

A black salamander with yellow spots is the central focus, resting on a large, vibrant yellow autumn leaf. The background is a forest floor with moss, rocks, and other fallen leaves. The text is overlaid on a white and green banner at the top.

DOOR COUNTY  
**FESTIVAL**  
OF **NATURE**

May 21 – 24, 2026

Convergence

**CELEBRATING THE NATURAL BEAUTY  
OF THE DOOR PENINSULA**

# Welcome to the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual

## DOOR COUNTY FESTIVAL OF NATURE



The Ridges Sanctuary invites you to join us in celebrating the natural beauty of the Door Peninsula at this year's Festival of Nature, May 21-24, 2026. This year marks the 24<sup>th</sup> Festival of Nature. The theme of this year's Festival is *Convergence*: the coming together of ideas, communities, and spaces. Convergence represents the junction of all necessary variables of the equation which move our scientific community forward towards progress.

Once accepted as a veritable underpinning of society, the scientific community now finds itself in a precarious position. In our work at The Ridges, we recognize all the forms of scientific research and conservation continuing to take place throughout the county and how the efforts of individuals decades ago have been instrumental in protecting the habitats we enjoy today. Convergence is both an honoring and a celebration of this work.

Science is predicated on systems. The word "system," originating from the Greek word *systema*, means a whole made up of parts, or an organized whole. To conduct scientific research is to attempt to put together a very large, complex puzzle. Without other pieces to give context to the colors and patterns printed on it, a single piece is just information. When you begin to see the patterns among the pieces, you can see the picture take shape. As we piece together scientific research and understanding, the arduous process of executing fieldwork, testing hypotheses, and analyzing endless data points also continues. This process cannot be conducted insularly, especially when the ecological puzzle is both complex and on the precipice of immeasurable change.

If we look at the landscape of The Ridges alone, we see interactions between several habitat types: the southernmost boreal forest in the United States at this elevation, a ridge and swale complex that exists in only a few places along the Great Lakes, a Sanctuary with over 475 vascular plant species and 29 species of native orchids, and a Ramsar-designated wetland of international importance. These are all puzzle pieces that together create a large, multi-faceted picture of ecology and biology—pieces that we are trying to sort through to understand how they fit together and how we can preserve them. None of this work is done in isolation. Citizen scientists, volunteer researchers, staff, visiting researchers, student interns, partner organizations, and universities all contribute to critical research taking place throughout all seasons, year after year. Organizations that promote and contribute to conservation are also contributing to conservation efforts. Even visitors who travel here to enjoy The Ridges make a difference in promoting positive behaviors and raising awareness about these critical habitats.

If we expand our view to look at the Peninsula as a whole, we can begin to understand how large and complex the puzzle of scientific research actually is. We also begin to understand the dedication of scientists, researchers, and conservationists who have come before us, building each piece so that we may continue their work. Every contribution relies not only on its relationship to one another, but on the evidence gathered before our time that has allowed us to inch toward progress.

We could not be more honored to celebrate the dedication of individuals and organizations who continue to practice and promote research and conservation within our community. We hope you will join us in celebration of the convergence of people, place, and science at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Festival of Nature.

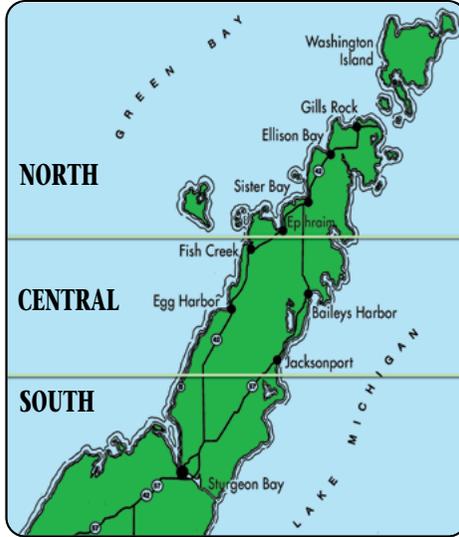
Best,



**Anna Foster**  
Director of Operations

**The following pages highlight field trips, special events, artist exhibitions, and more!  
Please support our sponsors and partners by getting involved and patronizing their establishments.**

# North/South/Central Map



The North, South, and Central areas on the map correspond to designations at the end of each field trip description and will help you to determine the general location of each trip.



Find your field trip location

## PLANNING YOUR TRIP

### Transportation

Transportation for field trips is NOT provided unless indicated in the trip description. Carpooling may be an option for some trips and will be managed at your and the trip leader's discretion. Some field trips may require a Wisconsin State Park Pass. Passes can be purchased at the entrances to state parks.

### Field Trip Tips

Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early to check in with your trip leader. We suggest bringing your own bug repellent, sunscreen, water, and appropriate footwear and clothing.

All registered participants of a field trip will receive a reminder email the week of your field trip, including special instructions from your field trip leader. Be sure to follow your field trip leader's instructions to ensure an enjoyable field trip experience.

### Weather

Be prepared for variable weather throughout the season. Lake breezes moderate the local temperatures and can change within a matter of hours. Field trips will run rain or shine but will cancel in the chance of severe or threatening weather conditions.

### Meals

Meals are not included in the registration fees.

### Where to Stay

Lodging in Door County throughout the season can be limited. We suggest making reservations well in advance. For more information on lodging options, visit:

- Baileys Harbor Community Association, [www.baileysharbor.com](http://www.baileysharbor.com)
- Destination Door County, [www.doorcounty.com](http://www.doorcounty.com)

Please consider supporting our business members and sponsors by visiting <https://ridgessanctuary.org/membership/>. Thank you for your support!

### Accessibility

The Ridges is committed to providing accessible experiences for Festival of Nature participants. Please contact us to discuss potential accommodations for your field trip. Please note that not all field trips can be modified to accommodate accessibility needs due to location, trail conditions, etc.

Icons have been added next to field trip titles to indicate activity level, family friendly field trips, and wheelchair accessible field trips.

# What You Need to Know

**Check out our Festival of Nature website!**

**Visit [doorcountyfestivalofnature.org](http://doorcountyfestivalofnature.org)**

For registration, field trip resources, sponsor details and more!

## REGISTRATION

The 2026 Festival of Nature offers a full slate of field trips, classes, and activities throughout Door County. **Registration opens Monday, March 16 for Ridges members and Wednesday, March 18 for the public.** For member registration instructions, visit The Ridges Sanctuary website. There is a maximum number of participants allowed for each field trip or program. Registering early is the best way to ensure you get to participate in the activities you want. Registration is easy – go to [ridgessanctuary.org](http://ridgessanctuary.org) or call 920-839-2802. We'll confirm your registration by email.

\*Registering online offers the best chance of securing your spot in the field trips of your choosing. You are welcome to call The Ridges if you are unable to register online, but please be patient and understand that staff does not have the capacity to answer all phone calls immediately when registration opens. Because we will not be able to check voicemails until later in the day, please keep trying until you get through to someone.

## WALK-IN REGISTRATION AND FIELD TRIP RESOURCES

**Pre-Registration is required for all Festival of Nature programs.** Walk-in registration is available at the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center during business hours. Please check our website for the most current Nature Center hours as they change throughout the year.

Field trip information with driving directions, special instructions, and your itinerary will be included in your registration confirmation email. Please keep the email handy for future reference. You can also access these resources on the Festival of Nature website: [doorcountyfestivalofnature.org](http://doorcountyfestivalofnature.org).

## PROGRAM FEES

Program fees per field trip vary from \$30 to \$65 per person, per program. Prices are listed in each program description. Program prices for youth under the age of 16 are 50% of the full price.\* When registering as a member or as youth, please be prepared to provide membership details and/or date of birth in the registration portal.

Please note the location of your field trip. A park pass may be required unless otherwise indicated for field trips in a state park.

*\*Exclusions apply*

## CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

The *Door County Festival of Nature* reserves the right to cancel an activity or field trip when necessary. If a trip is canceled, you will be notified as soon as possible so that you may select an alternate trip or receive a full refund. Please make sure to provide us with a phone number for last-minute communications. You can cancel your registration by email or phone. Cancellations made 30 days prior to the program start date will be refunded in full, minus a \$10 processing fee. Cancellations made between 8 and 29 days prior to the program start date will be refunded at 50% of the total fees. Refunds will not be issued for cancellations made less than 7 days prior to the program start date.

Some field trips with partners may have the opportunity to be rescheduled if canceled due to weather. We will reach out to participants directly in this case to determine a preferred solution to cancellation.

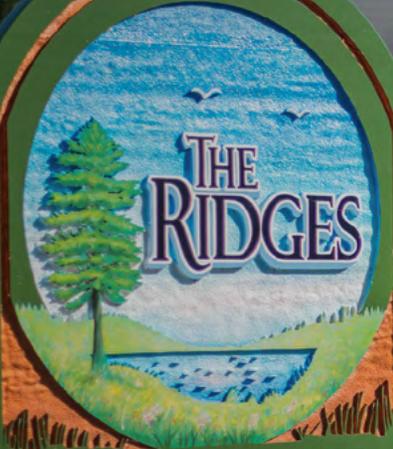
Door County is a rare and unique jewel of Wisconsin. Visitors come from across the country and the world to experience its beauty. For centuries, the land now recognized as The Ridges Sanctuary has been honored and respected. It is our responsibility to continue to protect and preserve the sensitive habitats within The Ridges Sanctuary for future generations to experience and appreciate.

