

# Pierce Cedar Creek Institute

for environmental education

701 W. Cloverdale Road  
Hastings, MI 49058  
tel.269.721.4190 | [CedarCreekInstitute.org](http://CedarCreekInstitute.org)



## Spring Calendar of Events March — May 2024

Visitor Center Hours  
Monday — Friday, 9 am — 5 pm

Institute Closed  
Memorial Day  
Monday, May 27, 2024

Trails Open Daily, Dawn — Dusk



*Sandhill Crane and Chick—Summer 2024 Exhibit by Bob Pierce*



# Calendar of Events

## Have you heard about Pierce Pickups?

Have a busy week coming up? No time to cook? Tired of fast food? Don't stress about what's for dinner. Try a Pierce Pickup. These frozen entrees are 100% homemade and a great alternative to making your own meals. The menu changes monthly with some extra menus created for holidays. It's so simple, just go to [CedarCreekInstitute.org](http://CedarCreekInstitute.org) to view the menu and place your order!



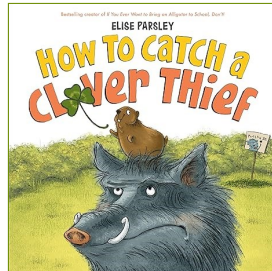
## March Storybook Walk:

### *How to Catch a Clover Thief*

by Elise Parsley

Follow this funny tale about problem-solving and ingenuity to discover who's stealing Roy's favorite meal from right under his snout? After your storybook adventure, stop by the southside of the Visitor Center and learn how you can be a nature detective. This storybook walk is thanks to the generosity of Joel and Barbara VanDyken.

**Free (Self-guided on Black Walnut Trail)**



## Who Stole the Rose Hips? Mystery Game on the Trails

**Friday, March 1–Sunday, March 31**

Be a nature detective and help us solve the mystery of the missing rose hips. Walk the trail, gather evidence, and follow the clues. Was it Ricky the Raccoon, Dexter the Deer, or Roger the Rabbit? Can you discover the culprit?

**Free (Self-guided on Lupine Trail)**

## Stewardship Workday

**Saturday, March 2 1:30–4 pm**

Join the Stewardship Department for winter land management activities. Spring is a great time to conduct woody invasive control and spread native seed to enhance natural communities. We will meet inside the Visitor Center. Participants are encouraged to register to ensure enough tools are provided and in case of last-minute cancellations due to poor weather. Check social media and our website for upcoming workdays.

**Free**



## Easter Brunch

**Sunday, March 10**

**Brunch seatings: 11:15 am and 1 pm | Concert: 12:15–1 pm**

Discover the musical talents of local musician Zach Franklin on the keyboard with a mix of light jazz and easy-listening music while enjoying good conversation and food. The concert is free and you do not have to attend brunch to enjoy the music.

**Member Adults \$24; Children \$14**

**Non-Member Adults \$30; Children \$18**

**Children ages 5–12; 4 and under are Free (plus tax)**

## Volunteer Orientation Training (Ages 18+)

**Tuesday, March 12 6:30–8:30 pm**

Join us for an evening of learning about the Institute and available volunteer opportunities. We will cover the Institute's history, an overview of the trails and property, tour the main buildings, and highlight current and upcoming volunteer opportunities. A good overview for both new and familiar faces!

**Free**

## Rock Painting Fundraiser (Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

**Wednesday, March 13 6–8 pm**

Rocks can become a wonderful canvas to create all kinds of fun creatures and patterns. Join local artist Nancy Anderson as she guides you through the process of rock painting in a fun and welcoming atmosphere. No painting experience necessary. Refreshments will be provided. Space is limited, please register early. Limit 20 people.

**Cost \$60**

## Specialty Dinner – A Taste of the Irish

**Thursday, March 14 Dinner: 5:30–6:30 pm**

Enjoy a buffet-style meal planned around the traditional St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage dish. Put on something green and come and enjoy a delicious meal.

**Registration deadline February 29.**

**Member Adults \$20; Children: \$10**

**Non-Member Adults \$25; Children \$12 (plus tax)**

**Children ages 5–12; 4 and under are Free**



## Nature Playdates in the Play Space (Ages 6 and under)

**Thursday, March 14 Raindrops and Rainbows 10–11 am**

**Thursday, April 11 Funny Frogs 10–11 am**

**Thursday, May 9 Wacky Wildflowers 10–11 am**

Learn to enjoy nature in every season. Each playdate will consist of some guided and free play time designed to connect your little ones to the natural world around them. This program is for children and their accompanying caregivers. Go to [CedarCreekInstitute.org](http://CedarCreekInstitute.org) for additional programs in this series.

