

S.I. NATURE NEWS

THE QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER OF THE UNIT 26
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION MASTER NATURALISTS

Spring 2020 – ISSUE 2

MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM UPDATE

WRITTEN BY AUSTIN LITTLE

As we head into a new year and new decade, many exciting Master Naturalist activities and opportunities await us in the 2020 spring season! Spring time in Southern Illinois is one of the most active and dynamic seasons in nature. It's a great time to get out and experience what our region has to offer from the incredible spring blooms of native ephemeral flowers to the late spring return of the Prothonotary Warbler. This spring there are lots of great opportunities for volunteering and continuing education credits with our program partners- see a short list of exciting events in the Continuing Education and Volunteer opportunities sections.

The next training for the Master Naturalist program will begin Jan 23rd at the Giant City. We look forward to seeing the new changes implemented, and invite you to attend these new sessions to continue to grow your knowledge.

We continue to appreciate your volunteer efforts to help our local organizations! Please remember to log your volunteer hours at <https://volunteer.extension.illinois.edu/>.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, feel free to call (618-687-1727) or email (little84@illinois.edu).

UNIT 26 PROGRAM PARTNERS:

- REND LAKE RECREATION NATURE SITES
- GIANT CITY STATE PARK
- SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST
- AG IN THE CLASSROOM
- RIVER TO RIVER CWMA
- JOHN A. LOGAN
- CRAB ORCHARD WILDLIFE REFUGE
- TOUCH OF NATURE

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University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunity in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact your local Extension office. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting your access needs.

Illinois Master Naturalist



The new logo is here!

The beautiful new design features a very important pollinator of Illinois native habitats.

It showcases the Monarch butterfly whose populations have been declining drastically across the country.

Above: New Master Naturalist logos.

Backyard Maple Syrup Production Workshop February 1st, 2020 10:00am

The fifth annual backyard maple syrup production workshop will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2020 from 10am-12pm at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center, located at 354 State Highway 145 N, Simpson, IL 62985. This program is free and open to the public.

The program will cover tree identification, equipment needs, tree tapping, sap collection, boiling, and finishing maple syrup. Participants will see firsthand the processes involved in making maple syrup. We will have a demonstration of a syrup evaporator and an optional tour of a sugarbush forest, managed for maple syrup production and utilizing a pipeline system of sap collection. **New this year is taste-testing maple syrup produced right here at Dixon Springs!**

The University of Illinois Extension will provide some activities for kids, including taste testing of real maple syrup!

If you are interested in attending this workshop, please RSVP by January 30, 2020 by calling the Ag Center office at 618-695-2441, please indicate if you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program.

For more information:


Chris Evans —
csevans@illinois.edu,
618-695-3383

Bronwyn Aly—
baly@illinois.edu,
618-252-8391

Dixon Springs Ag Center
354 State Hwy 145 North
Simpson, IL 62985
February 1, 2020
10am-12pm

Program Activities

- Maple Syrup Basics
- Taste-Testing Maple Syrup
- Field Tour of Maple Syrup Collection System
- Kids Program



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If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, contact Dixon Springs Ag Center at 618-695-2441.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Feb. 22 – Volunteer Recruitment Day (Crab Orchard)
- Feb. 29 – Storytime In The park: Fox (Giant City)
- March. 21 – Hike with a homeless dog (Giant City)
- March. 21 – Storytime in the Park:Trees (Giant City)
- Apr. 11 – 50th Anniversary Earth Day Celebration (Giant City)
- Apr. 22-24 – Stewardship Week (Dixon Springs Ag. Center)

Who to Contact?

Cache River Wetlands Center

Molie Oliver & Kim Rohling - 618-657-2064

Giant City State Park

Jennifer Randolph - 618-457-4836

Shawnee National Forest

Linda Hauser - 618-833-8576 x104

Ag in the Classroom

Maria Farris - 618-694-9893

Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge

618-997-3344

Touch of Nature

618-453-1121

Rend Lake Visitors Center

618-724-2493

Visit <https://www.siwanderings.com/> to see a calendar of upcoming events across southern Illinois!

BEGINNER CHAINSAW SAFETY AND FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT TRAINING



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February 8, 2020

10am-3pm

Dixon Springs Agricultural Center

354 State Highway 145N

Simpson, IL 62985-9614

Join us for a hands-on, field training for Beginner Chainsaw Safety and Forest Stand Improvement. Participants will be trained in safe use of chainsaws, safety gear to use, chainsaw cleaning/maintenance and an opportunity to practice these skills with experts.

Dress appropriately with long pants and sturdy boots. Bring chainsaws and PPE (chaps, helmets, hearing & eye protection) if you have them (can loan if needed). Bring a sack lunch.

Please register early or ask questions by email
krohling@illinois.edu or phone
618-695-3383



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CONTINUING EDUCATION

OPPORTUNITIES

Jan 23, 8:30-4pm – Spring 2020 Master Naturalist Class begins @ Giant City Visitors Center

Jan 25, 10-11am - Rare and Little-Known Plants of Illinois @ Cache River Wetlands Center

Feb 1, 10-12am – Birding Basics @ Giant City Visitors Center

Feb. 8, 1-2pm - Native Plants for Pollinators @ Cache River Wetlands Center

March. 28 10-11am – Giant City “Streets” Exposed @ Giant City Visitors Center

April 3,4,5 – Illinois Native Plant Society Symposium @ John A. Logan College

April 4,11,17 10-11am – Spring Wildflower Walks @ Giant City State Park

Please Register for Events

Cache River Wetlands Center - 618-657-2064

Giant City State Park - 618-457-4836

Touch Of nature - 618-453-1121

Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge - 618-997-3344



Hosted by Emiquon Audubon Society a chapter of Illinois Audubon Society

STAY TUNED FOR SPRING
FIELD TRIPS!

If you have ideas for field trips throughout southern Illinois that you would be interested in hosting or attending, contact Austin!



Information on past Birding Blitz, <http://www.birdingblitz.org/>