WOODS talk

Asbury Woods ANDREW J. CONNER NATURE CENTER

ANDREW J. CONNER NATURE CENTER BROWN'S FARM GREENWAY TRAIL

ASBURY WOODS | The Year of Water





Asbury Woods is thrilled to announce a new initiative to help us achieve our vision that Northwestern Pennsylvania be a region where protection of and appreciation for natural places is a deeply held personal and community value. As a way to delve deeper into important environmental and conservation topics, we will begin year-long themes that allow us to explore subjects in a robust and multi-disciplinary way.

We are kicking off this new approach to programming with **The Year of Water**. Water

is one of the world's most vital natural resources and our region's strategic location adjacent to Lake Erie makes the topic of clean water and sustainable use of fresh water a matter of local, regional, national, and global significance. Whether we are drinking it, recreating in and on it, living on its shores, or using it for industry, Lake Erie and its watershed surrounds us and is an inescapable part of the fabric of our community. With Walnut Creek, a major tributary of Lake Erie, passing through Asbury Woods' property, water was a natural choice to kick off our yearly themes.

Our goal is to provide programs, forums, materials, and experiences which engage people of all ages in a conversation about the importance of water and appreciation for this precious resource. We hope that individuals and the community as a whole will learn how they can take action to protect water. Starting with this newsletter, you'll notice programs with a symbol to indicate they are part of **The Year of Water** programming. We will also share relevant materials through our various communication channels: website, blogs, email, and social media.

In addition to our internal team, we'll be partnering with topic experts, individuals and organizations who can add expertise, provide research data, and share new ways to view and appreciate water. January will be our first such program with Amber Stillwell, Coastal Outreach Specialist with PA SeaGrant, for a discussion about aquatic invasive species and their impacts on wetland ecosystems.

During 2023, the Asbury Woods exhibit hall will become a host site for Trouts in the Classroom, a national program that helps demonstrate the everyday relevance of healthy watersheds and engages youth in active stewardship.

Later in the year we will be unveiling a major collaboration with renowned artist and Erie native, Kevin-John Jobczynski. As his fine arts career has led him to working with brands such as Disney, Lucas Films, ESPN, the NFL and others, he remains inspired by his memories of visits to Asbury Woods as a student at Asbury Elementary School. Kevin-John will be working on an original piece of art that captures the spirit of **The Year of Water** at Asbury Woods. January March O April

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MAPLE SEASON at Asbury Woods

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Happy New Year!

A new year and more new programs and projects are underway at Asbury Woods! I'm thrilled that 2023 will be The Year of Water at Asbury Woods. As an Erie native, water has played an integral part in my life. In my youth we hiked along and played in Fourmile Creek. As an adult, I spend my most joyful hours sailing, kayaking, wading and just taking in the beauty of the creeks and our lakeshore. Water is such a key part of life in our region and seemingly so



Jennifer Farrar, CFRE Executive Director

abundant that it is easy to take this incredible freshwater resource for granted. So in 2023, Asbury Woods will undertake a year-long focus on water. Programming, articles, speakers and more will help shine a light on this amazing natural resource.

We are also looking forward to a revised approach to maple season at Asbury Woods. Our talented education team has planned a variety of ways for the public to engage in maple sugaring at Asbury Woods. One new way is to look for the lit-up maple leaf on the sugar shack when you are visiting. If that maple leaf is on, come on in and see the process in action!

Finally, Asbury Woods has completed the series of property acquisitions that we have been working on for two years. In April 2021 we acquired 11 acres of property along West 38th Street and in December 2022, we closed on another 40 acres. The 40 acres were previously owned by Mercyhurst University and our existing trail network traversed their property. These newly acquired acres are now permanently conserved land.

Asbury Woods enters 2023 hopeful that we can continue to educate, inspire and protect, and we couldn't do it without the thousands of supporters who contribute, volunteer, and advocate on our behalf.

From the Woods,



NATURE CENTER BROWN'S FARM GREENWAY TRAIL

asburywoods.org | 814.835.5356

Vision Statement: Asbury Woods strives to realize a future for Northwestern Pennsylvania where appreciation for and protection of natural places is a deeply held personal and community value.

