



Discover Nature

Spring 2019



The ODC Network is a collection of nine business divisions with the mission to connect people, land, and nature through outdoor education, greenway development, and habitat and wildlife conservation.



FREE ADMISSION—Two Locations!



4214 56th Street • Holland, MI • 49423

The Outdoor Discovery Center is 155 acres with about 3 miles of trails, located on the south side of Holland, just south of West Michigan Regional Airport. Admission is free!



600 Graafschap Road • Holland, MI • 49423

DeGraaf Nature Center is 18 acres of forest and wetlands located within the City of Holland, just south of Lake Macatawa. Admission is free!



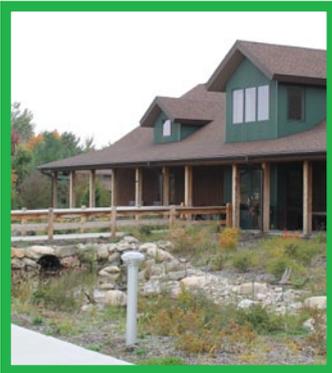
Join us for a Program!

In the following pages, you will find descriptions of all of our community programs available in the upcoming months.

Register at outdoordiscovery.org

Program Locations

Programs may be held at the **Outdoor Discovery Center**, at **DeGraaf Nature Center**, or at **various other parks** and natural areas in our community. Attend programs closest to you—or discover new places in our community! All locations are listed next to the program title—when necessary, the address and details can be found in italics beneath the program description.



Outdoor Discovery Center
4214 56th Street
Holland, MI 49423



DeGraaf Nature Center
600 Graafschap Road
Holland, MI 49423



Other Locations
*Addresses listed beneath
program description*



Join us for Maple Syrup Programs!

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Knee-high Naturalists	2 Spring Awakenings
3	4	5	6 Nature for Tykes	7 Knee-high Naturalists	8 VoLes	9 Maple Sugar Time
10	11 Hungry, Hungry Serpents	12 Explore a Story	13	14	15 Knee-high Naturalists	16 Maple Sugar Time Raptor Madness
17	18	19	20	21 Knee-high Naturalists	22	23 VoLes Maple Palooza
24	25	26	27	28	29 Knee-high Naturalists	30 Backpacking 101 Nature's Paintbrush

Did you know?

We have summer camps for kids!

Find out details at outdoordiscovery.org

April

	1 Hungry, Hungry Serpents	2 Walk in the Woods	3	4 Knee-high Naturalists	5 Live Birds of Prey	6 Reptiles Rock
		Discover Nature Spring Break Camp Little Explorers Spring Break Camp				
	8	9	10 Nature for Tykes	11 Morning Bird Walk Spring Beach Clean-up	12 Knee-high Naturalists VoLes Woodcock Walk	13 Wonderous Wetlands
14	15	16 Explore a Story	17	18 Morning Bird Walk Knee-high Naturalists Win-Wildflower Walk	19	20 Early Birds Hike
21	22	23	24 Step it Up!	25 Birds and Brews	26 Knee-high Naturalists	27 VoLes Earth Day River Clean-up Backpacking 101
28	29	30 Morning Bird Walk	1	2 Knee-high Naturalists	3 VoLes	4 Amazing Amphibians

May

5	6 Hungry, Hungry Serpents	7 Morning Bird Walk	8	9 Nature for Tykes Evening of Wildflowers	10 Knee-high Naturalists	11 Birding Bonanza
12	13 Springtime Story	14 Explore a Story	15 Step it Up!	16 Morning Bird Walk Knee-high Naturalists	17 Walk in the Woods	18 Native Wildflower Sale VoLes
19	20	21	22 Archery Night	23	24 Knee-high Naturalists Knee-deep in a Wetland	25 All About Owls
26	27	28	29	30 Knee-high Naturalists	31	

Knee-high Naturalists (formerly Nature School) (ODC)

Knee-high Naturalists introduces the wonders of the natural world to young children. Crafts, activities, books, snacks, live animals, and outside exploration will be incorporated into their nature-based learning experience.

Parents are encouraged to attend with their 4 to 6 year old (though not required). Parents or guardians are asked to attend with their 3 year old to help with bathroom use and transitioning into a group learning environment.

- Friday, March 1
- Friday, March 15
- Friday, March 29
- Friday, April 12
- Friday, April 26
- Friday, May 10
- Friday, May 24
- 10 AM–12:00 PM

Registration required
Fee: \$10 per child, \$5 per child for members



Hungry, Hungry Serpents (ODC)

Have you ever wondered what snakes eat? Snakes are carnivores and only eat other animals. They are definitely not vegetarians! Come to the Visitors Center to find out what's on the menu as you watch our resident serpents enjoy a meal.

