

# Discover Nature

Programs and News  
from the ODC Network

Fall  
2023



The **ODC Network** is a collection of business divisions with the mission to advance outdoor education and conservation in West Michigan.



## FREE ADMISSION—Two Locations!

**4214 56th Street • Holland, MI • 49423**



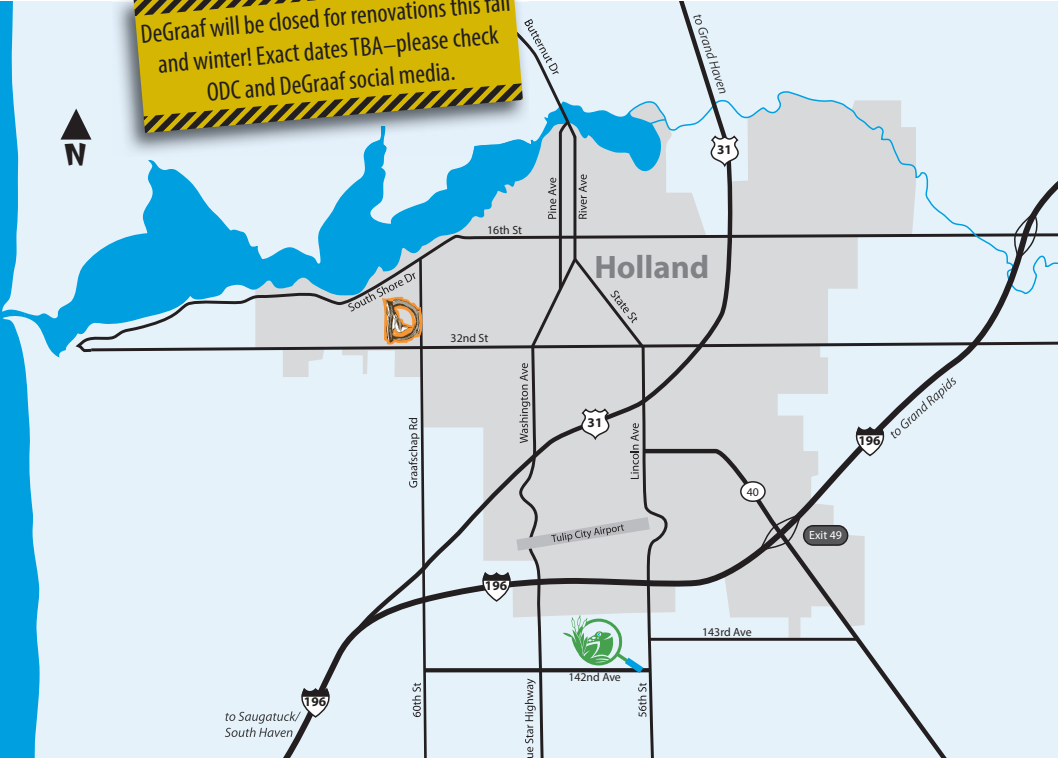
The Outdoor Discovery Center is 155 acres with about 3 miles of trails, located on the south side of Holland, just south of West Michigan Regional Airport. Admission is free! Trails open dawn to dusk—Visitors Center open 10 AM–3 PM, Monday–Saturday.

**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! Trails open dawn to dusk—Helen O Brower Visitors Center open 10 AM–3 PM, Tuesday–Saturday.

DeGraaf will be closed for renovations this fall and winter! Exact dates TBA—please check ODC and DeGraaf social media.



# Native Connections Supported by Women of Color GIVE Grant

This past year the ODC Network team met with various Anishinaabe tribes/members locally and regionally here in Michigan. In February, staff visited the Ziibiwing Center which features cultural exhibits presented by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan. During the month of April some staff toured the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Center of History and Culture, virtually presented about the ODC Cultural History Center program expansion to the Michigan Anishinaabek Cultural Preservation & Repatriation Alliance, consulted with the Anishinaabe curator at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, and co-hosted a native sustainability community conversation with a Pokagon Band tribal staff member at DeGraaf Nature Center.