Consider getting involved! Help us continue our important work in Preservation, Education, and Research by becoming a member, making a tax-deductible contribution, or by volunteering. Your donation, your time, and your commitment, no matter how humble, goes a long way towards helping The Ridges continue to offer programs like this. Visit our website to learn about all of the ways you can get involved. [ridgessanctuary.org](http://ridgessanctuary.org).

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# 2026 Community Partners

The following organizations have come together to bring about the Door County Festival of Nature. Their work is dedicated to protecting and maintaining our natural treasures for generations to come. They need your support. Every contribution, no matter how humble, helps these organizations continue to offer programs like this. Your support is greatly appreciated!



## Door County Land Trust

Protecting Door County's Exceptional Lands and Waters...Forever

Protecting Door County's exceptional lands and waters... forever. Door County Land Trust protects more than 9,400 acres of open space, scenic beauty, and ecological integrity. Door County Land Trust nature preserves are open to the public at no charge for hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife observation, some forms of hunting, and other low-impact, non-motorized recreational activities. Door County Land Trust is accredited by the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Commission and is a local non-profit organization supported by people like you! Trail maps and more information may be found at [www.doorcountylandtrust.org](http://www.doorcountylandtrust.org).



In 2018 Horseshoe Bay Farms, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit, was established. Originally constructed between 1917-1919 on the beautiful shores of Green Bay in Egg Harbor, several barns and structures of this historic farm still stand today. Because of its prominence in

the development of Door County, both in the agricultural industry and as a civic landmark, it is listed on the National & State Register of Historic Places. Its mission focuses on the preservation, rehabilitation, and activation of Horseshoe Bay Farms. More information about tours, programs, events, and volunteer opportunities can be found at [www.horseshoebayfarms.org](http://www.horseshoebayfarms.org).



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

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization guided by science and dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. We have worked with landowners, communities, and other partners in Door County since 1962 to protect nearly 8,000 acres of ecologically-significant lands and waters, including at our four preserves on the Door Peninsula: Mink River, North Bay-Mud Lake, Kangaroo Lake, and Shivering Sands. Learn more about us at [nature.org/Wisconsin](http://nature.org/Wisconsin).



## BJÖRKLUNDEN LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

Come experience Björklunden - a 441-acre estate located just south of Baileys Harbor with 3.5 miles of hiking trails along Lake Michigan. Much of this area is protected in partnership with the Door County Land Trust and features remarkable geology, flora, and fauna. Jane Whitney offers hikes most Mondays at 1:15pm, June through October (meet on lodge deck). If you seek adventure that combines relaxation and education, the Björklunden seminars offer courses across a range of subjects at the lodge with ample time for reflection and exploring built into the schedule. The historic Boynton Chapel is open for tours on Monday and Wednesday, 1-4pm, mid-June through August. The Chapel is available for weddings and bus tours too! Facilities are also available for rent subject to availability.

[Lawrence.edu/bjorklunden](http://Lawrence.edu/bjorklunden) • 920.839.2216



## OPEN DOOR BIRD SANCTUARY

Open Door Bird Sanctuary - Come enjoy the unique experience of birds of prey in a natural environment! Be awed and inspired by close encounters with raptors during a 1-hour program, talk with educators, see and touch artifacts and visit birds on display. With 34 acres of serene landscape, 3 different scenic hikes and a picnic area, make it an afternoon to remember! Visit [www.opendoorbirdsantuary.org](http://www.opendoorbirdsantuary.org) for this years hours and program schedule. (Private tours available at any time by appointment).



In keeping with its mission, the Wisconsin DNR is dedicated to working with the citizens and businesses of Wisconsin while preserving and enhancing the natural resources of Wisconsin - our air, land and water, our wildlife, fish and forests and the ecosystems that sustain all life. In partnership with individuals and organizations, DNR staff promote a healthy, sustainable environment and a full range of outdoor opportunities. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/>.



The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. Two National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) are managed by the USFWS

here in Door County: Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge, made up of lands on 6 islands between Wisconsin's Door County Peninsula and Michigan's Garden Peninsula, and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge containing Gravel and Spider islands off the east coast of the Door Peninsula. Both refuges are home to the Wisconsin Islands Wilderness area, established in 1970, containing Hog, Spider, and Gravel islands. The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is the official partner of the USFWS at Green Bay NWR, and support events, volunteering, and community outreach. To learn more, visit [fws.gov/refuge/green-bay/about-us](https://fws.gov/refuge/green-bay/about-us).



The mission of the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is to partner with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and contemporary use of the historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands, and to conserve and

protect wildlife resources, while providing opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation. Visit our website <https://www.plumandpilot.org/> to learn more about our important work and to learn how you can get involved.



Climate Change Coalition of Door County is a non-partisan organization that through education, outreach and civil dialogue increases public understanding of climate change and its many detrimental impacts at home and around the world. Our objective is to inspire prompt action by individuals and policymakers at all levels to address the causes and challenges of climate change and to help communities adapt to its impacts. CCCDC works to raise awareness of climate change in Door County and beyond through a variety of channels focused on the important collateral benefits of climate action. Visit our website [www.climatechangedoorcounty.com](http://www.climatechangedoorcounty.com) to learn more about our important work and how you can get involved.



The Door County Invasive Species Team (DCIST) is a group of natural resource professionals and interested public members that are concerned about the preservation of Door County's natural environment. DCIST seeks to halt the invasion of exotic, non-native plants by empowering citizens with the education, tools and skills necessary to control invasive species. DCIST is committed to educating, preventing, minimizing, and eradicating invasive plants and reducing their impact on Door County's natural resources, economic viability, and human welfare. The partnership promotes an open exchange of information, public and private sector coordination, and citizen involvement.

The DCIST meetings include personnel from local non-profit groups, citizen organizations, and local, state and federal agencies. For information on the next meeting, contact the DCIST coordinator at 920-746-5955 (message line).



Black-throated Green Warbler, O. Deutsch

# 2026 Special Events

## FESTIVAL DINNER AND KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

**Friday, May 22, 4:30 pm**

**Location:** About Thyme Farm,  
8425 County F, Baileys Harbor

**Fee:** \$40/per person

**Reception & Beverage Service:** 4:30 pm

**Dinner:** 5:00 pm

Enjoy a delectable family style dinner prepared by Thyme Restaurant & Catering with dessert prepared by Fika Bakery.

**Welcome & General Announcements:** 6:15 pm

**Keynote Presentation:** 6:30 pm

**Limit:** 185

**Reserve your spot by May 8, 2026**



Photo By: Andrew Pirrung

## THE TEMPERATE-BOREAL ECOTONE IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Join us for a keynote presentation by forest ecologist Lee Frelich as he explores the different types of boreal refugia and their fate in the warming climate. Door County lies within the ecotone — a boundary between two distinct ecological communities — where boreal forests (spruce, fir, birch and aspen) transition into temperate forests (maple, beech, oak and hemlock). At regional scales, the boreal-temperate ecotone runs in an east-west direction with boreal forests in colder climates at higher latitudes. However, ecotone structure varies a lot with longitude; in some places it is very sharp (ca 20 miles) and in others (e.g. most of the Great Lakes region) more diffuse, with a mosaic of temperate and boreal forests over hundreds of miles of latitude, with many small ecotones embedded within the regional ecotone.

Many factors influence whether a given acre is occupied by boreal or temperate tree species, and how long the boreal species will hold on in a warming climate. Boreal forests in Door County are refugial, having persisted through past climatic warming that allowed expansion of temperate forests. The strength of a boreal refugium depends on factors such as continental versus maritime climates, landforms that influence temperature on north- or south-facing slopes, and cold-air pooling at night. Landform also influences the disturbance regime, which in turn can accelerate or slow forest type transitions.

The ecotone in Door County and the surrounding region is a landscape mosaic where boreal refugia will blink out for various reasons at varied times as the climate warms. In this presentation we will explore the different types of boreal refugia and their fate in a warming climate.



Lee Frelich

### SPEAKER BIO

**Lee Frelich** is Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology. He received a Ph.D. in Forest Ecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1986. Frelich has authored 240 publications with 375 coauthors from 27 countries, including major works for *Cambridge University Press* and *Oxford University Press*. He is listed among the top 1% of all scientists in the world in the Ecology and Environment category by the *Web of Science Essential Indicators*. His research has been featured in the news media over 600 times, including such venues as *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and *Washington Post*. Research interests include large-scale fire and wind, earthworm invasion, and climate change in temperate and boreal forests.

# ART EXHIBIT AND ARTIST RECEPTION

## Convergence: Understanding Nature through Observation

This exhibition features the photography of nature and wildlife photographer Jacob Loyacano. His photography brings together science, curiosity, and personal outdoor experiences. With a background in biology, he approaches nature as something to learn from as well as appreciate. Each photograph comes from being present in the field—watching, waiting, and paying attention—where observation turns into understanding.

Jacob has spent time working in very different environments, from the deserts and mountains of the Americas to coral reefs in Australia and the wetlands and forests of Door County. While these places look different on the surface, they are connected by shared patterns of survival, change, and balance. Photography allows him to show those connections and place local landscapes within a larger natural context.