- Monday, March 11
- Monday, April 1
- Monday, May 6
- 2–3 PM

No registration necessary
Fee: FREE

Nature for Tykes (ODC)

Bring out your little tykes to learn more about nature. In each program, you and your little tyke will have the opportunity to explore together - learning about and meeting some owls, discovering how plants and animals get ready for spring, and getting muddy catching some frogs! Please dress for the weather.

- Wednesday, March 6 • Theme: Owls
- Wednesday, April 10 • Theme: Signs of Spring
- Thursday, May 9 • Theme: Frogs
- 10–11:00 AM

Registration required
Fee: \$4 per child, FREE for members



Raptor Madness (ODC)

It's finally here. It's what you've been waiting for. It's Raptor Madness!

Come out and meet our Sweet 16 Raptors up close and personal. Learn facts about our birds of prey as you see them so you can use that knowledge to fill out your brackets. After the program, follow the ODC on Facebook to vote for your favorites.

It's gonna be a blast!

Saturday, March 16

11 AM-12:30 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$5 per person, FREE for members



Discover Nature Spring Break Camp (ODC)

This camp is for kids who are crazy about wildlife. They will study a variety of animals and plants native to Michigan and the habitats where they live at the Outdoor Discovery Center. We will discover animals both caught in the wild and from the Center's captive animal collection during camp. Please bring a water bottle and a light snack.

Tuesday-Thursday, April 2-4

9 AM-12:00 PM

Ages 7-11

Registration required

Fee: \$50 per child, \$37.50 for members



Live Birds of Prey: Final Four (ODC)

Come one, come all to our Birds of Prey Final Four. We will be highlighting the winners and losers of our Raptor Madness at this live bird show. No need to have filled out brackets last month to enjoy this event.

Friday, April 5

2-3:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$5 per person, FREE for members



Woodcock Walk (ODC)

Explore the nature preserve with a naturalist in search of two bird species most people don't see: American Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe. Dress in dark clothing and be prepared to be outside the entire time. Flashlights are welcome. Meet at the Visitors Center for a brief introduction before going outside.

Friday, April 12

8-9:30 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members



Wondrous Wetlands (ODC)

Explore the wetlands of the ODC with a naturalist in search of fish, insects, crayfish, and frogs! We will use nets to try and catch some of these awesome creatures. You are responsible for your own footwear. Expect to walk into the water with shoes or boots. No bare feet or open-toed sandals.

Saturday, April 13
10–11:30 AM

Registration required
Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members

Step it Up! (ODC)

The ODC Network is partnering with Ottawa County Parks, Allegan County Parks, and Ottawa Department of Public Health to bring you the *Step it Up!* challenge. This free, 8-week program is designed to help you get active and visit new parks. All levels of fitness are welcome!

Join us for one or all of our optional group walks as we explore the different parks. Each walk will be led by a guide.

This walk through the Nature Preserve will be led by an ODC naturalist. For a full list of the walks please visit www.miottawa.org/Parks/stepitup.htm

Wednesday, April 24
6–7:00 PM

Registration required at www.miOttawa.org/StepItUp
Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Ottawa Department of Public Health, Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission, Allegan County Michigan, and Allegan County Parks Commission

Archery Night (ODC)

Hey grown-ups, don't you want to shoot at a duck-billed dinosaur or possibly a giant mosquito? Well then, come on out to the ODC for your chance to learn or hone your archery skills. This event is for all levels. Beginners can get some personal tutoring and the "experts" can come out and display their skills. This is all for fun with no competition. We will provide all of the equipment you will need. (Sorry, no outside bows.) This program is for 18 yrs old and up. We will meet at the Visitors Center and be walking out to the range as a group - please arrive a few minutes early.



Wednesday, May 22
6–7:30 PM

Registration required
Fee: \$10 per person, \$5 for members

All About Owls (ODC)

Did you know that we have eleven different species of owls that call Michigan home? Join us as we learn about the owls of Michigan and get a close up view of the ODC's resident rescue owls. At the end of the program you will have a chance to get your picture taken with a real live owl!

Saturday, May 25
11 AM–12:00 PM

Registration required
Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members



Knee-high Naturalists (DeGraaf)

Knee-high Naturalists introduces the wonders of the natural world to young children. Crafts, activities, books, snacks, live animals, and outside exploration will be incorporated into their nature-based learning experience.