In May, we hosted the Gun Lake Band and Pokagon Band tribal staff on separate visits where they toured the Outdoor Discovery Center, including the Cultural History Center trail and exhibit. Great conversations were

sparked regarding collaborative work through the ODC Network and tribal communities.

ODC staff were then encouraged to visit some local summer Powwows. In June, ODC staff learned about Powwow etiquette at a class hosted by the Gun Lake Band. In July, staff attended the Sweetgrass Moon Powwow held at the Jijak Camp in Hopkins. Four ODC staff members joined in on the fun event featuring tribal drums, dance performers, native craft vendors, native food vendors, and a community feast. We participated in an inter-tribal dance in the arena where all the dances took place, and were honored to be invited to participate in the sacred fire offering (using the 4 traditional medicines). Taking home food and gift items purchased from the native vendors was a great way to contribute to these small native businesses.



Pokagon Band Tribal Staff visit ODC DeWitt Birds of Prey Center

This is a friendly reminder to keep visiting parks in your **2023 Park Passport**. Passports must be turned in to the **Visitor Center at ODC** or **DeGraaf Nature Center** by **Friday, November 17** to receive a prize and enter the drawing. *Prizes available while supplies last.*



## Join us for a Program!

In the following pages, you will find titles or descriptions of our community programs available in the coming months. Look for more information on our website or social media!

## 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  
[outdoordiscovery.org](http://outdoordiscovery.org)



DeGraaf Nature Center  
600 Graafschap Road  
Holland, MI 49423  
[degraaf.org](http://degraaf.org)



Other Locations  
*Addresses listed beneath  
program description*

October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Women in Nature - Archery	4	5	6 Knee-high Naturalists VoLes Night Hike	7 River Junction Preserve Opening
8	9 Family Fall Scavenger Hunt	10 Explore A Story	11	12	13 Knee-high Naturalists	14
15	16 Homeschool - Plants On The Move	17 Explore A Story	18 Nature For Tykes - Seeds	19	20 Knee-high Naturalists	21 Treats & Trails VoLes <i>ODC &amp; DeGraaf Visitors Centers Closed</i>
22	23	24	25	26	27 Knee-high Naturalists	28
29	30	31	1	2	3 Knee-high Naturalists VoLes	4 Animal Sounds

November

5	6 Homeschool - Trees Are Terrific	7 Explore A Story	8	9	10 Knee-high Naturalists	11
12	13	14	15 Nature for Tykes - Fall Leaves	16 Women In Nature - Greenery Workshop	17 Knee-high Naturalists	18 VoLes All About Owls
19	20	21	22	23 <i>ODC &amp; DeGraaf Visitors Centers Closed</i>	24 <i>ODC &amp; DeGraaf Visitors Centers Closed</i>	25 <i>DeGraaf Visitors Center Closed</i>
26	27	28 Holiday Winter Walk	29 Greenery Workshop	30	1 Knee-high Naturalists	2 Pioneer Christmas

December

3	4	5 Explore A Story Holiday Winter Walk	6	7	8 Knee-high Naturalists	9 Animals In The Winter
10	11 Homeschool - Homestead Holiday	12 Holiday Winter Walk	13 Nature for Tykes - Getting Ready for Winter	14	15 Knee-high Naturalists	16
17	18	19 Holiday Winter Walk	20	21 Winter Solstice Celebration	22 Knee-high Naturalists	23 <i>DeGraaf Visitors Center Closed</i>
24	25 <i>ODC &amp; DeGraaf Visitors Centers Closed</i>	26 Holiday Winter Walk	27	28 Nature Puppet Show	29 Knee-high Naturalists	30 Christmas Bird Count <i>DeGraaf Visitors Center Closed</i>

Find the right program for you at a glance with **suggested age ranges** at the top of each description.