The Mission of Asbury Woods is to inspire a greater connection to the natural world by protecting, managing and interpreting our property; providing outdoor recreational opportunities; and offering environmental education experiences.

The Asbury Woods Partnership is a 5013(C) nonprofit charity registered with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations. The official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State at 1-800-732-0999. Funding for the Asbury Woods Partnership is provided through grants, program fees and the generosity of our members, donors and patrons.

Asbury Woods Staff

Jennifer Farrar *Executive Director*

Sarah Bennett Director of Education

Anush Dulgaryan Bruno Visitor Services Associate

Sharon Burton Visitor Services Associate

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UPCOMING EVENTS



February 19, 2023

A Place For All Seasons, A Race For All Seasons Trail Run Series 2023

Our 216 acres of property is the perfect place to present a challenging trail race. The scenic course through the Walnut Creek watershed will provide a mix of boardwalk, packed dirt trails, and single-course loops. Rock your running game during 2023 with the 4, 5, and 6 mile Into the Woods series at Asbury Woods! To learn more visit: www.asburywoods.org/events/trail-run-series/

Start off the season with our 4 mile fun run! This non-timed event is all about enjoying year-round outdoor recreation and fitness on the trails of Asbury Woods. Post race warm-up with chili compliments of Cali's West Catering.

Sponsored by: UPMC HEALTH PLAN Special Thanks to:









Luminaria February 10, 2023

Tickets are \$15 and \$5 to add childcare. Registration required

Enjoy a self-guided romantic stroll through our meandering trails following the flickering lights of luminaries lighting a path through the woods, then warm up with a cozy fire, sweet treats, and music in the picnic shelter. Childcare will be available. To learn more visit: www.asburywoods.org/events/luminaria



Maple Festival March 4 & 5, 2023

Tickets: \$6, Children 3 and under are free Pre-registration preferred

The annual Maple Festival is a celebration of a heritage unique to our region. Learn more about this fascinating use of one of nature's sweetest renewable resources with interactive stations and informative demonstrations. The highlight is a stop in

the Asbury Woods sugar shack where the magic of sap to syrup happens! You'll be able to tempt your taste buds with all manner of maple products provided by several vendors on site. To learn more visit: https://www.asburywoods.org/events/ maple-festival/





City Nature Challenge April 28 – May 1, 2023

The Greater Erie City Nature Challenge is back for its 2nd year! Last year, we smashed our goals, so we are expanding to all of Erie County this year! The Greater Erie City Nature Challenge is part of the international City Nature Challenge which challenges us to document as many wild things as possible during this four-day event on the free iNaturalist app. Not only will you be learning about the creatures in Erie County but each observation contributes to a growing global wildlife database that scientists can

use in their research. Visit our website for more information about how you can get involved. https://www.asburywoods. org/events/city-nature-challenge/

WINTER PROGRAMS: January - April 2023

Supported through the generosity of A.J. Grack Business Interiors



Snow Sprouts

Dates: Wednesdays, January 11 – February 15 Time: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Age: 2 – 5 years old, accompanied by an adult Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$7 Program Fee: \$9

Nature exploration is fun in every season! Little explorers and their favorite grownup are invited to join us for hands-on nature exploration, science activities, and guided outdoor play. Our weekly themes will include: Snow Art, Winter Tracks and Signs, Snowtrek, and Animals in Winter. Appropriate outdoor dress is encouraged, as most weeks will include outdoor exploration and play.

Kid's Winter Day Camp

Date: Monday, January 23 OR Monday, February 20 Time: 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Age: Kindergarten – 5th grade Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$42 Program Fee: \$50

How does a day off from school get even better? Spend it at Asbury Woods! We'll explore the outdoors, use our imaginations, and more! Dress to get messy and spend time outside.

This is a drop-off program that children attend independently. Each child should bring a packed lunch, water bottle, afternoon snack and come dressed to be outside. Participants may be dropped off between 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. and should be picked up before 5:30 p.m. An emergency contact form and program waiver must be completed for each child attending the program.

YOUTH



Nature Tots

Dates: Wednesdays, March 1 – April 26 Time: 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Age: Children 18 – 36 months old, accompanied by an adult Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$6 Program Fee: \$8

Calling all little explorers! Toddlers and accompanying adults will enjoy nature play and exploration through sensory experiences, hands-on activities, and crafts. Most weeks include an outdoor activity so come dressed for the weather.



