to work through those and continue this great fundraiser.

The next birdseed sale will be held in September. If you need birdseed before then, we are able to order additional bags of seed. We are not able to order Woldumix before the September sale, however you can substitute the Custom No-mess seed which is a similar high-quality mix. Just call (517) 322-0030 if you would like to order seed this summer.

Texas Hold-em Fundraiser

We again, have received the highest compliments on our Texas Hold-em volunteers. We raised over \$1,900 this April to support our education programs! That's \$3,800 in 2011 so far! Thanks to all the volunteers for their help in accomplishing our goals. A special thank you to Essie for all of her hard work to fill the volunteer slots! We have two events left this year: October 13-16, 2011 and December 8-11, 2011. If you'd like to volunteer call Essie at (517) 322-0030. This has proved to be a great fundraiser and support for our education programs.





WOLDUMAR
NATURE CENTER

Environmental Education & Preservation
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Nature Photography Workshops



Valerie Hoffman has been passionately involved with photography for over 40 years. Up until recently, she worked and taught in the photographic retail environment for over 21 years. She is currently teaching photography and camera basics in a one-on-one and group classroom settings. Valerie will be leading two workshops in June and two workshops in September. For beginners and advanced amateurs alike, these three-hour workshops combine informative classroom instruction along with hands-on shooting opportunities to put what you learn immediately into practice.

June 11th: “Intro to Close Up/Macro Photography”; Part 1 of a two-part series

Have you ever wondered how the pros take great close up shots of flowers, bugs and bees? Think you need expensive camera equipment to get those shots? Think again! In this class we will cover different equipment options from inexpensive filters to macro photo lenses; as well as other accessories useful for close up photography.

June 25th: “Creative Close Up and Macro Photography” Part 2 of a two-part series

This class begins where the first class left off. Now that we understand the basics of close up/macro photography, we will learn how to use these tools and techniques to create fun and artsy images.

For more information about these workshops and the workshops coming in September please visit our website.

Visitor Center & Gift Shop Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sunday 12 noon - 4 p.m.

Administrative Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Trails open from dawn to dusk daily. Other hours determined by programs & events.

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