These are flexible with ability and attention span.

Register at [outdoordiscovery.org](http://outdoordiscovery.org)

## Women In Nature (ODC)

**Ages 12-99**

This program series is designed to motivate women to be more healthy, active and passionate about the natural world surrounding them.

Tuesday, October 3 • Archery • Fee: \$12 per person

Thursday, November 16 • Greenery Workshop • Fee: \$20 per person

6–7:30 PM • Registration required



## Knee-high Naturalists (ODC)

**Ages 3-6 Drop-off**

Introduce the natural world to young children through activities, books, snacks, live animals, and outside exploration.

Friday, October 6

Friday, November 3

Friday, December 1

Friday, October 20

Friday, November 17

Friday, December 15

10–11:30 AM • Registration required • Fee: \$10 per child, \$5 for members

Friday, December 29

## VoLes (ODC)

**Ages 12-18 Drop-off**

Our Volunteer League (nicknamed “VoLes”) is a service club for teens to experience what it takes to maintain a natural area and captive wildlife. Come work with ODC Network staff on a variety of indoor and outdoor tasks at the ODC and DeGraaf Nature Center. Past projects have included removing invasive species, cleaning enclosures, and adding nature play features. It’s also a great way to earn those community service volunteer hours!

No prior experience or participation is required to sign up.

Fri, October 6 • 3:30–5 PM

Fri, November 3 • 3:30–5 PM

Sat, October 21 • 2–7 PM

Sat, November 18 • 10 AM–12 PM

Registration required • Fee: FREE



Find more program details and register at [outdoordiscovery.org](http://outdoordiscovery.org)

## Explore a Story (ODC)

**Ages 1-7**

It’s time to round up the little ones and come to ODC 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.

Tuesday, October 10 Tuesday, November 7 Tuesday, December 5

10–11 AM • Registration is not required, but appreciated • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members



# Successful Summer Camp Season

As we transition into cooler weather and schools are back in session, we would like to look back and reflect on a great Summer Camp season at the ODC. This past summer, we had **315 campers** between the **ages of 4 and 16** attend our various summer camps. We held **8 weeks** of camps, with a total of **21 camps** for the summer. Our Naturalist team was assisted this summer by 3 seasonal staff, Miss Amy, Miss Syd, and Miss Kimberly, who helped to make this summer camp season a great success!



**Mark your calendars! Registration for 2024 Summer Camps opens February 1 at 9AM!**

Look for the 2024 offerings to be posted this winter at [outdoordiscovery.org/programs/camps](http://outdoordiscovery.org/programs/camps)

**Homeschool Class (ODC)** **Ages 6-10** **Drop-off**

Monday, October 16 • Theme: Plants On the Move  
 Monday, November 6 • Theme: Trees Are Terrific  
 Monday, December 11 • Theme: Homestead Holidays

10 AM–12 PM • Registration required • Fee: \$10 per student



**Nature for Tykes (ODC)** **Ages 3-7**

Bring out your little tykes to learn more about nature. Please dress for the weather.

Wednesday, October 18 • Theme: Seeds  
 Wednesday, November 15 • Theme: Fall Leaves  
 Wednesday, December 13 • Theme: Getting Ready For Winter

10–11 AM • Registration required • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members



**Treats & Trails (ODC)** **Ages 0-99**

Bring your entire family out for a safe and fun walk along the trails of the Outdoor Discovery Center. There will be wildlife encounters, games, and candy. Children are encouraged to wear their costumes. All the nature trails are wheelchair, stroller, and wagon-friendly. You must walk a total of 1.2 miles to see the entire event.

Saturday, October 21 • 2–7 PM • No registration necessary; No new admissions after 6 PM • Fee: \$20 per family

143rd Ave

S'mores Sponsor: **CL CONSTRUCTION**

142nd Avenue and 56th Street will be converted to one-way streets for the event, with angled parking along one side.