Preschool Nature Discovery

Dates: Wednesdays, March 1 – April 26 Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Age: Children 3 – 5 years old, accompanied by an adult Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$7 Program Fee: \$9

Big adventures begin at Asbury Woods in our nature class for preschoolers. Classes will include science and nature exploration through sensory experiences, hands-on activities, and crafts. Most weeks include an outdoor activity so come dressed for the weather.

Homeschool Programs

Dates: Thursdays January 26, February 23, March 23, and April 27 Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Age: Kindergarten – 5th grade Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$10 Program Fee: \$12

Asbury Woods Homeschool offerings have gotten even better! Starting this January each homeschool offering will include prelessons and suggested extension activities. We will also offer 5 programs throughout the year that address the Ecology and Environment PA State Standards. These are indicated by an EE next to them. The programs below are for kids in grades K-5th. Parents may drop children off or choose to stay with them regardless of age. To learn more visit our website.

January 26 – Snowshoe Adventure

Put on your outdoor gear and join us for a snowshoe adventure in the woods! Kids should wear winter boots for this program. If there is not enough snow for snowshoeing, we will explore the woods in winter.

February 23 – Weather Works

Students will explore, observe, and measure a variety of elements of weather. They will also create their own weather reports in small groups.

March 23 – Maple Magic (EE)

Did you know that maple syrup is one of Pennsylvania's oldest native crops? Come learn all about maple trees and their key role in Pennsylvania's agriculture. Students will learn how maple trees make sap, how we collect it, and how we use sap to produce maple syrup.

April 27 – *Humans and the Environment (EE)* We rely on the environment for everything we have, so we need to take good care of it! Students will practice their recycling skills and learn about how pollution can hurt the environment.

> Pre-registration is required for all programs, unless otherwise noted

YOUTH

Kids Hiking Club

Date: Friday April 21 Time: 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Age: 5 – 12 years old Location: Nature Center Program Fee: \$5

Come explore the trails at Asbury Woods with one of our naturalists! Kids Hiking Club will be offered once per month April – October. Appropriate outdoor clothing and sturdy walking shoes or boots are a must. Parents are welcome to join us but are not required.

Scout Day – Outdoor Art

Date: Saturday, April 22 Times: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Grades K-1 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Grades 2-3 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. Grades 4-5 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Grades 6-8 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Grades 9-12 Location: Nature Center

Program Fee: \$14 includes all materials

Join us for a day of outdoor and natureinspired art! Girl Scouts will complete all requirements for their level's Outdoor Art badge. Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts may complete parts of art-based adventures and merit badges. Children under age 9 must be accompanied by an adult, but there is no charge for adults. Children 9 years of age or older may be dropped off and then picked up at the end of the program. Each child must register for the correct grade level.

EcoExplorers Club for Middle Schoolers

Dates: 1st & 3rd Thursday of every month starting January 5 through May 18 Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Currently enrolled in 6th-8th grade Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$38 Program Fee: \$48

Asbury Woods is excited to launch EcoExplorers: a new after-school environmental club just for you. Club members will meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month January – May. This club is perfect for kids who love nature, science, and the outdoors. This spring will feature a variety of cool activities like snowshoeing, stream monitoring, learning how to identify mammal skulls, and exploring wetlands. Club members will also gain valuable volunteer experience. Come join us for the perfect blend of learning and fun!

Wolf Moon Hike

Date: Friday, January 6 Time: 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 8 and up Location: Brown's Farm Supporting Donor Fee: \$3 Program Fee: \$5

Early darkness means everyone can enjoy the Full Wolf Moon in January! Join us at Brown's Farm to learn why January's full moon is called the wolf moon, play games, and learn more about human night vision. Close-toed shoes and weatherappropriate outerwear are recommended for all participants.

Cross Country Ski Clinics

Dates: Saturdays, January 7 through February 25 Time: 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 10 & up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$13 Program Fee: \$16 No pre-registration required

The snowy trails at Asbury Woods are the perfect place to learn how to cross country ski. These clinics will teach participants the basics of the sport. No prior experience is needed, and all equipment is provided. There must be at least 6" of snow for the clinic. Check the website and Facebook for trail conditions.