Parents are encouraged to attend with their 4 to 6 year old - though not required. Parents or guardians are asked to attend with their 3 year old to help with bathroom use and transitioning into a group learning environment.

Thursday, March 7
 Thursday, March 21
 Thursday, April 4
 Thursday, April 28
 Thursday, May 2
 Thursday, May 16
 Thursday, May 30
 10 AM–12:00 PM



Registration required

Fee: \$10 per child, \$5 per child for members

Explore a Story (DeGraaf)

It's time to round up the little ones and come out to DeGraaf Nature Center for Explore a Story! We'll be introducing kids to the outdoors through books and outdoor adventures. We'll read stories, take hikes, meet animals, and have lots of fun. Dress for the weather because we'll be heading outside to experience the nature around us!

Tuesday, March 12
 Tuesday, April 16
 Tuesday, May 14
 9–10:00 AM

No registration necessary

Fee: \$4 per child, FREE for members

Spring Awakenings (DeGraaf)

Spring is almost here and it's time to get ready for what nature will be bringing us. We will be meeting some spring animals, hearing some spring sounds, and taking a walk on the trails to look for any signs that spring is just around the corner.

Saturday, March 2
 11 AM–12:00 PM

No registration necessary

Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members

Maple Palooza (DeGraaf)

What's a palooza? Well, visit us and find out! We will be celebrating all things maple at the end of the sugaring season. There will be crafts and other activities for children of every height. We will also have maple snacks on hand for purchase. What Maple Palooza would be complete without a band? We are happy to have back our annual entertainment from the Tiki O'Riley Irish Band.

Saturday, March 23
 11 AM–3:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$5 per family

Backpacking 101 (DeGraaf)

Are you getting bored with car camping or want to take your hiking to the next level? Then join DeGraaf Nature Center as we introduce you to the exciting world of backpacking.

In the Backpacking 101 Series we will explore many different aspects of this pastime including trail etiquette, gear options, backpacking food, trip planning, survival, and more. We will also include training hikes as we make our way to a weekend on the trails next summer—no need to have attended Parts 1 or 2 to participate in these sessions.

Saturday, March 30 • Part 3

Saturday, April 27 • Part 4

10:30 AM–12:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$3 per session, FREE for members

Nature's Paintbrush (DeGraaf)

Come join us in a visual celebration of the first signs of spring as we paint the forthcoming wonder of migratory birds and budding plants. All materials are provided in this art workshop, taught by area artist and naturalist, Nancy Berg, to create a 14x20 acrylic painting. No experience is required. The workshop is designed for ages 12-adult.

Saturday, March 30

1–3:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$25 per person, \$20 for members



Little Explorers Spring Break Camp (DeGraaf)

Does your little one like to look for bugs and play in mud? Would they like to explore for the day and discover what lives here at DeGraaf Nature Center? In this camp we will do all that and more! We will spend our time inside and outside listening to stories, creating crafts and hiking.

Please bring a water bottle and a light snack.

Tuesday-Thursday, April 2-4

9 AM–12:00 PM

Ages 4-6

Registration required

Fee: \$50 per child, \$37.50 for members



Reptiles Rock (DeGraaf)

Snakes and turtles and skinks, oh my!

They don't have fur or feathers, they have scales. They have four legs, or maybe none. They are totally awesome and we have 31 different species in Michigan! Join us as we investigate and meet some of Michigan's reptiles.

Saturday, April 6

11 AM–12:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members



Morning Bird Walk (DeGraaf)

Start your day with a morning walk at DeGraaf Nature Center. We will walk the trails in search of birds. With the songbird migration in full swing there should be something new to see almost every day of spring. Binoculars are available for lending.

Thursday, April 11

Thursday, April 18

Tuesday, April 30

Tuesday, May 7

Thursday, May 16

9–10:00 AM

No registration necessary

Fee: FREE



Amazing Amphibians (DeGraaf)

What is an amphibian and why are they important? Why don't you join us and find out. We will have live amphibians to see and touch as we learn about these amazing animals!

Saturday, May 4

11 AM–12:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members



Evening of Wildflowers (DeGraaf)

Stroll the trails with a naturalist in search of spring wildflowers like dutchman's breeches, trillium, marsh marigold, and spring beauty. The hiking will be easy paced with frequent stops. Don't forget your camera!