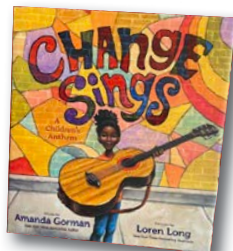
If traveling from Holland, be prepared to detour around the property to approach from 142nd.

**Animal Sounds (ODC)** **Ages 5-12**

Join us as we learn about the different sounds we can hear from our animal friends and some other amazing communication techniques. We are partnering with the Little Read Lakeshore (<https://bigreadlakeshore.com>) for this conservation program to go along with the book *Change Sings* by Amanda Gorman. The first 10 families to arrive receive a free copy (one book per household).

Saturday, November 4 • 11 AM–12 PM

Registration appreciated • Fee: FREE - sponsored by the Little Read Lakeshore



**All About Owls (ODC)** **Ages 5-99**

Did you know that there are 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, November 18 • 11 AM–12 PM

Registration appreciated • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members



**Nature Puppet Show (ODC)** **Ages 5-99**

You're invited to join us for a puppet show! Let's learn about wild animals and their habitat homes.

Saturday, December 28 • 10–11 AM

Registration appreciated • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members



## EDUCATORS! Check out our new School Program Offerings Booklet!

For anyone wishing to schedule a field trip experience with the ODC, find specific information about program offerings such as topics, locations, appropriate ages, and pricing here!

[outdoordiscovery.org/programs/school-programs](https://outdoordiscovery.org/programs/school-programs)



## DeGraaf Nature Center Under Construction this Fall

DeGraaf will be closed periodically while undergoing construction this fall and winter! Exact dates are unknown but will be posted on ODC and DeGraaf social media. Thank you for helping everyone stay safe as our facility is improved. We appreciate your patience as we develop a better experience for visitors!

  @odcwatershed

## Herb Eldean Education Center Progresses

We have made exciting progress on the new Herb Eldean Education Center!

Since the groundbreaking in May, we finished the foundation, installed the steel structural beams, and started the carpentry work. The dock will be finished and open to the public

starting in October. CL Construction's goal is to enclose the building before winter.

While there is lots of work to be done, it is exciting to see this project taking shape. Currently, we expect that this project will be done in early spring of 2024.



## Corporate Partner Highlight

Each year we ask local businesses to support the ODC Network through a Corporate Partnership. This is a unique opportunity where businesses can give back through sponsoring one of our many events, program series, and scholarship funds. In return, they receive recognition and other perks.

This year 50 businesses joined this program! We thank you for your continued support. If you're interested in learning more about ODC Network's Corporate Partnership program, please go to [outdoordiscovery.org/corporate-partnership](https://outdoordiscovery.org/corporate-partnership) or contact Ashley VanZee, [ashley@outdoordiscovery.org](mailto:ashley@outdoordiscovery.org) or 616-368-9289.

Thank you to our Lead Sponsors:





# Holidays with the ODC Network

Create family memories and traditions with us during these winter programs!

## Holiday Winter Walks (ODC) **Ages 0-99**

Bring your friends and family out for this self-guided walk on our lantern-lit Sensory Trail to enjoy the evening sky. Warm beverages will be available in the pavilion and flashlights are welcome.

**Tuesdays, November 28–January 2**

**5:30–7:30 PM** • No registration required • Fee: FREE

## Greenery Workshop (ODC) **Ages 16-99**

Make your own wall decoration or table arrangement and leave the mess behind. We'll provide fresh greens and other natural materials; bring your own tools if you wish.

**Wednesday, November 29**

**6–7:30 PM** • Registration required • Fee: \$20 per person

## Pioneer Christmas (DeGraaf) **Ages 4-99**

Experience some of the ways that pioneers prepared for their winter holidays as we visit the log cabin to learn about Christmas trees in Michigan, hand-dip candles, and make a practical pioneer craft to take home! Guardians must stay with the class.

**Saturday; December 2**

**10–11:30 AM** • Registration required • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members

## Animals In Winter (ODC) **Ages 5-99**

Join us as we talk about how some animals survive during the colder months.