**Free**

## Conservation in a Changing World Series: Biodiversity in our Backyard

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

**Friday, March 15**

**Program: 11 am–Noon (in-person and on Zoom)**

**Lunch: Noon–1 pm**

Biodiversity can begin in your own backyard! Join Travis Kurtz, community science coordinator at John Ball Zoo, as he discusses how you can make an impact on understanding biodiversity and our coexistence with nature. This program will be presented in-person and on Zoom. A recording of the program will be available to all registered participants on the Institute's YouTube Channel. **Registration deadline is Thursday, March 7, to reserve a lunch.** To sign up for additional programs in this series, go to

[CedarCreekInstitute.org](http://CedarCreekInstitute.org).

**Program Only: Members Free | Non-Members \$8**

**Program and Lunch: Members \$15 | Non-Members \$21**



# Calendar of Events

## Nature Book Club (Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month

Early Birds 10:30 am–Noon (In-person)

\*Night Owls 7–8:30 pm (Virtually on Zoom)

\*Meet only March, May, September, and November

With a mix of fiction, non-fiction, and biographies, this book club is for readers who share an avid concern and interest in the natural world. There is no commitment other than to enjoy reading and sharing books about nature. Feel free to join us even if you have not read the book (and be inspired to read it)! The daytime Early Bird group will meet at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, while the evening Night Owl group will meet on Zoom every other month. This club will be led by Institute staff, volunteers, and the Dowling Public Library. Participants are required to obtain the books themselves. Many of the local libraries carry these books or you may purchase them.

Free



March 19\*

*The Falcon Thief:  
A True Tale of Adventure, Treachery,  
and the Hunt for the Perfect Bird*  
by Joshua Hammer

April 16

*World of Wonders:  
In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks,  
and Other Astonishments*  
by Aimee Nezhukumatathil

May 21\*

*The Last Beekeeper* by Julie Carrick Dalton

To sign up for additional programs in this series, go to  
[CedarCreekInstitute.org](http://CedarCreekInstitute.org).

## Spring Break Space Exploration Kits

Friday, March 29–Sunday, April 7

In anticipation of the upcoming solar eclipse on April 8, stop by the Institute to pick up a free kit full of STEM fun with hands-on activities to keep learning and exploring during the break. Kits will be grouped by age or grade level: preschool, early and upper elementary.

Free

## April Storybook Walk:

*And the Bullfrogs Sing:*

*A Life Cycle Begins*

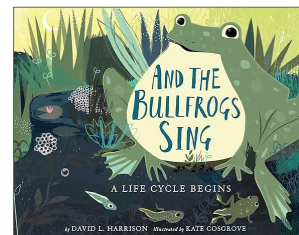
by David L. Harrison,

Illustrated by Kate Cosgrove

Follow the lifecycle of bullfrogs as

eggs are laid, tadpoles hatch, young frogs frolic, and after three years, the cycle begins again. After your storybook adventure, stop by the southside of the Visitor Center and learn about the frogs and toads that are singing this spring. This storybook walk is thanks to the generosity of Joel and Barbara VanDyken.

Free (Self-guided on Black Walnut Trail)



## Poetry on the Trails

Monday, April 1–Tuesday, April 30

Celebrate National Poetry Month by walking the trails and reading the writings of past Nature in Worlds fellows at the Institute. After your walk, return to the Visitor Center and write your own poem. Materials are available at the southside of the Visitor Center near the restrooms.

Free (Self-guided on Lupine Trail)

## Native Plant Sale

Pre-ordering begins April 1

Sale date: Saturday, June 1

9am–Noon

Join us at this year's annual Native Plant Sale! For the second year in a row, in addition to pre-order pick-up, we will host an in-person event at the Visitor Center to provide an opportunity for community members to browse our gift shop, purchase additional plants, and consult with experienced staff on gardening recommendations. Plant stock will be subject to availability so we highly encourage pre-ordering to obtain your desired species before they sell out. Pre-ordering will begin April 1<sup>st</sup> at [CedarCreekInstitutePlants.com](http://CedarCreekInstitutePlants.com). Stay tuned on our social media accounts for more updates and reminders.

Free



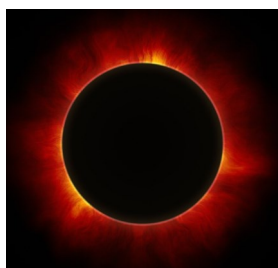
## Science Storytime: Total Eclipse of the Sun

at Pocket Park (Ages 6 and under with Adult, Family Friendly)

Friday, March 22 10:30–11:15 am

Learn about the science of eclipses with stories, songs, and activities about the sun and moon in this eclipse-themed storytime hosted by Hastings Public Library and Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. This program will be outdoors at the Pocket Park (Riverside) located along the Thornapple River, just north of the Hastings Public Library. If the weather is bad, the program will relocate to the Hastings Public Library's Community Room.

