

36th ANNUAL Festival of Spring

An Earth Day Celebration

Co-sponsored by

DECATUR AUDUBON SOCIETY and
MACON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ROCK SPRINGS CONSERVATION AREA

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2017

SPRING MIGRATION WALK – Meet at the Information Shelter, north of the parking lot

8 AM – 9 AM

Join a knowledgeable Audubon guide for a walk on the trails in search of early spring migrants as well as birds who live in Central Illinois year round. Spring is a wonderful time to discover new birds. Bring your own binoculars or borrow ours.

SANGAMON RIVER CLEAN UP – Information Shelter

Sign up 9:30 AM, clean up 10 AM – 12 PM

Help to make the river a safer and more beautiful place for people and wildlife. Dress to get dirty and **bring your own gloves** if you can. Garbage bags, snacks, water, and a few gloves will be available.

Families and individuals welcome! **Organized groups are required to preregister by calling 217-423-7708.** Sponsored by Macon County Conservation District and Community Environmental Council.

All remaining activities are 12 PM to 4 PM, unless otherwise noted:

TICKETS TO TREASURES, Rock Springs Nature Center, East entrance and at activity stops

Kids ages 12 and under are invited to get a ticket and have it marked while visiting various activity stops. Children will be awarded a prize when they turn in their ticket. Free and available at all activities marked with TREASURE STOP.

CANOE RODEO, Cattail Ponds, east of picnic area

Learn how to get in and out of a canoe, learn paddling strokes, and safety tips. Then, canoe through the rodeo course. **\$2/person.** Register and pay at the Cattail Ponds. Recommended for adults and children age 5 and up. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

DIP AND SCOOP, Cattail Ponds, east of the picnic area

Visit the Cattail Ponds to discover the aquatic life that thrives below the surface. Nets and buckets are provided to dip and scoop up some fun!

MOTOR BOAT RACERS, Cattail Ponds, east of the picnic area

Try your hand at maneuvering remote controlled boats. Swerve in and out of the waves and race your buddies.

WEB OF LIFE GAME, Pavilion 1, near the woods **(TREASURE STOP)**

Children can pretend to be an animal and try to stay alive. Prizes will be awarded and kids will have fun as they play this environmental game. Provided by Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

PAINTING NATURE WITH NATURE, Pavilion 2, near the pond **(TREASURE STOP)**

Create your own art as you paint with nature's natural palette: flower petals, leaves, stems, and charcoal. For all ages. Provided by Decatur Audubon.

PONY RIDES, Picnic Area, **1 PM to 3 PM**

Children can enjoy a ride on a real pony led by an experienced handler from Shiloh Stables. **\$3/child**. Register and pay at the picnic area.

OPEN HOUSE at HOMESTEAD PRAIRIE FARM and WOODSHOP (TREASURE STOP)

Tour the homestead and woodshop. Meet historical interpreters in period clothing and learn how people lived and survived in the 1800s. Children and adults can try historic games.

PRESIDENTAL SIGNATURES, Homestead Prairie Farm

Learn about the Macon County History Museum from Director Nathan Pierce, and see real-life, original autographs from US Presidents Andrew Jackson and Grover Cleveland.

BLUEGRASS MUSIC, Homestead Prairie Farm

Enjoy good ol' foot stompin' bluegrass music played by local group, Cactus Ranch.

BABY FARM ANIMALS, Homestead Prairie Farm

Visit with baby chicks, turkeys, and ducklings. These traditional barnyard animals are available thanks to Rural King.

BIG BEAUTIFUL BUBBLES, Homestead Prairie Farm

Stop by the bubble making station and make some HUGE bubbles for fun. Recipes and directions to make bubbles at home provided.

BUZZING BEES & HONEY, Homestead Prairie Farm

Honey bees provide us with much more than honey. Apples, cucumbers, soybeans, peaches, sunflowers, and more. Some say honeybees are responsible for one out of every three bites of food we eat. Glacier's Edge Master Naturalists will help you discover the wonder of this little insect that plays a key role in our lives every day.

VINTAGE WOOD TURNING, Homestead Prairie Farm

Conservation District volunteer, Jerry Sievers, will demonstrate the skills of wood turning on a spring pole lathe. He will create spindles for 3-legged stools that served many functions in the 1800s. No electricity needed to drive the lathe. Pay him a visit and you will be amazed at his skill and the final product!

THE RAIN MAKER, West side of the main parking lot

Have you ever wondered where all the rainwater goes? Why does some of the water look muddy while other water looks clear? This demonstration will help you discover what runoff is and simple steps to control it. Sponsored by Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District.

ROCK HOUND ROUND-UP, Rock Springs Nature Center, East Lawn
Children 12 years of age and under can dig for buried treasure. Discover crystals, fossils, agates, and more and take one home. Limit one per child.

TEMPORARY TATTOOS AND CHALK ART, Rock Springs Nature Center, East Lawn
Stop by for a temporary tattoo or two, and create your own nature art with sidewalk chalk.

WAGON RIDES, Rock Springs Nature Center, South entrance, **12 PM – 3:30 PM**
Wagon rides will be available every half hour starting at noon and continuing until 3:30 PM. Sign up for your FREE tickets at the Information Island inside the nature center.

BIRDS & BLOSSOMS HIKE, Rock Springs Nature Center, West entrance deck, **1 PM – 1:30 PM**
Join a naturalist for a guided hike through the forest and prairie. We'll examine spring wildflowers and look and listen for migratory birds. Binoculars provided.

DULCIMER CLUB, Rock Springs Nature Center, East Conference Room, **12 PM – 1 PM**
Enjoy local musicians as they practice for future concerts. Dulcimers, guitar, penny flute, harp, and autoharp.