Thursday, May 9

6–7:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$4 per person, FREE for members

Native Wildflower Sale (DeGraaf)

There is such a great value in planting native perennials in your landscape. They live many years and reduce the need to replant flower beds each spring. They require no fertilizing, little weeding, and they give a progression of beauty that lasts until frost. They are wildlife friendly too. Over 35 species of wildflowers, trees and shrubs for sun or shade will be available. These are locally grown, Michigan genotypes. Shop early for the best selection. Prices start at \$4 per plant with quantity discounts available.

Saturday, May 18

11 AM–4:00 PM

No registration necessary



VoLes Volunteer League (Locations TBA)

Our Volunteer League is a service club for teens to experience what it takes to maintain a natural area and captive wildlife, and to gain insight to the ODC Network mission. This program is designed for 12-18 year olds who will work with staff on a variety of indoor and outdoor tasks. We might spend time removing invasive species, cleaning up animal enclosures, or a number of other projects that further our goal of connecting people with nature. It's also a great way to earn those community service volunteer hours!

VoLes club meetings are scheduled for one Friday and one Saturday of each month, with a total of six meetings per session. Spring, Summer and Fall sessions are available, no prior experience or participation required to sign up. There is no fee for this activity, however a signed Behavior Guidelines Agreement and Photo/Liability Release Form are required.

Friday, March 8 • 3:30–5:30 PM

Saturday, March 23 • 2–4 PM

Friday, April 12 • 3:30–5:30 PM

Saturday, April 27 • 1–4 PM • *River Clean-up*

Friday, May 3 • 3:30–5:30 PM

Saturday, May 18 • 2–4 PM



Registration required • Fee: FREE

Maple Sugar Time (Van Raalte Farm)

It's maple sugar time! Come out to the historic VanRaalte Farm where the sap will be flowing and the sugar house will be steaming. Join us as we tap trees, gather sap, and watch the evaporator boil the liquid down into real maple syrup. There will be lots of activities for the kids and we'll have maple snacks available for purchase.

Saturday, March 9

Saturday, March 16

12–4:00 PM

No registration necessary • Fee: \$5 per family

Program location: VanRaalte Farm, 1076 E. 16th Street, Holland, MI

Walk in the Woods (Sanctuary Woods)

Visit the amazing dune ecosystem of Sanctuary Woods to explore the sights and sounds of spring. This time of year brings migrating birds, beautiful wildflowers, and active mammals. Please note this hike does include approximately 170 stairs.

Tuesday, April 2

10–11:00 AM

Registration required • Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Laketown Township

Program location: Sanctuary Woods, 4749 66th Street, Holland, MI

Spring Beach Cleanup (Shore Acres Park)

We're teaming up with Saugatuck Brewing Company to get the Saugatuck Dunes ready for the summer season. We'll provide you with garbage bags, rubber gloves, and a trail map - all you need to bring is your hiking boots!

After your section of the trail is done, head over to SBC for beer & snacks. Everyone who participates will receive complimentary snacks at the brewery; anyone 21+ will also receive two \$1.00 pint vouchers redeemable at SBC.

Thursday, April 11

5–8:00 PM

No registration necessary • Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Saugatuck Brewing Company

Program location: Shore Acres Park, 6602 138th Ave. Holland, MI 49423

Women in Nature: Wildflower Walk (Rabbit River Preserve)

Is it a Trout Lily? Trillium? Jack-in-the-pulpit? Hike the trails of Rabbit River with a naturalist as we find and identify woodland wildflowers. Cameras are encouraged. Sturdy hiking shoes are required. Field guides and magnifying glasses will be provided.

Thursday, April 18
6–7:00 PM

Registration required • Fee: FREE
Program location: Rabbit River Preserve,
4401 135th Ave, Hamilton, MI 49419



Early Birds Hike (Stu Visser Trails)

Wake up with the birds as you hike the trails with a naturalist in search of spring migrants like warblers, vireos, flycatchers and shorebirds. Binoculars and field guides are available for loan. Meet at the Ottawa Beach Road parking lot.

Saturday, April 20
8–9:30 AM

Registration required • Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Park Township
Program location: Stu Visser Trails, 923 Ottawa Beach Rd. Holland, MI

Birds and Brews (Saugatuck Brewing Company)

Join the ODC and Saugatuck Brewing Company as we pair specialty beers with a live birds of prey show. Get up close and personal with the raptors of the Outdoor Discovery Center on the Patio at SBC.

We'll learn about 5 different birds of prey and "pair" each bird's personality with the characteristics of one of SBC's beers. Each round includes a 5 oz sample of SBC beer. You will also receive a welcome pint of one of SBC's staples on your way in, to get you comfortable while you wait for the show to start.