**Artist Reception, Thursday, May 21, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm**  
**Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center**

Special artist presentation will begin at 5:00 pm



Jacob Loyacano



Photo By: Jacob Loyacano

## ARTIST BIO

**Jacob Loyacano** is a nature and wildlife photographer with a background in biology, originally from Jupiter, Florida. His passion for the natural world began early and was nurtured through his education at the Jupiter Environmental Research and Field Studies Academy. He later earned a degree in Biology from Florida State University, where he worked as an undergraduate researcher studying snake venoms and assisted in the collection of venom from rattlesnake species across the southern United States.

In 2016, Jacob moved to Australia to immerse himself in its extraordinary native fauna. While in Australia he worked on the Ningaloo Reef with a whale shark tour operator, where he helped create meaningful encounters that connected visitors with many of the incredible species on the Ningaloo Reef. These experiences highlighted the power of convergence—when shared moments in nature foster deeper understanding and meaningful connection. His ongoing pursuit of wildlife and wild places has taken him to Australia, New Zealand, Alaska, South America, and beyond, often drawn to dramatic landscapes and the challenge of finding rare and elusive species.

Jacob relocated to Door County in 2020 for what was intended to be a single summer and has called it home ever since. In 2025, he discovered The Ridges Sanctuary and the remarkable diversity of plant life found throughout the Door Peninsula. That summer marked a shift in focus toward documenting the region's unique and often overlooked floral species.

Driven by a belief that education is essential to conservation, Jacob shares his photography as a tool for learning and inspiration. Each image is paired with interpretive information to help viewers better understand the species and ecosystems depicted. Above all, he hopes to inspire others to explore the natural world for themselves—proving that meaningful encounters with nature are possible anywhere, from distant continents to one's own backyard.



Swale, TRS

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Festival of Nature, Keynote Dinner 2024

# FOREST DAYS



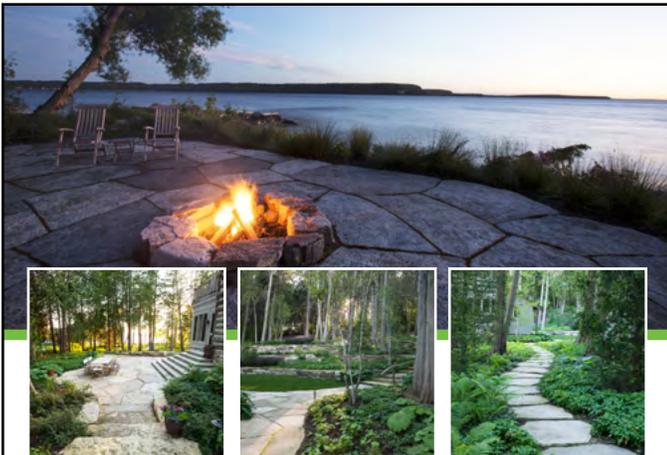
Rotary Club of Door County North

Supporting the youth of our community.  
Partnering with The Ridges Sanctuary and Friends of Gibraltar.

**JOIN US!**  
Meeting Wednesdays at 8 AM

Check Peninsula Pulse Calendar for program and meeting location or zoom information.

**Rotary**



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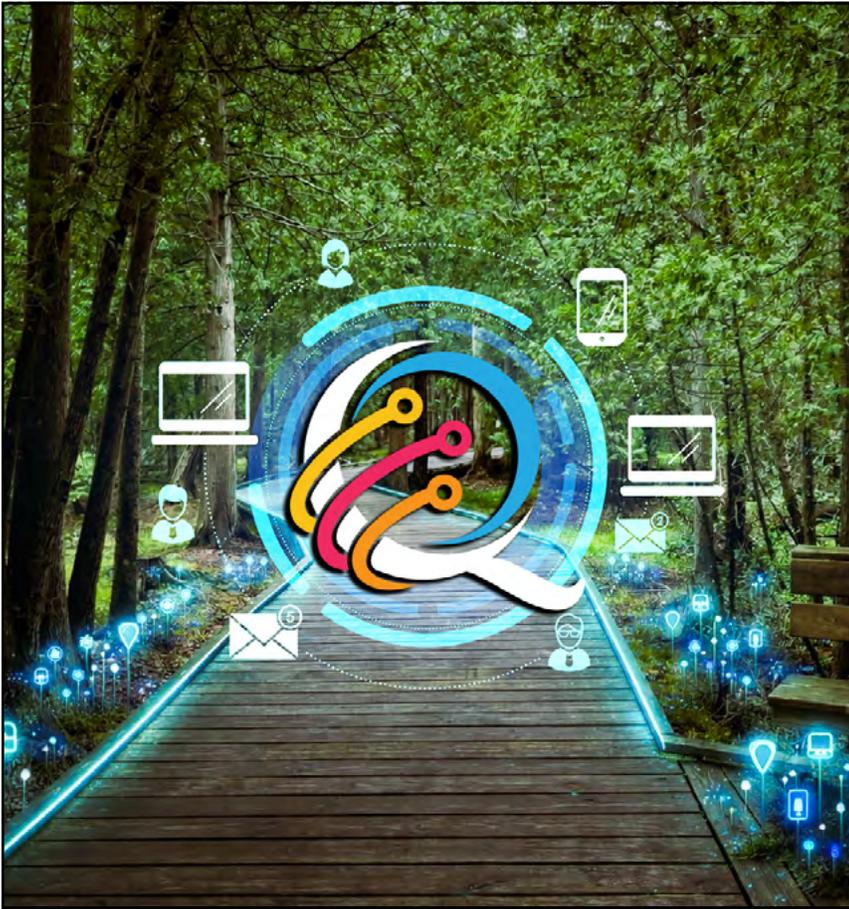
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# 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## EXPLORE THE QUIETSIDE

BAILEYS HARBOR | DOOR COUNTY, WI

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- April 4 Easter in Baileys Harbor
- April 16-19 Brown Trout Tournament
- May 17 Sunday Farm Markets Begin
- June 6 Blessing of the Fleet
- June 7 Sunday Yoga Sessions Begin
- July 4 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration
- September 12 Autumnfest
- October 31 Halloween Celebration
- December 5 Harbor Holiday

**BAILEYS HARBOR**   
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## Björklunden vid Sjön (Birch Forest by the Water)

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#### MILES OF TRAILS...

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#### EVOLVE WITH US...

Net Zero Björklunden features a living laboratory of sustainable technologies.  
[lawrence.edu/bjorknetzero](http://lawrence.edu/bjorknetzero)



#### GROWING TOGETHER...

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[lawrence.edu/bjork](http://lawrence.edu/bjork)



**BRILLIANT MOVE.**

Photo: Dan Eggert Photography, courtesy of The Door County Land Trust

Björklunden, Lawrence University's north campus, is located one mile south from Baileys Harbor on Hwy 57 at 7590 Boynton Lane 920-839-2216



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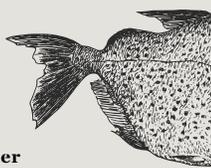


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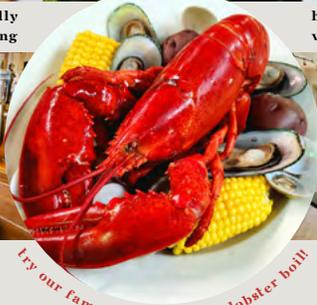
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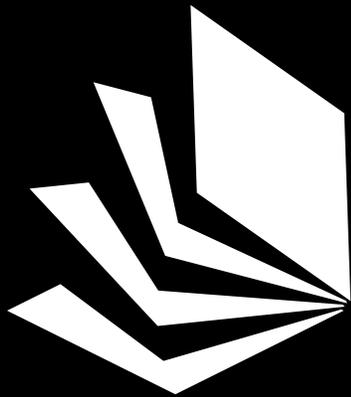
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# 2026 Field Trips At A Glance

Fast, easy registration is available at [doorcountyfestivalofnature.org](http://doorcountyfestivalofnature.org) or call (920) 839-2802.

# Program	Time	Page #
<b>FRIDAY, MAY 22 - MORNING</b>		
1. Birds of a Lakeshore Forest of Door County - <b>NEW</b>	6:00 am – 8:00 am	19
2. Mud Lake/Rieboldt's Creek Paddle	8:00 am – 10:30 am	19
3. Bat Heroes - <b>NEW</b>	8:00 am – 11:00 am	19
4. Macroinvertebrate Mayhem!	9:00 am – 10:30 am	19
5. Research at The Ridges	9:00 am – 11:00 am	19
6. Writing About Nature So People Actually Read It - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:00 am	20
7. How Does Nature Listen? - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:00 am	20
8. Invasive Impacts: How Collaboration Protects Door County's Native Habitats - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	20
9. From Field to Farm: Using Technology for a Better Tomorrow - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	20
10. Lake Michigan Coastal Forest Ecology	9:00 am – 11:30 am	20
11. Stickwork Environmental Art Installation at Historic Horseshoe Bay Farms	9:00 am – 11:30 am	21
12. Trailside Bryophytes: Mosses, Liverworts & Hornworts of Peatland Habitats - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	21
13. A Closer Look at Plants of The Ridges Sanctuary	9:00 am – 11:30 am	21
<b>FRIDAY, MAY 22 - AFTERNOON</b>		
14. Bat Heroes - <b>NEW</b>	12:00 pm – 3:30 pm	21
15. It Isn't Easy Being (Ever)Green	1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	21
16. Discovering a Tiny World of Animals in Wetland Moss Communities - <b>NEW</b>	1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	21
17. Sway Brewery Tour: Highlighting Wild Harvested Ingredients & Rustic Techniques	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	22
18. Bear Creek Awaits: Journey into a New Land Trust Nature Preserve - <b>NEW</b>	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	22
19. Natural & Human History at Heins Creek Nature Preserve	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	22
20. Exploring the Niagara Escarpment at Lautenbach Woods	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	22
21. The Fossils & Geology of Door County	1:30 pm – 4:00 pm	23
22. Beginning Drawing - <b>NEW</b>	1:30 pm – 4:00 pm	23
23. Birding by Ear Class	1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	23
<b>FRIDAY, MAY 22 - EVENING</b>		
<b>Festival Dinner and Keynote Presentation</b>	4:30 pm – 8:30 pm	7
24. Explore Open Door Bird Sanctuary	4:30 pm – 7:00 pm	23
25. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour - Sunset Trip	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	23
<b>SATURDAY, MAY 23 - MORNING</b>		
26. Mink River Bird Hike - <b>NEW</b>	6:00 am – 8:00 am	23
27. Small Wings, Big Impact - <b>NEW</b>	8:00 am – 11:00 am	24
28. Lessons from the Boreal Edge: Community Solutions to a Sustainable Future - <b>NEW</b>	8:30 am – 11:30 am	24
29. Let's Seed it Forward: Engaging in Native Seed Stewardship - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 10:30 am	24
30. A Wisconsin Worldwide Wonder: Exploring One of Door County's Ramsar Wetlands - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:00 am	24
31. Walking & Writing Nature - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:00 am	25
32. Bryoramble at The Ridges Sanctuary	9:00 am – 11:00 am	25