Snowshoe Clinics

Dates: Saturdays, January 7 through February 25 Time: 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 10 & up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$13 Program Fee: \$16 No pre-registration required

Snowshoeing is a great way to explore the outdoors during the winter months. This clinic provides you with basic techniques. No prior experience needed and all equipment is provided. Waterproof boots are recommended. There must be at least 6" of snow for the clinic. Check the website and Facebook for trail conditions.

Have a group of 10 or more? Call to schedule a private clinic.

The Science of Snow

ALL AGES

Date: Tuesday, February 7 Time: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 8 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$3 Program Fee: \$5

Have you ever wondered about what water in winter looks like? Come join us to learn more about snow and ice in the winter. If it is snowing, we will go outside, please dress appropriately for the weather.

Backyard Maple Syrup Production

Date: Saturday, February 18 Time: 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Age: Adults and children 12 years and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$25 Program Fee: \$30

It's maple season at Asbury Woods and in your yard! Come and learn the basics of how maple syrup was discovered, how to identify and tap a maple tree, how to process maple sap into syrup, and canning the finished product. Participants will take home a sap collecting kit for use on one tree and a reference book. The program fee is per kit.



Family Owl Prowl

Date: Wednesday, February 22 OR Tuesday, April 18 Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 10 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$6 Program Fee: \$8

Kids and adults alike will delight in this unique evening learning about owls and attempting to get them to answer our calls. The program includes a brief indoor portion followed by a hike on the trails. Closed toed shoes and weatherappropriate outerwear are recommended for all participants.

ALL AGES



Spring Equinox Hike

Date: Monday, March 20 Time: 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 8 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$3 Program Fee: \$5

Hike right at the transition of day to night during the spring equinox and learn more about how the Earth rotates around the Earth. Closed-toed shoes and weatherappropriate outerwear are recommended for all participants.

Spring Campfire Hike

Date: Friday, April 14 Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 8 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$5 Program Fee: \$7

Enjoy a peaceful evening on the trails of Asbury Woods during a guided night walk followed by a fireside treat in the picnic shelter. Dress for the weather and be prepared for muddy trails.

Rent a Maple Bucket

Dates: February/March Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Age: All ages Location: Nature Center Program Fee: \$25 for 2 buckets

Let Asbury Woods do the work of tapping maple trees while you take home the sap! Asbury Woods is offering an opportunity to "rent" a set of two buckets to collect sap in maple trees at the Nature Center. Each bucket can hold up to four gallons of sap. New to maple syrup production? An Asbury Woods staff member will be corresponding with you to help guide you through each step of the process.



Date: Saturday, March 25 Time: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 5 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$3 Program Fee: \$5

Spring is the perfect time to visit vernal pools at Asbury Woods! Learn about these important temporary wetlands and look for the animals that live there. Trail conditions will likely be muddy so be sure to dress appropriately.

Wonders of Wetlands

Date: Saturday, April 29 Time: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Age: Adults and children ages 5 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$5 Program Fee: \$7

Wetlands are busy places this time of year! They serve as nurseries for many types of animals. Use nets, microscopes and other tools to find some of these critters. How many wonders will you see?



Dates: Saturdays, January 7 through April 29 (No drop in March 4, April 8, or April 22) Time: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Age: All ages Location: Nature Center FREE No pre-registration required.

Looking for something wild to do? Stop in each Saturday to discover something new about the natural world. Each week, Asbury Woods will offer a new experience that could include a animal meet-and-greet, a science experiment, a nature art project, a guided hike, and more. Check our website for upcoming themes www.asburywoods.org/ programs/program-schedule/

Drop-in and Discover is presented by



ADULTS



Lecture: The Magic of Maple

Date: Tuesday, January 10 Time: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Adults and teens ages 16 and up Location: Nature Center FREE

There's magic in the... maple trees! Learn all about the process of making maple syrup at Asbury Woods. From harvesting sap to canning syrup, you'll be excited to get involved! You'll have a chance to sign up for several different volunteer opportunities.