FEISTY & FRIENDS, Rock Springs Nature Center, Children's Awareness Room
Visit a lovable ferret and his reptilian friends in the Children's Awareness Room. Hoggy the snake and Boxy the turtle will entertain and educate you about their fascinating lives.

MAKE A PINECONE BIRD FEEDER, Nature Center, North Exhibit Hall **(TREASURE STOP)**
Children can make a simple pinecone bird feeder to take home, while parents learn about backyard birds from a bird expert with the Decatur Audubon Society.

MONARCH MURAL CHALLENGE, Rock Springs Nature Center, Upper Level Conference Room
Pick a square to color on our 32 piece monarch mural. Once the mural is complete, we will assemble it and display in in the exhibit hall May-September 2017, along with six others.

AUDUBON – NOT JUST FOR THE BIRDS, Rock Springs Nature Center, North Exhibit Hall
Walk through this exhibit featuring John J. Audubon prints, mounted bird specimens, information on how and why National and State Audubon Societies formed, what the Decatur Chapter is all about. You'll also find tips on birding, selecting binoculars, and more.

ILLINOIS RAPTOR CENTER WILD BIRD SHOW, Rock Springs Nature Center, Auditorium
12 PM, 1:30 PM, and 3 PM
You will never forget the first time you see a hawk, owl, or falcon right in front of you. Meet these predatory birds while you learn how they survive in the wild habitats of Central Illinois. Seating is limited, so don't miss this incredible show of beauty and force.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHARON BLAZER, Rock Springs Nature Center, North Gallery
Enjoy wonderful photos of wildlife and the night sky by this talented local photographer.

ART BY COLIN BISHOP & MIKAYLA MENDENHALL, Rock Springs Nature Center, South Gallery
View paintings and prints with natural and abstract themes by a current student and an alumna of Millikin University.

EXHIBITS & BOOTHS

PLANT EXCHANGE, Rock Springs Nature Center, South Lobby, **12 PM until plants are gone**

Bring plants you can spare and trade them for others. Donations are welcome if you would like a plant but have none to trade. By Decatur Audubon Society.

BOOK EXCHANGE, Rock Springs Nature Center, South Lobby, **12 PM until books are gone**

Bring books to exchange. You're not limited to environmental and birding books, but those types of books would be good to bring. Clear your shelves of unwanted books! No books to trade? Leave a donation for the books you take. By Decatur Audubon Society.

SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION, Rock Springs Nature Center, Main Lobby

Browse camp activities for ages 1-15 that will be available at Rock Springs Conservation Area this summer. Options range from single day camps to full day, all week day camps with optional before and after care (7 AM – 6 PM). Swimming and field trips included.

DECATUR AUDUBON SOCIETY, Rock Springs Nature Center, North Exhibit Hall

Co-sponsor of the Festival of Spring, Audubon is not "just for the birds." Discover more about this organization and enter drawings for wren birdhouse kits, bird feeders, and more.

MASTER GARDENERS, Rock Springs Nature Center, Activity Room **(TREASURE STOP)**

We can help you plan your vegetable and flower gardens. Children can "Plant a Seed" and take it home to watch it grow. Sponsored by University of Illinois Extension.

GLACIER'S EDGE MASTER NATURALISTS, Homestead Prairie Farm

Interested in nature and would like to learn more? Learn about fur bearing animals and discover how you can become a Master Naturalist. Sponsored by University of Illinois Extension.

RESTORATION STATION, Picnic Area **(TREASURE STOP)**

How does the Macon County Conservation District manage thousands of acres of natural areas and wildlife habitat? Check out the equipment we use and meet the Natural Resources staff. Discover how you can make a difference by volunteering.

MERCY GARDENS, Picnic Area

Discover how you can grow your own garden, pick up plants to get started, and learn how to be a part of Mercy Gardens. All plants have been grown by the Mercy Gardens students.

MIDWEST FIBER, Picnic Area

Discover the role Midwest Fiber plays in our community. Brochures and facts on recycling available. A magnet board for kids to learn about recycling, and a bottle-cap toss to win prizes.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL, Picnic Area

Learn about this collaboration of agencies and organizations who help people care for the Earth and bring environmental speakers to your community annually. Co-sponsor of Sangamon River Clean-up.

FRIENDS OF LINCOLN TRAIL HOMESTEAD STATE PARK, Picnic area

This new organization is working to bring historic preservation and environmental restoration to Lincoln Trail Homestead State Park. We aim to engage the public through trail and river access, historic and environmental educational programs, and site enhancement. Kids can participate in a Lincoln activity.

DECATUR BICYCLE CLUB & DECATUR BICYCLE SHOP, Picnic Area

Discover how you can be a member of the Decatur Bicycle Club and learn what is planned for the season ahead. You can also find out about the Decatur Bicycle Shop. They not only sell used and new bicycles, but provide repair services and supplies.

FOOD & DRINKS, Information Shelter, 12 PM to 3 PM

Sandwiches, drinks, and snacks are available for purchase at the Information Shelter, on the north end of the main parking lot.

Learn more

Decatur Audubon Society - www.decaturnaudubon.org

Macon County Conservation District - www.maconcountyconservation.org

Community Environmental Council – www.maconceec.org

University of Illinois Extension - web.extension.illinois.edu/state

Friends of Lincoln Trail Homestead State Park - www.lincolntrailhomesteadstatepark.com

Additional sponsors

Community Environmental Council

Golden K Kiwanis

Glacier's Edge Master Naturalists

Save the Date

The next Festival of Spring will be Saturday, April 21, 2018