Photo By Kimberly Mackowski

## SATURDAY, MAY 23 - MORNING CONTINUED

33. How Does Nature Listen? - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:00 am	25
34. A Closer Look at Plants of The Ridges Sanctuary	9:00 am – 11:30 am	25
35. Door County & Its Legacy of Labyrinths - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	25
36. Kayak Logan Creek	9:00 am – 11:30 am	25
37. Photographing Spring Wildflowers	9:00 am – 12:00 pm	26
38. Fish Creek Scenic Boat Tour - Peninsula Park Caves & Ephraim North Cruise	11:00 am – 12:30 pm	26

## SATURDAY, MAY 23 - AFTERNOON

39. Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge Island Exploration	12:00 pm – 3:30 pm	26
40. Sturgeon Bay Maritime Overview	12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	26
41. Death's Door Boat Tour - Death's Door Lighthouse Cruise - <b>NEW</b>	1:00 pm – 2:40 pm	27
42. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	27
43. A Sensory Hike in the Rushes Wilderness Preserve - <b>NEW</b>	1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	27
44. State Natural Area Sampler	1:00 pm – 3:30 pm	27
45. Reduce, Reuse, Repair: Mending & Clothing Sustainability - <b>NEW</b>	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	27
46. Tour de Nature - <b>NEW</b>	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	27
47. Ecohydrology of The Ridges Sanctuary: A Groundwater & Tree Ring Adventure - <b>NEW</b>	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	28
48. Geological Walking Tour of The Ridges Sanctuary	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	28
49. Wine Growing in The Wisconsin Ledge AVA - <b>NEW</b>	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	28
50. Turtle-y Good Time	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	28
51. Wildflowers Galore	1:30 pm – 4:00 pm	28

## SATURDAY, MAY 23 - EVENING

52. Adventures in Documentary Film: Screening of <i>Keepers of the Door: The Story of the Door County Lighthouses</i> - <b>NEW</b>	6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	29
53. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour - Sunset Trip	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	29
54. Amazing Anurans: Frogs & Toads of Door County - <b>NEW</b>	7:00 pm – 8:30 pm	29
55. Spring Night Hike at The Ridges Sanctuary	8:00 pm – 10:00 pm	29

## SUNDAY, MAY 24 - MORNING

56. Let's Go Birding!	6:00 am – 9:00 am	29
57. Small Wings, Big Impact - <b>NEW</b>	8:00 am – 11:00 am	29
58. Photosynthesis Research at The Ridges: Basics & Applications - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 10:30 am	30
59. Planting for Pollinators	9:00 am – 10:30 am	30
60. Stream Monitoring: Assessing Stream Health through Citizen Science	9:00 am – 11:00 am	30
61. Wandering Aimlessly at Appel's Bluff	9:00 am – 11:00 am	30
62. Temperate-Boreal Forest Ecotone & Windstorm Damage in Newport Park - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	30
63. What in the World is Happening at The Ridges? - <b>NEW</b>	9:00 am – 11:30 am	31
64. Explore Open Door Bird Sanctuary	9:00 am – 11:30 am	31
65. Eagle Bluff Kayak Tour	9:00 am – 11:30 am	31
66. Explore Bjorklunden & Boynton Chapel	9:30 am – 12:00 pm	31
67. Sturgeon Bay Maritime Overview	9:45 am – 11:45 am	31

## SUNDAY, MAY 24 - AFTERNOON

68. Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge Island Exploration	12:00 pm – 3:30 pm	31
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# 2026 Field Trip Descriptions

## ORGANIZATIONAL ABBREVIATIONS

CCCCC	Climate Change Coalition of Door County
DCIST	Door County Invasive Species Team
DCLT	Door County Land Trust
FOPPI	Friends of Plum and Pilot Island
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
ODBS	Open Door Bird Sanctuary
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TRS	The Ridges Sanctuary
UWGB	University of Wisconsin Green Bay

## FRIDAY, MAY 22 · MORNING

### 1. Birds of a Lakeshore Forest of Door County - NEW 🟢 📖

Friday, May 22, 6:00 am – 8:00 am

Leader: Mike Grimm

Fee: \$30

An easy early morning stroll through the Lake Michigan coastal conifer/hardwoods of the Nature Conservancy's Shivering Sands Preserve to find migratory and breeding birds. At this time of year these coastal forests are good areas to see late migrating warblers and early forest breeding birds of Door County. We can also discuss any questions people might have regarding the forest, wetland or other aspects of this landscape.

**Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** TNC Shivering Sands Preserve, Sturgeon Bay  
**Limit:** 10

### 2. Mud Lake/Rieboldt's Creek Paddle 🟡

Friday, May 22, 8:00 am – 10:30 am

Leaders: Andrew Crowell & Tonya Crowell

Fee: \$30

Rieboldt's Creek is the outlet for Mud Lake and flows nearly two miles as it meanders its way to Lake Michigan. Rich aquatic diversity abounds and will be on display as paddlers experience this hidden gem nestled within the Mud Lake State Natural Area. Enjoy a relaxing paddle up the creek and into Mud Lake. Glide through diverse beds of aquatic plants, including burreed, coontail, and wild rice. Bring your binoculars — this site is excellent for viewing migrating waterfowl and songbirds! Bring your own canoe/kayak, paddles, and PFDs. You may also call Bay Shore Outfitters to rent a kayak. Length of trip may vary based on wind conditions; paddlers need to be able to paddle for 2 hours. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Rieboldt Creek Crossing on County Q, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 10 Kayaks or Canoes

### 3. Bat Heroes - NEW 📖 🟢

Friday, May 22, 8:00 am – 11:00 am

Leader: FOPPI

Fee: \$65

Bats can eat up to 1,200 mosquitoes per hour, yet over half of US bat species face severe decline or are endangered. Learn how



agencies like the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, and WI Department of Natural Resources are studying the endangered little brown bat at one of the largest bat maternity wards on Plum Island. **Suitable for all ages.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

### 4. Macroinvertebrate Mayhem! 🟢 📖

Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 10:30 am

Leaders: Ana Hinkle & Zane Wulliger, TRS

Fee: \$30

Please join us to find and study aquatic invertebrates that live in Door County! You'll use dip nets to collect samples, then identify taxonomy to the family level based on their characteristics. Then, delve into the life history of local aquatic insects and invertebrates to understand the importance of bioindicators in our local water ways. Finally, use the EPT index score to identify water quality of the sample site. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Town Hall, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 15

### 5. Research at The Ridges 🟢

Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Leaders: Tony Kiszonas & Victoria Holderer, TRS

Fee: \$30

The Ridges Sanctuary's very own Research team will take you on a guided tour to discuss research initiatives that we are working on at The Ridges Sanctuary. This opportunity will give you a close-up look into the dwarf lake iris restoration program, Ram's head orchid research, and the Boreal Climate Survivability Project, along with other ongoing research initiatives and ways to get involved. During this field trip, we will explore The Ridges boardwalk research stations, tour a Boreal Climate Survivability Plot, and observe work we are conducting at The Ridges Sanctuary in orchid germination. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 10

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Activity   ■ Moderate Activity   ■ Strenuous Activity   🏠 Family Friendly   ♿ Wheelchair Accessible

Photo By: E. Ellison



Photo By: K. Mackowski

## 6. Writing About Nature so People Actually Read It - NEW ■

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** Debra Fitzgerald

**Fee:** \$30

In this workshop, Debra Fitzgerald, Peninsula Pulse Editor and award-winning environmental reporter, will share practical tools for writing about nature, conservation and climate issues for public audiences. Participants will learn how to frame stories, communicate why something matters, and adapt their writing for articles, newsletters, signage, and outreach. The session includes real examples, editorial insights, and hands-on exercises designed to help writers of all experience levels sharpen their work. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 7. How Does Nature Listen? - NEW ■