**Saturday, December 9**

**11 AM–12 PM** • Registration required • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members

## Winter Solstice Celebration (ODC) **Ages 6-14**

Come dig into what the significance of the solstice is while having some fun celebrating the start of winter with crafts, games, and a snack over a warm fire. Dress for the weather as some of the program will be outdoors.

**Wednesday, December 21**

**1–2 PM** • Registration required • Fee: \$6 per child, \$4 for members

## Christmas Bird Count (DeGraaf) **Ages 3-12**

The Christmas Bird Count is in its 124th year as the longest running citizen science project on the planet. Help staff of the ODC Network tally all the birds in the Holland count circle. No experience is required other than a willingness to be outside! Binoculars are available for lending. Email Jamie Krupka for more info or to sign up — [jamie@outdoordiscovery.org](mailto:jamie@outdoordiscovery.org)

**Saturday, December 30**

**8 AM–5 PM** • Registration required • Fee: FREE

Sponsored by:



## Volunteer Groups Contribute to Our Success

Corporate volunteer groups are crucial in helping our teams complete projects throughout our properties. This year 23 different groups served across six of our sites. We appreciate the support and extra hands from each and every group that has volunteered! The following are highlights from some of our partners this year.

DISHER Design has participated in annual volunteer projects since 2017. This spring, employees volunteered their time to design

and build travel boxes for our birds of prey. In June, 130 DISHER employees participated in a volunteer day to help split wood, install sign posts on the trails, and help with landscaping.

Tennant Company has volunteered annually since 2016. Nearly 100 volunteers have contributed to building maintenance and land conservation. This year they painted and stained two pavilions at Outdoor Discovery Center and helped prepare the new River Junction Preserve for its grand opening (coming up October 7).





# ODC Gift Guide

Give greener gifts this holiday by exploring conservation and educational offerings! Find options for all ages and interests below!

## For the Animal Lover: Sponsor an ODC Education Animal

ODC is home to 26 birds of prey, six mammals, and many reptiles and amphibians. These animals act as ambassadors for their species as ODC staff educate thousands of people about Michigan wildlife. Sponsoring an education animal of your choosing is a personal commitment that helps us to meet the animals' holistic care needs, such as diet and enrichment, throughout their lives.

[outdoordiscovery.org/outdoordiscoverycenter/visit/sponsor-an-animal](https://outdoordiscovery.org/outdoordiscoverycenter/visit/sponsor-an-animal)



## For the Readers, Rock Collectors, and Small Business Supporters:

### Visit our Gift Shop

Located at the ODC (4214 56th St, Holland, MI 49423), we have artwork and locally handcrafted gifts as well as childrens' books, toys and ODC branded items. Functional artwork includes hand-painted canvas featuring local birds, clay ornaments with imprints of native plants, and bird jewelry made from recycled cereal boxes! (Inventory subject to change)



## For the Wilderness Enthusiast: Register for a Program

Programs offered by ODC teach valuable skills and cover a wide variety of seasonal topics! Sign up to learn about our neighboring plants, animals and habitats, try for the first time or hone your skills like archery, kayaking, and snowshoeing, or attend a workshop and bring home a handmade craft.

[outdoordiscovery.org/programs/#calendar](https://outdoordiscovery.org/programs/#calendar)



## For the Lifelong Learners: Purchase a Membership

Think that one program wouldn't be enough? Consider an individual or family membership that, among other benefits, includes discounted rates for ODC programs, so you can come back again and again for a fraction of the cost!

[outdoordiscovery.org/membership/](https://outdoordiscovery.org/membership/)



## For the World Explorer: Join an Upcoming Explorer Network Trip

Help a loved one travel the world by paying their deposit for an upcoming trip!