Free



## Dinner and a Movie: Homegrown Conservation (Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

Friday, March 22

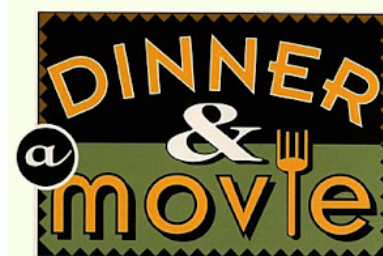
Dinner: 6–7 pm

Films and Networking 7–9 pm

Join us for an evening of learning about the great work happening in “your own backyard” through a series of films highlighting local conservation efforts. After the film screenings, connect with local organizations and find how you can learn more and get involved in these and other conservation efforts throughout Michigan. **Registration deadline is Thursday, March 14, to reserve a dinner.**

Dinner and Film Screenings: Members \$25 | Non-Members \$35

Film Screenings Only: Members \$7 | Non-Members \$10





# Calendar of Events

## Native Garden Planting Party

(Ages 12+, Under 18 with Adult)

Wednesday, April 10

6–8 pm

Join us for a planting party this spring. Participants will receive a tray of transplantable pots, native plant seeds, and lots of information about preparing and sowing different seed types. But this party is not just about playing in the dirt, it also includes “tea time” complete with flavored teas and tasty tidbits. This program is suitable for “gardeners” of all experience levels.

**Members \$35 | Non-Members \$47**



## 2024 Trail Blazers Social Hikes

(April through October) (Ages 18+)

Join us this year to make new hiking buddies, enjoy good conversation, feel comfortable hiking the Institute's trails, and become familiar with ALL of the Institute's trails. Two options of the same hike will be offered each month. Please register for either the Thursday or Saturday hiking day. Register at [CedarCreekInstitute.org](https://cedarcreekinstitute.org). Each hike is about 1.5 to 2 miles in distance. Terrain is uneven and hilly on grassy to dirt-packed, and sometimes muddy, trails.



Thursdays, April 11, May 16, June 13, July 11, August 15  
September 12, and October 10

or

Saturdays, April 13, May 18, June 15, July 13, August 17,  
September 14, and October 12

10am–Noon

**Members \$10 | Non-Members \$14 (for the entire series)**

Cost covers all 7 hikes, hiking stick and medallion,  
decals, and button.

## Art in April Brunch:

### Weaving a Web of Art and Science

Sunday, April 14

Brunch seatings: 11:15 am and 1 pm

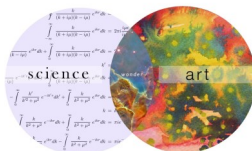
Program: 12:15–1 pm

In celebration of World Art Day (April 15), join Stephanie Clark, a former Institute research fellow and PhD candidate at Michigan State University, as she takes you on her amazing journey using art as a tool to enhance her science. After her talk, be inspired use your own artistic and scientific observation skills to create your own “work of art” using supplied watercolors and canvas on the Visitor Center deck or in the Commons Area. The program is free and you do not have to attend brunch to enjoy it.

**Member Adults \$24; Children \$14**

**Non-Member Adults \$30; Children \$18**

**Children ages 5–12; 4 and under are Free (plus tax)**



## Conservation in a Changing World Series: Seeing the Forest for More Than Trees

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

Friday, April 19

Program: 11 am–Noon

(in-person and on Zoom)

Lunch: Noon–1 pm

Join Georgia Peterson, Professor in Michigan State University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Specialist, as she discusses how healthy forests can help keep some of those challenges in check. Learn what makes a healthy forest, the many benefits we get from them, and how we can help forests adapt to changes. This program will be presented in-person and on Zoom. A recording of the program will be available to all registered participants on the Institute's YouTube Channel.

**Registration deadline is Thursday, April 11, to reserve a lunch.** To sign up for additional programs in this series, go to [CedarCreekInstitute.org](https://cedarcreekinstitute.org).