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** Deneen Wiske

**Fee:** \$30

In this guided hike, we'll explore the communication environment of the Lake Michigan ecotone—the transition zone where forest, shoreline, and water meet. We'll observe how the ecosystem listens and communicates, and what that reveals about life at the edge of change. Together, we'll practice attentive listening—to nature and to each other—and consider how nature is a model for human skills that are needed in places and times of convergence and transition. \*Park vehicle admission stickers or passes are required for this field trip. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Newport State Park, Parking Lot 3, Ellison Bay **Limit:** 12

## 8. Invasive Impacts: How Collaboration Protects Door County's Native Habitats - NEW ■

**Friday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leaders:** Sam Hoffman, TRS & Jason Miller, DCIST

**Fee:** \$30

Invasive species are one of the leading causes of biodiversity loss worldwide. Mitigating this threat requires collaboration between local government, nonprofit conservation organizations, and private landowners. Join Ridges' Land Manager Sam Hoffman

and Door County Invasive Species Team coordinator Jason Miller to explore the negative ecological impacts of invasive species on native ecosystems and how they are collaboratively being managed in Door County. Visit various habitat types within The Ridges Sanctuary preserve, highlighting key species to know and the stewardship strategies used to preserve the ecological health of natural areas large and small. **Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 9. From Field to Farm: Using Technology for a Better Tomorrow - NEW ■ 🏠

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leaders:** Olson Family Farm & NRCS

**Fee:** \$30

The Olson Family Farm, a proud 5th generation family farm, invites you to join us for a guided farm tour and learn more about how tradition and innovation work together on our operation. You'll see how we use sustainable farming practices and modern technology, including solar panels and robotic milking, to care for our land and our cows. Our focus is on continually improving the quality of our environment, enhancing the well-being and comfort of our cows, and supporting the life of our family on the farm. We look forward to welcoming you and sharing our story, our practices, and our passion for farming. **Suitable for ages 5 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Olson Family Farm, Sturgeon Bay **Limit:** 20

## 10. Lake Michigan Coastal Forest Ecology ■ 🏠

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Mike Grimm

**Fee:** \$30

The trip will be through conifer-dominated and mixed conifer/hardwood forests on a ridge and swale landform typical of many places on the Lake Michigan coast of Door County. We'll talk about the past post-glacial and present geologic and ecologic processes which form this setting, as well as the hydrology of the site. We'll also talk about the current suite of plants and animals which inhabit the site; and whatever else might come up in our conversation and questions. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** TNC Shivering Sands Preserve, Sturgeon Bay **Limit:** 12

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Photo By: W. Belfuss



## 11. Stickwork Environmental Art Installation at Historic Horseshoe Bay Farms

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Kiley Rusch

**Fee:** \$30

Horseshoe Bay Farms, originally constructed between 1917-1919 on the shores of Green Bay in Egg Harbor, features several historic barns and structures that still stand today. Visitors can enjoy a guided walking tour of the property, exploring the iconic barns and learning about the farm's extensive history and long-term vision. In addition to the historic structures, the farm is home to a breathtaking willow sculpture installation called Stickwork. Created by artist Patrick Dougherty, this intricate, larger-than-life sculpture is made entirely from locally sourced willow branches, woven together into a stunning work of art that blends seamlessly with the surrounding landscape. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Horseshoe Bay Farms, Egg Harbor

**Limit:** 25

## 12. Trailside Bryophytes: Mosses, Liverworts & Hornworts of Peatland Habitats - NEW

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leaders:** Dr. Keir Wefferling & Tony Klingert, UWGB

**Fee:** \$30

Be the first to explore a special peatland with the benefit of a new beautifully illustrated pocket guide developed at UW-Green Bay specially for the bryophytes along the trails and boardwalks in this wetland gem. These lands are protected by a Door County Land Trust Conservation Easement. With a provided hand lens and by getting close to tiny mosses and liverworts with experts, you'll appreciate their crucial ecological roles during this saunter. **Suitable for all ages.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Bayshore Blufflands Preserve, Sturgeon Bay

**Limit:** 16

## 13. A Closer Look at Plants of The Ridges Sanctuary

**Friday, May 22, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Kathleen Marie Garness

**Fee:** \$30

After a quick introduction to botanical drawing techniques, using simple art supplies, participants will examine and draw some of the many plants known from The Ridges Sanctuary.



Photo By: A. Foster

The workshop will review botanical vocabulary and offer a deeper understanding of plant families and their characteristic traits. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

### FRIDAY, MAY 22 · AFTERNOON

## 14. Bat Heroes - NEW

**Friday, May 22, 12:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** FOPPI

**Fee:** \$65

See #3 for full description.

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

## 15. It Isn't Easy Being (Ever)Green

**Friday, May 22, 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leaders:** Jane Whitney & Julie Knox

**Fee:** \$30

Besides conifers, what other plants stay green all year? Join us as we take a leisurely walk through the rustic trails of The Ridges to learn about plants that stay green all year long. We'll learn the advantages/disadvantages of being evergreen, identify several species of evergreen plants, and, as a bonus, enjoy the spring wildflowers that will surely be in bloom. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Workshop at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 16. Discovering a Tiny World of Animals in Wetland Moss Communities - NEW

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Leader:** Dr. Michael Draney, UWGB

**Fee:** \$30

Sphagnum and other wetland mosses are a rich three-dimensional habitat for a diverse array of animals, but they are hard to observe, especially without damaging their fragile habitat. We will use a modified leaf-blower (the "bug vacuum") to sample these habitats near The Ridges' boardwalks and rustic trails. Participants will help in collecting the tiny animals from these samples, then we will observe and identify them up

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Activity   ■ Moderate Activity   ■ Strenuous Activity   🏠 Family Friendly   ♿ Wheelchair Accessible

Photo By: L. Humphries



close under microscopes back at the Nature Center. **Suitable for all ages.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 17. Sway Brewery Tour: Highlighting Wild Harvested Ingredients & Rustic Techniques ■ ♿

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** Matt Sampson

**Fee:** \$30

Take a tour of Sway Brewing's fermentation cellar, and sample beers made with truly local ingredients. You will learn about Sway's brewing philosophy—highlighting storied, locally sourced ingredients, taking inspiration from old world styles, and utilizing rustic techniques to create beers tied to time and place. Sway highlights many foraged, native ingredients and locally grown fruits in their beers. These beers are a direct representation of the area in which they're brought to life—Door County. Sway strives to connect our environment and our community through balanced, pleasant beer. **Must be 21 or older to participate.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Sway Brewing + Blending, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 20

## 18. Bear Creek Awaits: Journey into a New Land Trust Nature Preserve - NEW ■

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leaders:** Paige Witek & Thomas Stasiak, DCLT

**Fee:** \$30

Join the Door County Land Trust staff for an inspiring exploration of Bear Creek—the Land Trust's newest nature preserve! This 75-acre gem in Southern Door was once a working dairy farm, but today its rolling grasslands and forested wetlands offer sweeping vistas and an atmosphere of quiet wildness. On this guided exploration, you'll hear the stories hidden in its natural history, and learn about the restoration and conservation projects shaping its future. Field trip will cover approximately 1.5 miles of trail over uneven ground in open fields, forest, with one steep decline/incline and other smaller gradual hills. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Bear Creek Nature Preserve, Algoma

**Limit:** 20



Photo By: A. Pirrung

## 19. Natural & Human History at Heins Creek Nature Preserve ■ 🏠

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leaders:** Marilyn Hein & Mike Madden

**Fee:** \$30

Join us for a guided stroll through the Door County Land Trust's Heins Creek Nature Preserve. Explore its natural history, from post-glacial landscapes and Native American tribes to early settler stories. Walk from open sand dunes into forested trails, listen to flowing water, learn about trout and sucker spawning, and discover how the county's waterways connect to make this preserve an outdoor classroom. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Heins Creek Nature Preserve, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 16

## 20. Exploring the Niagara Escarpment at Lautenbach Woods ■ 🏠

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** Brian Forest, DCLT

**Fee:** \$30

The surface water is long gone, but this area provides evidence of ancient glacial drainage paths. Caves and enlarged rock crevices, coupled with springs that outlet below the escarpment, provide a great example of sinkhole/spring complexes. Descend the Niagara Escarpment and enjoy seasonal wildflowers as well as discussion on glacial geology, karst features and challenges of protecting water quality in sensitive areas. Hiking boots are recommended, as we will face a stretch of moderately rocky terrain. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Lautenbach Woods Nature Preserve, Egg Harbor

**Limit:** 18

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS



## 21. The Fossils & Geology of Door County

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Leader:** Don Mikulic

**Fee:** \$30

The story of Door County begins over 400 million years ago when most of North America was covered by shallow marine seas. While the scenic bluffs of the Niagara Escarpment are the most visible feature of this event, the rocks around Baileys Harbor are among the most fossiliferous of the region. This field trip will provide an opportunity to examine these rocks close up and collect fossils in one of the quarries in the region. **Must be 18 or older to participate.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Town Hall, carpooling required to field trip location

**Limit:** 25

## 22. Beginning Drawing - NEW

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Leader:** Dan Meinhardt

**Fee:** \$40

Are you someone who thinks they can't draw? Or maybe you're just starting to learn how? As long as you're interested in looking closely at nature, this trip will get you drawing realistically with a few simple tools and tricks. Biologist and scientific illustrator Dan Meinhardt will be your guide to putting what you see on paper. Participants will need to bring a cell phone with a camera. All other supplies will be provided. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 10