**Epic Alaskan Adventure** | Part 1 June 8-15, 2024 |  
Part 2 June 15-20, 2024

**Coastal Alaska** | September 2-12, 2024

**Utah's Big 5** | September 25-October 4, 2024

**Arctic Polar Bear Expedition** | November 6-12, 2024

**Ecuador & Galapagos: Women In Nature** | Spring 2025

**Tanzania Safari** | Spring 2025

[outdoordiscovery.org/explore/trips](https://outdoordiscovery.org/explore/trips)



MillerKnoll employees have volunteered at ODC since 2002. Over 1,000 employees have removed invasive plants, helped build playscapes and benches, and more. This year MillerKnoll employees rebuilt a bridge at our Macatawa River Greenway site, Poppen Woods, and plan to build a kiosk there as well.

Preferred Employment is a local agency that works with adults with special needs to prepare them for the workforce. Between July and August, they visited the ODC

weekly to help fill bird feeders, cut back trails, landscape, wash tables and chairs in the Discovery Pavilion, and remove invasive plants in the Eldean Family Nature Play Park and along the Sensory Trail.

Thank you to all of our wonderful corporate volunteer groups! We are excited for even more contributions of time and talent in 2024. If you're interested in scheduling a volunteer opportunity for your team, please contact Ashley VanZee, [ashley@outdoordiscovery.org](mailto:ashley@outdoordiscovery.org) or 616-368-9289.



**Night Hike (Huyser Farm)** **Ages 8-99**

Take a walk through the woods at night. Use your senses along the walk to find out how much you can feel, touch, hear, and see at night. Learn how nocturnal animals use their other senses to survive in the evening.

**Friday, October 6 • 7:30–8:30 PM** • Registration required • Fee: FREE - sponsored by Laketown Township

Program Location: Huyser Farm Park, 4184 64th Street, Holland

**Fall Family Scavenger Hunt (Ransom Street Park)** **Ages 3-99**

Get the family and explore outside on a fall scavenger hunt. Join one of our naturalists and hike the trails of Ransom Street Park in search of colors, bugs, birds, plants and more. You're sure to find some fun as you search and learn about how plants and animals are getting ready for winter. All materials are provided.

**Monday, October 6 • 10–11 AM** • Registration required • Fee: FREE - sponsored by Park Township

Program Location: Ransom Street Park, 16520 Ransom Street, Holland

**Knee-high Naturalists (Dragonflies Learning Lab)** **Ages 3-6 Drop-off**

Introduce the natural world to young children through activities, books, snacks, live animals, and outside exploration.

**Friday, October 13**

**Friday, November 10**

**Friday, December 8**

**Friday, October 27**

**Friday, December 22**

**10–11:30 AM** • Registration required • Fee: \$10 per child, \$5 for members

Program Location: Dragonflies Discovery Preschool, 30 N 152nd, Holland

**River Junction Preserve Grand Opening****0-99**

Join our team in celebrating the public opening of the River Junction Preserve on Saturday, October 7. We will be at the site from 10-2pm to introduce you to the property, provide a chance to chat with our staff who have been working on the planning and restoration, and grab a snack.

**Saturday, October 7 • 10 AM–2 PM**

No registration required • Fee: FREE

Program location: 5400 Block, 132nd Ave, Hamilton



Beginning October 8, the property will be open from dawn to dusk like our other preserves. The site will have numerous trail loops through the upland forest, while a longer out-and-back trail can take hikers all the way to the confluence of the Rabbit and Kalamazoo Rivers.

We've been working hard getting the property ready to share, which has been helped by several volunteer groups and funding from the Kalamazoo River Trustees. This has included putting in new gates and a parking area, dealing with some encroaching invasive species, grading out and cleaning up trails, and installing maps and signage.

**Summer Camp at the Junction**

Our Outdoor Skills Summer Camp was the first group to be able to use the River Junction Preserve this past August, putting their orienteering and survival skills to the test on our newest, largest property. The size of the property was an incredible asset, making the orienteering lesson more interesting and challenging as the markers were further apart in all directions.