**Program Only: Members Free; Non-Members \$8**

**Program and Lunch: Members \$15 | Non-Members \$21**



## What's in Your Backyard Discussion:

### What's Up with No Mow May?

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

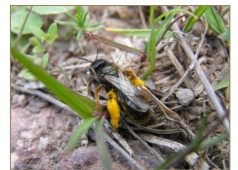
Wednesday, April 25

3:30–4:30 pm (in-person and on Zoom)

Join Logan Rowe, Conservation Associate with MSU Extension and Michigan Natural Features Inventory, as he discusses the science behind “No Mow May,” the role lawn maintenance plays on early spring pollinators, and why you should or shouldn't skip the lawn mower this spring. This program will be presented in-person and on Zoom. A recording of the program will be available to all registered participants on the Institute's YouTube Channel. To sign up for additional programs in this series, go to [CedarCreekInstitute.org](https://cedarcreekinstitute.org).

**Per Program: Members Free | Non-Members \$8**

**For the Entire Series: Members Free | Non-Members \$18**



## City Nature Challenge 2024 (Family Friendly)

Friday, April 26 - Monday, April 29

Be part of a nation-wide nature scavenger hunt!

Taking part is as simple as 1,2,3...

1. Find any “wild” plant, animal, or any other evidence of life.
2. Take a picture of what you find.
3. Share your observations.

Come and visit the Institute this weekend to participate in this community science project. Information will be available by the Visitor Center's southside entrance.

**Free (Self-guided on the trails)**



# Calendar of Events

## Solar Summit: Connecting People and Power

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

Saturday, April 27

6–9 pm

Join the Institute for an evening of learning to: become informed about the basics of solar energy and its impact on climate change, discover its potential in diversifying landowners' income and habitat usage, expose fears and misinformation surrounding solar energy, and listen to personal solar energy stories. This program is intended to provide a safe and welcoming environment to ask questions and receive answers about solar energy. This event is sponsored by Consumers Energy.

Free

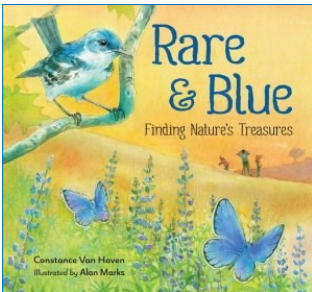


## May Storybook Walk:

### *Rare & Blue: Finding Nature's Treasures*

by Constance Van Hoven; Illustrated by Alan Marks

From the Karner blue butterfly to the blue whale, take a journey across various ecosystems to discover Earth's rarest and bluest treasures – a few of which reside here in Michigan! After your storybook adventure, stop by the southside of the Visitor Center and learn more Michigan's rare and blue species. This storybook walk is thanks to the generosity of Joel and Barbara VanDyken.



Free (Self-guided on Black Walnut Trail)

## What's in Michigan's Blue Waters

Wednesday, May 1–Friday, May 31

Can you identify the many fish that live in Michigan's lakes, streams, and rivers? Put your skills to the test while learning about Michigan's many fish species. Fish artwork by Al White.

Free (Self-guided on Lupine Trail)



## Migratory Bird Hike at the Little Grand Canyon

(Ages 9+, Under 18 with Adult)

Friday, May 3

8:30–10:30 am

Join the Barry County Bird Club in welcoming migratory birds to Michigan. Bring your favorite pair of binoculars or borrow one of the Institute's to get a better view of these spring harbingers. Be prepared to hike on a narrow path, uneven terrain, and steep stairs. We will meet at the Visitor Center and drive to the Little Grand Canyon property. Space is limited.

Members Free | Non-Members \$8



## Science Storytime: Springtime Pollinators

at Pocket Park (Ages 6 and under with Adult, Family Friendly)

Friday, May 3

10:30–11:15 am

Spring brings the return of the birds, blooms, and bugs. Learn about the importance of springtime insects and how you can help them with stories, songs, and activities. This pollinator-themed storytime is hosted by Hastings Public Library and Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. The program will be outdoors at the Pocket Park (Riverside) located along the Thornapple River, just north of the Hastings Public Library. If the weather is bad, the program will relocate to the Hastings Public Library's Community Room.

Free



## Spring Wildflower Accessible Tour

(Ages 9+, under 18 with Adult)

Tuesday, May 7 and Wednesday, May 8

10 am–Noon OR 2–4 pm

Tour the Institute's main property in a motorized, all-terrain vehicle while learning about the many ephemeral flowers that carpet our forest floors. Halfway through the tour, enjoy a relaxing "tea time" on the trail. This tour is extremely limited (maximum 5 per tour), so please reserve your spot early.