## 23. Birding by Ear Class

**Friday, May 22, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Leader:** Jan Wrede

**Fee:** \$30

Want to expand your ability to enjoy birds? Try something new and identify birds with your ears. It's easy. Jan is a summer resident of Door County and an experienced environmental educator. Join her for a colorful presentation that includes 25 pictures and songs of local species, plus a lesson on the Merlin app for recording and identifying bird songs. This class is designed for beginners and intermediate birders. Bring a friend, pen or pencil, your binoculars and, if possible, the free Merlin app downloaded onto your phone. Previous participants are



Photo By: L. Villano

welcome to repeat the class. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 20

## FRIDAY, MAY 22 · EVENING

## 24. Explore Open Door Bird Sanctuary

**Friday, May 22, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Leaders:** Rob Hults & Sandor Bittman, ODBS

**Fee:** \$30

Take a look behind the scenes at Open Door Bird Sanctuary – the only facility of its kind in Door County! Besides the rare opportunity to see the ODBS raptors up close and personal in their sanctuary mews, this tour will also feature actual feeding of the raptors, a photo op with one of the sanctuary birds, and a guided trail hike highlighting the Sanctuary's various ecosystems. ODBS is a nature center devoted to raptor and environmental education. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Open Door Bird Sanctuary, Sturgeon Bay

**Limit:** 20

## 25. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour – Sunset Trip

**Friday, May 22, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

**Leader:** Shoreline Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$65

Head out into the sparkling waters of Lake Michigan on "Hope," a retired U.S. Navy boat. Hope was built tough to meet high military safety standards and skipped by knowledgeable and experienced captains, so you can be assured of a safe trip. Hope will navigate the rustic shoreline of Lake Michigan while the narrator/first mate will share stories of the near and distant past, of shipwrecks and lighthouses, ancient geology, and current geography, and of changes to the local landscape. This trip is designed to be an overview of this most beautiful and amazing peninsula! **Suitable for families with kids ages 5 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Marina, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 25

## SATURDAY, MAY 23 · MORNING

## 26. Mink River Bird Hike - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 6:00 am – 8:00 am**

**Leader:** Ryan Nugent, TNC

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Activity   ■ Moderate Activity   ■ Strenuous Activity   🏠 Family Friendly   ♿ Wheelchair Accessible

Photo By: L. Humphries



**Fee:** \$30

Join us for a birding identification trip for novice birders. Expect to see migratory birds flying around The Nature Conservancy preserve. Learn visual and auditory skills. The hike meets at Mink River, Schoenbrunn trail parking lot at the corner of HWY NP and is 8/10ths of mile hike there and back on a grassy trail.

**Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** TNC Schoenbrunn Trailhead, Mink River Estuary Parking Lot, Ellison Bay

**Limit:** 8

## 27. Small Wings, Big Impact - NEW ■ 🏠

**Saturday, May 23, 8:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** FOPPI

**Fee:** \$65

Pollinators are crucial for sustaining wildlife, plants, and our food supply. The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands and the US Fish & Wildlife Service collaborate to protect pollinators and their habitats by addressing climate change and promoting access to nature's benefits. View our pollinator plot and the work we are doing to study monarch butterfly migration with the Washington Island School students. **Suitable for all ages.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

## 28. Lessons from the Boreal Edge: Community Solutions to a Sustainable Future - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 8:30 am – 11:30 am**

**Leaders:** Jeff Lutsey, CCCDC & Katie Krouse, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Door County sits at the boreal edge—a place of dynamic change and ecological learning. On this field trip, participants will explore how local organizations, landowners, municipalities, and researchers are responding to emerging challenges and shaping solutions that support long-term land health and community well-being. Through guided walks at a boreal tree planting research site and a small-home, eco-focused Boreal Preserve, we'll examine species shifts, land-use pressures, and community-driven approaches to stewardship and sustainable living. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Town Hall, carpooling required to field trip location

**Limit:** 16



Photo By: UW-Madison Aquatic Sciences Center

## 29. Let's Seed it Forward: Engaging in Native Seed Stewardship - NEW ■ 🏠 ♿

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 10:30 am**

**Leader:** Karen Smith

**Fee:** \$30

Native plant seed saving can be a rewarding, educational, and budget-friendly way to grow resilient landscapes that thrive naturally. Utilizing native plant seeds in home landscapes helps to support local wildlife, restore ecosystems, conserve genetic diversity, and create gardens perfectly suited to local climates. While seed saving has been a tradition in farming for centuries, saving and spreading native plant seeds to expand pollinator habitat can help promote biodiversity through seed preservation.

Participants in this session will review the essential elements for seed collection, cleaning, drying, storing, and germination techniques. Participants will also get some hands-on experience with seed processing and receive pollinator plant seeds collected from The Ridges property to start a home pollinator garden. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 30. A Wisconsin Worldwide Wonder: Exploring One of Door County's Ramsar Wetlands - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leaders:** Mike Grimm, Victoria Holderer, TRS, & Ryan Nugent, TNC

**Fee:** \$30

Discover Door County's very own internationally recognized Door Peninsula Coastal Wetlands Ramsar site. Join TNC's Conservation Ecologist, Mike Grimm and Door Peninsula Land Steward, Ryan Nugent, and Ridges Sanctuary's Applied Research Ecologist, Victoria Holderer, to learn more about our very own regionally and globally significant wetland. Meeting at Fern Trail, along the Mink River Estuary State Natural Area, we will explore a small portion of the 11,443-acre Ramsar site, protected by organizations like The Ridges Sanctuary, The Nature Conservancy, The Door County Land Trust, the Wisconsin DNR, and Door County municipalities. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Mink River Fern Trail Parking Lot, Ellison Bay

**Limit:** 10

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Photo By: V. Holderer



## 31. Walking & Writing Nature - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leaders:** Renata Golden & Jerod Santek, Write On, Door County

**Fee:** \$30

Join us for a nature and writing hike through Write On, Door County's campus. On this hike, we will take time to observe the plants, trees, birds, and other living creatures we see, and listen for the sounds they make in the wind or in their calls. We might even stop to smell the roses. With writing prompts, we will draft short poems or flash prose pieces that we can share with the group or keep to build on in our later work. Bring a notebook, pen or pencil, drawing materials if you would like, and your sense of wonder. This field trip is suitable for adults with all levels of writing experience. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Write On, Door County, Fish Creek

**Limit:** 12

## 32. Bryoramble at The Ridges Sanctuary

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leaders:** Dr. Keir Wefferling & Tony Klingert, UWGB

**Fee:** \$30

Whether you're new to the mosses and liverworts or you've been a bryologist for ages, come and see the incredible diversity of mosses and liverworts in the peatlands of The Ridges Sanctuary. These peatlands are home to about 100 known bryophyte species, and survey efforts in recent years have helped illuminate these often-overlooked plants. Get ready to learn field-identifiable mosses (and some tricky ones, too!) with bryologists Keir Wefferling and Tony Klingert. **Suitable for all ages.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 15

## 33. How Does Nature Listen? - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** Deneen Wiske

**Fee:** \$30

See #7 for full description. Please note different meeting locations.

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Town Hall, carpooling required to Toft Point Trailhead

**Limit:** 12



## 34. A Closer Look at Plants of The Ridges Sanctuary

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Kathleen Marie Garness

**Fee:** \$30

See #13 for full description.

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 35. Door County & Its Legacy of Labyrinths - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Mary Moskoff

**Fee:** \$30

Historians have discovered some of the first labyrinths in North America were built by Swedish immigrants that arrived along the shores of Lake Michigan. The paths of stone served as a practice of meditative walking as well as trapping trolls to protect their fishing hauls. The field trip starts with the film: *A Legacy of Door County Labyrinths* followed by a trip to a local outdoor labyrinth. Dress for weather and bring a journal.

**Suitable for all ages.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 10

## 36. Kayak Logan Creek

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Sam Hoffman, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Owned by The Ridges, the 175 acres at the north end of Clark Lake are comprised of various habitats. Paddle along with Ridges Land Manager Sam Hoffman and enjoy all of it from the water! We will begin at Clark Lake and take a leisurely trip into Logan Creek where we will experience a diverse community filled with many birds, shorelines full of spring flowers, and numerous aquatic plants. Glide through the pond lilies and part the bulrushes as we talk about the cultural and natural history of this beautiful inland lake fed by Logan Creek. This is an easy paddle. Bring binoculars and your own canoe/kayak, paddles, and PFDs. The length of the trip may vary based on wind conditions. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Clark Lake Boat Launch, Jacksonport

**Limit:** 10 Kayaks

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Activity  
 ■ Moderate Activity  
 ■ Strenuous Activity  
 🚰 Family Friendly  
 ♿ Wheelchair Accessible

Photo By: FCSBT



## 37. Photographing Spring Wildflowers ■

**Saturday, May 23, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Leader:** Tom Turriff

**Fee:** \$30

Nature can be experienced and translated through many different lenses. Join Tom Turriff for a “hands on” lesson in macro photography, and the ethics of nature photography in natural spaces. We will meet at the Rushes Wilderness Preserve. The trip will begin with a demonstration of technique and discussion of considerations in up-close photography of wildflowers. We will then put this knowledge into practice with an abundance of flowers to photograph. This program is suitable for intermediate and above photographers. A sturdy tripod and an interchangeable lens camera are required (no phones). Shortly after you register, Tom will email you links to reading material which will prepare you for this class. **Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** The Rushes Preserve, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 8