The banks of the river were the perfect setting for testing soil transpiration methods for gathering water, and gathering water to ensure fire-starting attempts stayed on the desired tinder piles. The richness of wilderness presented both a better opportunity to see unique plants and animals, as well as more separation from the real world, lending a more authentic feel to a survival situation that would require the skills explored at camp.



# Supporting Our Watersheds



On Saturday, August 12th, we held the **Macatawa Water Festival** on Windmill Island. While there was a bit of rain early, sunshine gave way and we had a lovely day where visitors were able to interact with over 20 hands-on learning activities and crafts about water.



The fourth annual **Cultivating Resilience Farm Field Day** took place on August 17th. An unfavorable weather forecast necessitated a move from the Morren Crops & Cattle farm to Noordeloos Christian Reformed Church. Despite this and other unforeseen changes, attendees were able to learn about how to evaluate soil health, the use of drone technology in farming, applications for agroforestry in farming operations, and hear conservation experiences from a panel of local farmers.



# Peter's Creek Restoration Update



Our team returned to Peters Creek this July, working to stabilize another section of this notoriously erosive stream. The site selected for restoration this year has been on our 'most wanted' list for nearly a decade, and funding from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy allowed us to tackle this stretch near Overisel Township Hall. Located a couple of miles upstream from our previous restorations at Poppen Woods, this section of creek



featured similar issues with downed trees, hairpin turns, scoured banks, and sediment deposits. Complicating factors included multiple

buried gas lines under the stream channel and a seasonal swale that ferries in excess storm runoff from a nearby field. Using the same natural design techniques used on previous projects, our partners from Niswander Environmental, Green Watershed Restoration, and 28 Specialties tackled this roughly 1300' stretch. In this process, we actually shortened the length of the stream itself, while leaving some of the biggest bends intact but no longer connected to the channel. These disconnected bends, called oxbows, are already a great hangout spot for local frogs, turtles, and insects.



# Education Network: Summer Success

This summer, the ODC Education Network provided summer literacy enrichment support to over 1000 elementary students and their teachers. Our team provided on site support and experiences to local school partners in Holland, Grand Haven, West Ottawa, Fennville, Jenison, and Allegan County.



Students who participated in summer literacy camps were also able to enjoy recreational activities in nature as part of their experience. These recreation experiences build a multi-sensory understanding of the world, increase program comprehension, and provide equitable opportunities to try a new activity.

Students had regular and consistent access to fresh, healthy, and non-packaged snacks that helped them learn about nutrition, food preference, and sensory response. This was part of each camp's daily social-emotional learning.



Before the start, this student had told his dad that he wouldn't like camp!



Education Network Staff blended outdoor experiences with literature and journaling as a way to help kids find connections in their natural world and relatable experiences to help them in their path to expanded literacy.



Most importantly, our summer programs help teachers and students form deep and meaningful connections with each other. These connections are the conduit to future success for all learners.

## Special Thanks to These Supporters:

- Holland Junior Welfare League
- Community Foundation of Holland/Zeland
- Grand Haven Area Community Foundation Youth Advisory Council



# Save The Date!

Important upcoming dates for all of our  
Nature-Based Preschools for the 24'-25' school year:

**New Family  
Open House**  
January 16

**Open  
Registration**  
January 18

  
**Seedlings**  
Discovery Preschool

Downtown Holland  
130 Central Ave, Holland, MI 49423

  
**Little Hawks**  
Discovery Preschool

Outdoor Discovery Center  
5678 143rd Ave, Holland, MI 49423

  
**Dragonflies**  
Discovery Preschool

North Holland Campus  
30 N 152nd Avenue, Holland, MI 49424



## Dragonflies Discovery Preschool Landscape Flourishes thanks to Management by ODC Conservation Services

Check out the ways that the native seed mix and plugs have grown over the last year!



The wildflowers are  
providing food and habitat  
for many songbirds,  
butterflies, bees, and moths!