Members \$7 | Non-Members \$10

## Spring Wildflower Walk along the Beech Maple Ridge Trail

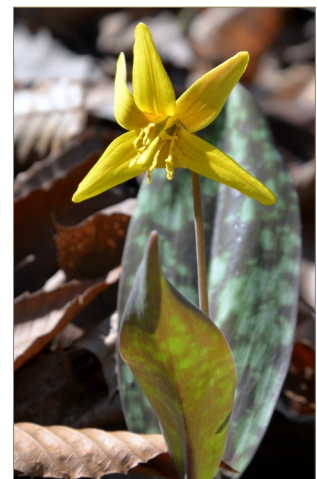
(Ages 9+, under 18 with Adult)

Saturday, May 11

9:30–11:30 am

Join us in exploring Michigan's many spring wildflowers in both forests and wetlands. From marsh marigold to yellow trout lily, there is so much to discover in this 1.5-mile walk along the Institute's picturesque Beech Maple Ridge Trail (blue trail).

Members \$7 | Non-Members \$10





## Spring Wildflower Hike at the Little Grand Canyon

(Ages 9+, under 18 with Adult)

**Saturday, May 11 1–3:30 pm**

Celebrate National Wildflower week by joining us for a hike through the Institute's Little Grand Canyon property. From spring beauty to trillium, this hike will highlight many of Michigan's ephemeral spring wildflowers. This 1.5-mile trail descends down a 60-foot deep glacial gorge on a narrow trail with uneven terrain and steep stairs. We will meet at the Visitor Center and drive to the Little Grand Canyon property.

**Members \$7 | Non-Members \$10**

## Mother's Day Brunch: Spring! Nature's Renewal

**Sunday, May 12**

**Brunch seatings: 11:15 am and 1 pm**

**Program: 12:15–1 pm**

Join folk singer and storyteller Robin Nott as he explores spring awakenings and its promise of renewed hope with songs and stories for all ages. The program is free and you do not have to attend brunch to enjoy it.

**Member Adults \$24; Children \$14**

**Non-Member Adults \$30; Children \$18**

**Children ages 5–12; 4 and under are Free (plus tax)**

## Barry County STEM Night (Family-friendly)

**Monday, May 13 6–7:30 pm**

Join us and learn about student projects from around Barry County. You can also visit with local groups to hear how your family can get more involved with STEM projects around the county and state.

**Free**

## Stewardship Workdays

**Wednesdays, May 15–August 7**

**9:30 am–Noon**

Get outside with the stewardship crew! Throughout the summer you will learn how to identify plants, remove common invasive plants, care for new plants, and other stewardship skills. Please dress to be outside and bring water and a snack. Gloves are provided. Open to all ages and skill levels.

**Free**



## Spring Herb Walk with Maggie Conklin

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

**Saturday, May 18 1–4 pm**

Join Maggie Conklin, Maven of Heirloom Academy and Naturopathic Doctor, as she explores seasonal identification, cultural and practical uses of many local herbs, and challenges the misunderstandings behind the term "weed." In this workshop, you will receive hands-on experience identifying spring herbs as well as recipes and resources to build upon your knowledge at home. Please be prepared for a fair amount of walking and standing, and dress appropriately for the weather. Space is limited, please register early!



Maggie Conklin BA, ND  
Maven of Heirloom Academy

## Conservation in a Changing World Series: Coexist with Wildlife in a Crowded World

(Ages 15+, Under 18 with Adult)

**Friday, May 24**

**Program: 11 am–Noon (in-person and on Zoom)**

**Lunch: Noon–1 pm**

In 2022 the human population reached 8 billion people, leaving little space and resources for the other millions of species who share our planet. Join Neil Carter, associate professor University of Michigan, as he discusses the trade-offs and collaborations necessary to conserve wildlife species, meet the needs of a growing human population, and coexist on shared landscapes. This program will be presented in-person and on Zoom. A recording of the program will be available to all registered participants on the Institute's YouTube Channel.

**Registration deadline is Thursday, May 16, to reserve a lunch.**

To sign up for additional programs in this series, go to

**[CedarCreekInstitute.org](https://cedarcreekinstitute.org).**

**Program Only: Members Free | Non-Members \$8**

**Program and Lunch: Members \$15 | Non-Members \$21**



**Registration, additional program information, and menus available at  
[CedarCreekInstitute.org](https://cedarcreekinstitute.org) or call (269) 721-4190.**

## Exhibits

### Paulette Carr — Into Nature Exhibit starts February 2024

Paulette Carr is a self-taught artist whose work has been exhibited throughout West Michigan. Inspired by Monet, Paulette presents her art in an impressionistic style primarily using acrylics but dabbles in oils, watercolors, and pastels. Paulette's art will be on exhibit and for sale at the Institute's Visitor Center February through May 2024.



### Bob Pierce — Birds and Butterflies and other Creatures that Fly Photography Exhibit starts June 2024

More information to come in our Summer Calendar of Events issue.