Lecture: Preventing Invasive Species in Critical Wetland Habitats

Date: Thursday, January 19 Time: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Adults and teens ages 16 and up Location: Nature Center FREE

Join Pennsylvania Sea Grant Coastal Outreach Specialist Amber Stilwell to learn about aquatic invasive species (AIS) in Pennsylvania and their impacts to freshwater ecosystems. AIS can pack a big punch to the environment and economy. Understanding common routes of introduction is critical to their management. Participants will learn how they can play a key role in preventing the spread of AIS in the Great Lakes and French Creek Watersheds.

ADULTS

Adult Owl Prowl

Date: Tuesday, March 7 Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Age: Adults and teens ages 16 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$6 Program Fee: \$8

Get ready for a unique evening on the trails of Asbury Woods. The evening will start with a short indoor portion, then head out to the trails as our educator calls to owls and, hopefully, they answer! Closed-toed shoes and weather-appropriate outerwear are recommended for all participants.



Painting at the Woods Date: Friday, March 10

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Age: Adults and teens ages 14 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$28 includes supplies

Program Fee: \$32 includes supplies

What better way to celebrate The Year of Water at Asbury Woods than to capture the magic of Walnut Creek during this fun evening of painting. We'll provide all materials; all you need to bring is your creativity! Feel free to bring snacks and beverages, as well.

Backyard Beekeeping Workshop

Dates: 4 week session every Wednesday, April 5 through 26 Time: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Age: Adults and teens ages 16 and up Location: Nature Center Supporting Donor Fee: \$55 Program Fee: \$65

Join our volunteer beekeeper, Charlie Schroeck, and learn all of the aspects necessary to be a successful backyard beekeeper. This four-week workshop will include background information on honey bees, equipment needed, proper maintenance and honey harvesting. Registration includes the book, *Starting Right with Bees*.



Maple Season at Asbury Woods

Maple syrup season in Erie County is just around the corner and we want you to get involved! From tapping trees to boiling syrup, you can see and do it all at Asbury Woods. Below are our expanded opportunities for everyone to learn about and engage in maple syrup making.

Look for these opportunities to get involved

• The Magic of Maple Syrup Lecture January 10, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Sign up on our website.

> • Rent a Maple Bucket Program We tap the trees and you take home the sap! Sign up on our website.

 Maple tree tapping during Drop In & Discover February 18 & 25, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Stop in on these Saturdays to learn more about the maple process and a maple themed activity!

> • Sap Boiling Notices: Watch for sap boiling notices on Facebook then come visit the Sugar Shack to learn all about maple syruping.



 Sugar Shack Volunteers
Weekdays, February and March see our webiste to get involved!
https://www.asburywoods.org/get-involved/



ANDREW J. CONNER NATURE CENTER BROWN'S FARM GREENWAY TRAIL

4105 Asbury Road Erie, Pennsylvania 16506 asburywoods.org





SUMMER CAMP 2023

We have prepared a schedule chock-full of outdoor adventures, nature exploration, science, and fun!

Summer Camp registrations will open to the public on February 15, 2023.

Become a Supporting Donor and you'll have the opportunity to register before the general public to ensure first chance to get the camps and dates you want. Last year camp sold out, so plan to register early! Make your gift now and become a Supporting Donor at www.asburywoods.org/ donate/annual-fund/.

CROSS COUNTRY SKI AND SNOWSHOE RENTALS



Embrace Erie's winters and enjoy the outdoors in all seasons! Snowshoes and cross country skis are available for rent at Asbury Woods. A great way to stay active and enjoy the outdoors during the winter, visitors of all ages may rent this equipment for use on our 216 acre property during regular business hours.

New to Cross Country Skiing or Snowshoeing?

Clinics are offered throughout the winter that will help you with the basics of these two fun winter activities. No prior experience is needed and all equipment is provided. There must be at least 6" of snow for the clinic.

Check our website for more details: www.asburywoods.org/rentals/ snowshoe-and-cross-country-ski-rentals/

Funded in part by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and a grant from the Environmental Stewardship Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Nature Center

November 1 – **March 31: Monday** – **Saturday** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Sunday** 12:00 – 4:00 p.m

April 1 – October 31: Monday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sunday 12:00 – 5:00 p.m The Squeaky Frog Gift Shop: Hours same as Nature Center

Trails Open Dawn to Dusk