# Summer Staff Experiences

Learn about the varied experiences from a few of our 2023 summer seasonal staff.



## Madison

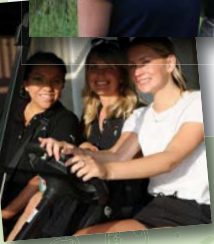
### Development Intern

#### A New Skill I Learned:

"One new skill that I learned is how to network with people in our community. Networking can include fundraising, volunteering and being involved in the ODC Network."

#### This Fall:

"I'm going to be returning to Hope College to finish my senior year. I will also be traveling a little bit this fall and working part time at *Jb and me* in downtown Holland."



## Programming Team Seasonal Staff

### Sydney

2nd year



#### A Unique Experience:

"I think having the opportunity to work with all of the animals at ODC has been a very unique experience. It's not every day that you get to hold an owl or hawk on a glove or spend time hanging out with a skunk or fox!"

#### This Fall:

"I'm going into my last semester at GVSU studying Environmental Studies and Communications. I'll also be helping out at the DeGraaf front desk and working on other Land & Water team projects."

Some of our preschool teachers choose to spend their summers providing seasonal help for other aspects of the ODC Network!

### Kimberly

PreK team



#### A New Skill I Learned:

"I developed many naturalist skills over the summer in regards to mammal, bird of prey, and herpetological care. Also, with identifying various plants, trees, and birds. The program staff was so supportive and helpful when I had questions or needed support."

#### This Fall:

"I am a teacher in the full-day GSRP program at Seedlings Discovery Preschool."

### Amy

2nd year



#### My Takeaways:

"I love the diversity of tasks and being in nature all day long. My favorite memories include getting closer to animals and staff. I love getting to know the animals and people around me! I also really enjoyed getting to know the kids."

#### This Fall:

"I will be going back to school at Eastern Michigan University to do my student teaching!"

PreK  
team

Sam



## Land & Water Interns

Our Land and Water team is made up of our conservation business lines like Project Clarity, both Macatawa and Kalamazoo River Greenways, and Conservation Services.

Caitlyn

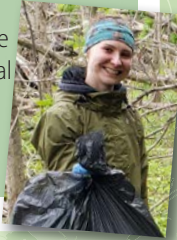


### A Unique Experience:

"I had never before been a part of a rainscaping assessment. Being able to chat with homeowners about sustainable landscaping, as well as helping them plan and design their native plantings was highly rewarding."

### This Fall:

"I will be entering my final year of my Bachelor's degree and enjoying all the beautiful natural changes that fall brings to Michigan."



Jordan



### A New Skill I Learned:

"Through interacting with different age ranges I have expanded my scientific communication abilities. This internship has given me the opportunity to educate youth about the importance of taking care of your watershed."

### This Fall:

"I'll be going back to GVSU to finish my last year of college."

### My Takeaways:

"One of my favorite memories from this summer was attending the MWEA conference in Grand Rapids. I enjoyed attending the different seminars and meeting industry partners. It really helped to paint a picture of all the work that not only goes into maintaining a watershed, but working together to improve it as well."

### This Fall:

"I will be going back to teaching preschool at the ODC's Little Hawks Discovery Preschool this fall. I can't wait to take what I learned this summer and share it with my students and fellow teachers."

Maya



## Sustainability Intern

### A New Skill I Learned:

"Taking part in managing the Tri-Communities Rain Barrel project this summer allowed me to develop new skills installing and maintaining rain barrels. I was also able to learn how to plan a large community project involving local non-profits, artists, and businesses from start to finish."

### This Fall:

"I will be going back up to Michigan Technological University to finish up my bachelors degree in Sustainability Science and Society this fall. I will also continue to work virtually as a Sustainability Intern at ODC this fall."

Thank you to all of our seasonal staff for an amazing 2023 Summer season!



4214 56th Street • Holland, MI • 49423

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
HOLLAND, MI  
Permit No. 339