100% of net proceeds from this event will be donated to the ODC Network and will go toward further education about and treatment of our local water sources. Always remember, without clean water, we can't make great beer.

Thursday, April 25
6:30–8:30 PM

Registration required at www.saugatuckbrewing.com/store
Fee: \$30 per person – beer samples included in ticket price. Must be 21, IDs required
Program location: Saugatuck Brewing Company, 2948 Blue Star Hwy, Douglas, MI

Earth Day River Clean Up (Dunton Park)

Help clean the Macatawa River the week of Earth Day (April 22). Depending on the group size, there may be a crew on the shores of the lake and another in kayaks in the river. Anyone under 16 years old must be with an adult. All boats, paddles and life vests will be provided. Meet at the lower parking lot near the boat launch.

Saturday, April 27
1–4:00 PM

Registration required • Fee: FREE
Program location: Dunton Park, 290 Howard Ave., Holland, MI

Birding Bonanza (Allegan State Game Area)

Catch the spring migration in full swing on this day-long birding excursion. Our first stop will be for warblers including the rare cerulean warbler in the Allegan State Game Area. We will hike near the Swan Creek Marsh and then stop for lunch at Crane's Pie Pantry and Restaurant where you can eat in the restaurant or bring a bag lunch to eat outside. Afterwards we will explore more of the Allegan State Game Area before heading north to Outdoor Discovery Center to finish the day. Carpooling is encouraged. Limited space will be available in a van driven by trip leader, Jamie Krupka.

Saturday, May 11

9 AM–3:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: \$12 per person, \$8 for members

Program location: Carpool from the Outdoor Discovery Center, 4214 56th Street, Holland, MI



Hooded Warbler

Springtime Story (Bysterveld Park)

Bring the little ones out to Bysterveld Park and enjoy a story and a stroll as we find out who's waking up for spring, who's coming back, and how the animals that stayed all winter are getting ready for the new season. You may be able to meet an animal that's ready for the warmer weather. Dress to be outside the entire time.

Monday, May 13

10–11:00 AM

Registration required

Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Allegan County Parks and Recreation

Program location: Bysterveld Park, 4171 14th St. Dorr, MI

Step it Up! (Farview Park)

The ODC Network is partnering with Ottawa County Parks, Allegan County Parks, and Ottawa Department of Public Health to bring you the *Step it Up!* challenge. This free, 8-week program is designed to help you get active and visit new parks. All levels of fitness are welcome!

This walk through a forested dune habitat will be led by an ODC naturalist. For a full list of the walks please visit www.miottawa.org/Parks/stepitup.htm

Wednesday, May 15

6–7:00 PM

Registration required at www.miOttawa.org/StepItUp

Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Ottawa Department of Public Health, Ottawa County parks &

Recreation Commission, Allegan County Michigan, and Allegan County Parks Commission.

Program Location: Farview Park, 6257 138th Ave. Holland, MI

Knee-deep in a Wetland (Farview Park)

Families are invited to meet a naturalist at Farview Park in search of amphibians, insects and other aquatic life. All collection tubs and dip nets will be provided. Old shoes or boots that can go into the water are recommended. No sandals or bare feet please.

Friday, May 24

7–8:00 PM

Registration required

Fee: FREE - Sponsored by Laketown Township

Program Location: Farview Park, 6257 138th Ave. Saugatuck, MI

This publication sponsored by:

miOttawa Department of
Public Health

The Ottawa Department of Public Health invites you to participate in their Step it Up Challenge.

Join the Step it Up! Fitness Challenge



This free program is designed to help you get active and visit new parks.

All levels of fitness welcome!

COMMIT TO FIT

REGISTER BY APRIL 15
at miOttawa.org/StepItUp



Step It Up is brought to you by



miOttawa Department of
Public Health



Participants can look forward to:

- Achieving fitness goals!
- Guided group walks with varying distances and paces
- Guided group adventures including kayaking, mountain biking, nature navigation, and more
- Discovering new parks in Ottawa & Allegan counties
- Meeting new people
- Incentive prizes
- Motivation & accountability by logging activity



“The adventure activities were terrific! The navigation was fun and informative, and introduced me to a new park. The disc golf was an activity I likely would never have tried if not for this opportunity.”



“The Step it Up program is a wonderful way to get people together to socialize and improve their health.”

Step it Up! begins on April 22. Sign up by April 15!

Questions? Contact Amy Sheele: (616) 393-5799

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