## 38. Fish Creek Scenic Boat Tour - Peninsula Park Caves & Ephraim North Cruise ■ 🚰

**Saturday, May 23, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm**

**Leader:** Cody Bolton

**Fee:** \$60

Enjoy an insightful narrative as our 69-passenger tour boat navigates the waters north along Peninsula State Park’s 7-mile shoreline. You’ll learn about the Park’s human and natural history, including the story of the Niagara Escarpment. Have your cameras ready as we cruise past the 145-year-old Eagle Bluff Lighthouse. You’ll also learn about the history of Ephraim and the millionaire’s estate on Horseshoe Island and enjoy an up-close and personal view of Eagle Cave, 40 feet above the shoreline. Finally, you’ll hear stories of French explorers and early Native American inhabitants at Nicolet Bay and have a chance to catch a glimpse of local wildlife along the shores and soaring along the caves high above. **Suitable for all ages.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Fish Creek Scenic Boat Tours, Spruce St Dock, Fish Creek

**Limit:** 58



Photo By: J. Lauriat

## SATURDAY, MAY 23 - AFTERNOON

## 39. Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge Island Exploration ■ 🚰

**Saturday, May 23, 12:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** FOPPI

**Fee:** \$65

Visit the Plum Island unit at Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge! The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (FOPPI) will share the island’s natural history and show how the US Fish & Wildlife Service conserves habitats. The trip includes a stop at Plum Island to see historic restoration efforts and climb the rear range light for views of Death’s Door. **Suitable for all ages.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

## 40. Sturgeon Bay Maritime Overview ■ 🚰

**Saturday, May 23, 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm**

**Leader:** Shoreline Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$65

Greetings! Welcome aboard our Navy Liberty Launch, the “Gratitude.” She is a 40 x 12-foot vessel that is very safe and sea-kindly. This tour starts going west to Fincantieri Shipyard, then to the shipwrecks at Bullhead. After that, we will head back east where we will cover a range of current and historical points of interest. The tour eventually goes through the shipping canal to Lake Michigan, where we will be treated to great photo opportunities of the Coast Guard Station Lighthouse as well as the pierhead lighthouse (known locally as the Red Shed). Subjects include geology, the fishery, commerce, and navigation. **Suitable for families with kids ages 5 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay

**Limit:** 25

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Photo By: Rushes Wilderness



## 41. Death's Door Boat Tour –

**Death's Door Lighthouse Cruise - NEW** ■ 🚤 ♿

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 2:40 pm**

**Leader:** Death's Door Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$60

Embark on the Death's Door Lighthouse Cruise from Gills Rock for a scenic journey through the historic waters of Door County. Witness the iconic Plum Island and Pilot Island lighthouses, along with the beauty of Washington Island, while learning about the area's rich maritime history and legendary shipwrecks. **Suitable for all ages.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Death's Door Boat Tours, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 72

## 42. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour ■ 🚤

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Leader:** Shoreline Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$65

Head out into the sparkling waters of Lake Michigan on "Hope," a retired U.S. Navy boat. Built tough to meet high military safety standards and skipped by knowledgeable and experienced captains, she assures a safe trip. "Hope" will navigate the rustic shoreline of Lake Michigan while the narrator/first mate will share stories of the near and distant past, of shipwrecks and lighthouses, ancient geology, and current geography, and of changes to the local landscape. This trip is designed to be an overview of this most beautiful and amazing peninsula! **Suitable for families with kids ages 5 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Marina, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 25

## 43. A Sensory Hike in the Rushes Wilderness Preserve - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** Ray Osinski, Wisconsin Master Naturalist

**Fee:** \$30

Join us for an interpretive hike in the Rushes Wilderness preserve, guided by a Master Naturalist! You'll get to explore how this beautiful wilderness preserve came to be and discover the many unique features along the 5-mile hiking trails. As you walk, let your senses—touch, sight, smell, hearing, and taste—help you fully immerse yourself in the experience. We'll be focusing on sensory engagement to help you connect with nature. So, dress for the weather and bring your curiosity and



Photo By: UW-Madison Aquatic Sciences Center

sense of adventure! **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** The Rushes Preserve, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 10

## 44. State Natural Area Sampler ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leaders:** Mark Martin & Susan Foote-Martin

**Fee:** \$30

The Baileys Harbor area includes six Natural Areas that are part of the Door Coastal Wetlands, a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance. On this trip, you'll be able to visit Baileys Harbor Boreal Forest, Moonlight Bay Bedrock Beach, Mud Lake, and North Bay. You'll learn about the ecology of the coastal wetlands and discover access points and little-known hiking trails. Highlights of the trip include rare and native plants, cedar forests, blooming indian paintbrushes and dwarf lake iris.

**Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Town Hall, carpooling required to field trip location

**Limit:** 20

## 45. Reduce, Reuse, Repair: Mending & Clothing Sustainability - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Leader:** Margaret Brennan, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Clothes tell a story! Join us to learn more about where your clothes come from and, more importantly, where they go when you're done with them. We'll end the program by learning how to mend what you have. Bring an article of clothing that's starting to show some wear, and we'll repair it together. All repair tools and materials will be provided by the instructor. No sewing experience necessary! **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 8

## 46. Tour de Nature - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Leader:** Andy Gill, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Hit the pavement and ride for nature. Join us for a ~25 mile cycle along The Ridges where we'll take a few pit stops to refuel and learn about the natural world around us. Bring your own bike, water, and helmet. We'll be riding ~25 miles at a leisurely pace,

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Hiking   ■ Moderate Hiking   ■ Strenuous Hiking   🏠 Family Friendly   ♿ Wheelchair Accessible

Photo By: Mixed MEADia



with a no-drop rule for all riders. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**  
**CENTRAL. Meet:** Ridges County Beach, Baileys Harbor  
**Limit:** 20

## 47. Ecohydrology of The Ridges Sanctuary: A Groundwater & Tree Ring Adventure - NEW ■ 🏠

**Saturday, May 23, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**  
**Leader:** Eric Kastelic, Geological Engineering PhD Student, UW-Madison  
**Fee:** \$30

Learn about research using tree rings from towering red and white pine trees to understand groundwater and surface water interactions of The Ridges Sanctuary. The field trip will begin with an overview presentation of the geology and hydrology of ridge and swale complexes and highlights from years of fieldwork. Followed by an approximately 2-mile guided hike along ridges trails to showcase groundwater monitoring and tree coring methods. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor  
**Limit:** 12

## 48. Geological Walking Tour of The Ridges Sanctuary ■ 🏠

**Saturday, May 23, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**  
**Leader:** Prof. John Luczaj, UWGB  
**Fee:** \$30

Join us for a tour of The Ridges Sanctuary, led by Prof. John Luczaj (UW-Green Bay). The field trip will present the geology of Baileys Harbor and the formation of its beach ridges, the origin of the Door Peninsula's many shoreline embayments, and the glacial history of northeastern Wisconsin. You may also bring rocks or fossils to be identified (before or after the tour in the cabin area). **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor  
**Limit:** 15

## 49. Wine Growing in The Wisconsin Ledge AVA - NEW ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**  
**Leader:** Allan Hyland & Emily Butteris  
**Fee:** \$30

Dive into the Wisconsin Ledge AVA (American Viticultural Area) by visiting a vineyard site to talk viticulture and enology with the



growing, winemaking team from Mixed MEADia Wines. We'll sip some wines and talk about what defines our unique grape-growing region, the grapes we grow, what kinds of wines we make, and why drinking local is so beneficial to our environment and local communities. **Must be 21 or older to participate.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Mixed MEADia Vineyard, Egg Harbor  
**Limit:** 20

## 50. Turtle-y Good Time ■ ♿

**Saturday, May 23, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**  
**Leader:** Amy Shook, TRS  
**Fee:** \$30

Join us at The Ridges to look for turtles! Bring your binoculars and hiking shoes to head out onto the trails to stop and look for turtles found in the swales. On this field trip, we will look for and identify turtles that are basking in the sun. **Suitable for ages 12 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor  
**Limit:** 15

## 51. Wildflowers Galore ■

**Saturday, May 23, 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm**  
**Leaders:** Jane Whitney & Julie Knox  
**Fee:** \$30

The spring wildflowers at Logan Creek are not to be missed! We will walk at a leisurely pace along the wildflower path to discover the hidden beauties and to ID those flowers we don't know. After enjoying the wildflower display, we will hike the remainder of the Logan Creek trails which pass through various habitats on the way to Clark Lake and Logan Creek. This is a slow-paced, 2-mile hike with frequent stops to look at plants on rustic trails with inclines. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**SOUTH. Meet:** Logan Creek Preserve, Jacksonport  
**Limit:** 12

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Photo By: G. Cobb



## SATURDAY, MAY 23 · EVENING

### 52. Adventures in Documentary Film: Screening of *Keepers of the Door: The Story of the Door County Lighthouses* - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm**

**Leader:** Daniel Larson, Documentary Filmmaker

**Fee:** \$30

Join us to celebrate the 29th anniversary of *Keepers of the Door: The Story of the Door County Lighthouses* with documentary filmmaker Daniel Larson. The film covers the history of lighthouse stations and what being a lighthouse keeper was like in Door County. Interviews with lighthouse keeper children are woven together with historic photographs and modern images. After the film, Dan will answer questions and talk about the making of the documentary and share stories. The film is based on Steven Karges's book, *Keepers of the Lights*. Steve passed away last year and this presentation is dedicated to his passion of lighthouse keeper life and the telling of their stories.

**Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 30

### 53. Baileys Harbor Lakeside Coastal Tour – Sunset Trip

**Saturday, May 23, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

**Leader:** Shoreline Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$65

See #25 for full description.

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Baileys Harbor Marina, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 25

### 54. Amazing Anurans: Frogs & Toads of Door County - NEW

**Saturday, May 23, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm**

**Leader:** Zane Wulliger, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Hop into the hidden lives of Door County's frogs and toads! Learn about the natural history of the species that call this area home and how to identify them by their unique calls. We'll then hike into the Sanctuary's swales to practice hands-on citizen science. Participants will receive an anuran identification pamphlet and resources on how to get further involved in



Photo By: E. Ellison

citizen science opportunities. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 15

### 55. Spring Night Hike at The Ridges Sanctuary

**Saturday, May 23, 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm**

**Leaders:** Amy Shook & Margaret Brennan, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Bats, salamanders, and frogs, oh my! Join Ridges staff on a nighttime adventure through the Sanctuary. Explore the Sanctuary trails in the dark, stopping to observe and learn about some of the unique nocturnal species that roam The Ridges at night. Flashlights will be provided. Must be comfortable navigating uneven terrain in the dark. **Suitable for ages 8 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 15

## SUNDAY, MAY 24 · MORNING

### 56. Let's Go Birding!

**Sunday, May 24, 6:00 am – 9:00 am**

**Leader:** Dan Scheiman, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

It's a great time to go birding as migration is in full swing and birds are singing! Let's look for migratory and resident birds in the coastal forest of Newport State Park. \*Park vehicle admission stickers or passes are required for this field trip.

**Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Newport State Park, Parking Lot 3, Ellison Bay

**Limit:** 12

### 57. Small Wings, Big Impact - NEW

**Sunday, May 24, 8:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** FOPPI

**Fee:** \$65

See #27 for full description.

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

■ Easy Activity   ■ Moderate Activity   ■ Strenuous Activity   🧰 Family Friendly   ♿ Wheelchair Accessible



## 58. Photosynthesis Research at The Ridges: Basics & Applications - NEW ■

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 10:30 am**

**Leader:** Bob Wise

**Fee:** \$30

Photosynthesis is the basis of almost every ecosystem on Earth. This workshop will look at the basics of photosynthesis in the classroom and outdoors. A 30-40 minute indoor discussion will include a brief explanation of photosynthesis and how it is measured. Then, a short field trip will be used to take photosynthesis readings using an InfraRed Gas Analyzer (IRGA), a robust, field-portable instrument. The results will be related to ongoing research at The Ridges. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 59. Planting for Pollinators ■ ♿

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 10:30 am**

**Leader:** Karen Smith

**Fee:** \$30

Are you interested in restoring and improving the land surrounding your home? Do you desire a beautiful native environment that attracts birds, bees, and butterflies? Are you looking to conserve or restore your property and create a low maintenance, ecologically stable environment? Then this could be the program for you! Participants in this session will review the essential elements for pollinator garden success, including garden design, soil management, plant selection, plant nutrition, and general plot maintenance. Participants will also tour the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center front gardens and receive pollinator plant seeds collected from the property to start a home pollinator garden. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 12

## 60. Stream Monitoring: Assessing Stream Health through Citizen Science ■

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** Todd Rockway

**Fee:** \$30

Join us for an exploration of the Kangaroo Lake watershed. The trip will begin at the headwaters of Peil Creek, visit Kangaroo Lake, and conclude at Heins Creek, a local stream within the

Kangaroo Lake watershed. Participants will learn the process employed by citizen scientists to evaluate stream health by utilizing measurements of water temperature, clarity, and dissolved oxygen content and the relationship between these parameters and the types of aquatic macroinvertebrates present in a healthy stream. **Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 8

## 61. Wandering Aimlessly at Appel's Bluff ■

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**

**Leader:** Tony Kiszonas, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

Enjoy a pleasant meander with a geological and biological focus at The Ridges Sanctuary's Appel's Bluff property. This unique adventure will include flowers, fossils, succession, and shorelines as we access areas of Appel's Bluff that are off of the beaten path. Discussion will center on the historical and current uses of this area along with observing some unique features of this rather recent addition to The Ridges Sanctuary. The hike will be a leisurely 2 miles, primarily on trails. Some areas may be damp. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Cabins at The Ridges Sanctuary, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 15

## 62. Temperate-Boreal Forest Ecotone & Windstorm Damage in Newport Park - NEW ■

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Lee Frelich

**Fee:** \$30

Join us on a hike through the interior and shoreline forests of Newport State Park. We will observe how the tree species from boreal and temperate forest biomes blend together, and ancient rocky and sand-ridge shorelines that are now in the interior of the park due to glacial rebound. In addition, we will see tree damage from the August 2025 windstorm, and talk about forest recovery after natural disturbances. This will be about a 3-mile hike. **Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Newport State Park, Parking Lot 2, Ellison Bay

**Limit:** 15

# 2026 FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS



Photo By: K. Smith

### 63. What in the World is Happening at The Ridges? - NEW

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leaders:** Katie Krouse, Andy Gill, Eliza Banjanac, TRS

**Fee:** \$30

The Ridges is focused on expanding its mission-driven programs of research and education. To accommodate the success and growing demand for these programs, The Ridges has undertaken a comprehensive planning process to identify facilities and site plans that will support its ambitions. We'll visit recent upgrades to the historic cabins, restrooms, and new workshop as well as discuss plans to improve our Education Campus and the former Ridges Inn & Suites as a Research Station providing lodging, space for research & citizen science, and additional administration space. **Suitable for ages 18 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 18

### 64. Explore Open Door Bird Sanctuary

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Rob Hults & Sandor Bittman, ODBS

**Fee:** \$30

See #24 for full description.

**SOUTH. Meet:** Open Door Bird Sanctuary, Sturgeon Bay

**Limit:** 20

### 65. Eagle Bluff Kayak Tour

**Sunday, May 24, 9:00 am – 11:30 am**

**Leader:** Melanie Krause

**Fee:** \$30

Come out to Peninsula State Park and kayak along the picturesque Eagle Bluff. You may have hiked Eagle Trail and stood at the base of the sheer dolomitic bluff or seen the view from the top of Eagle Tower 250' above the water, but we think the best view is from the water. Learn about the geologic history of how glaciers formed this feature and the rare flora and fauna that exist here. \*A State Park Pass is required for this field trip. Participants must bring their own kayaks, paddles, and PFDs.

**Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**NORTH. Meet:** Nicolet Beach, Peninsula State Park, Fish Creek

**Limit:** 12

### 66. Explore Bjorklunden & Boynton Chapel

**Sunday, May 24, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm**

**Leader:** Jane Whitney

**Fee:** \$30

A mile of shoreline, ancient ledges, coniferous forest, a stave church – Bjorklunden has it all! We'll hike along the water's edge, explore a 4,500-year-old ledge, visit the wind turbine and one of Door County's largest solar fields, and finish with a tour of Boynton Chapel, a stave church built right on the property.

**Suitable for ages 16 & up.**

**CENTRAL. Meet:** Bjorklunden, Baileys Harbor

**Limit:** 16

### 67. Sturgeon Bay Maritime Overview

**Sunday, May 24, 9:45 am – 11:45 am**

**Leader:** Shoreline Boat Tours

**Fee:** \$65

See #40 for full description.

**SOUTH. Meet:** Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay

**Limit:** 25

## SUNDAY, MAY 24 · AFTERNOON

### 68. Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge Island Exploration

**Sunday, May 24, 12:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Leader:** FOPPI

**Fee:** \$65

See #39 for full description.

**NORTH. Meet:** Shoreline Resort Marina, Gills Rock

**Limit:** 14

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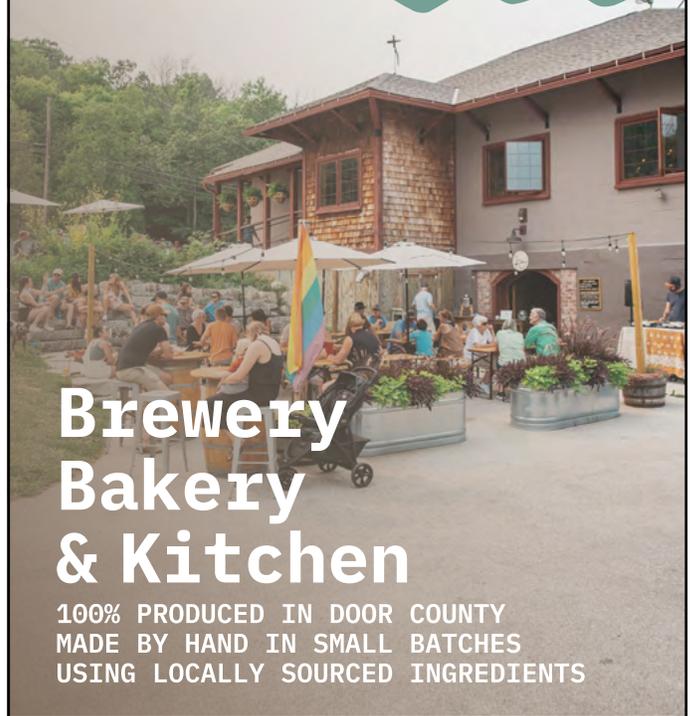
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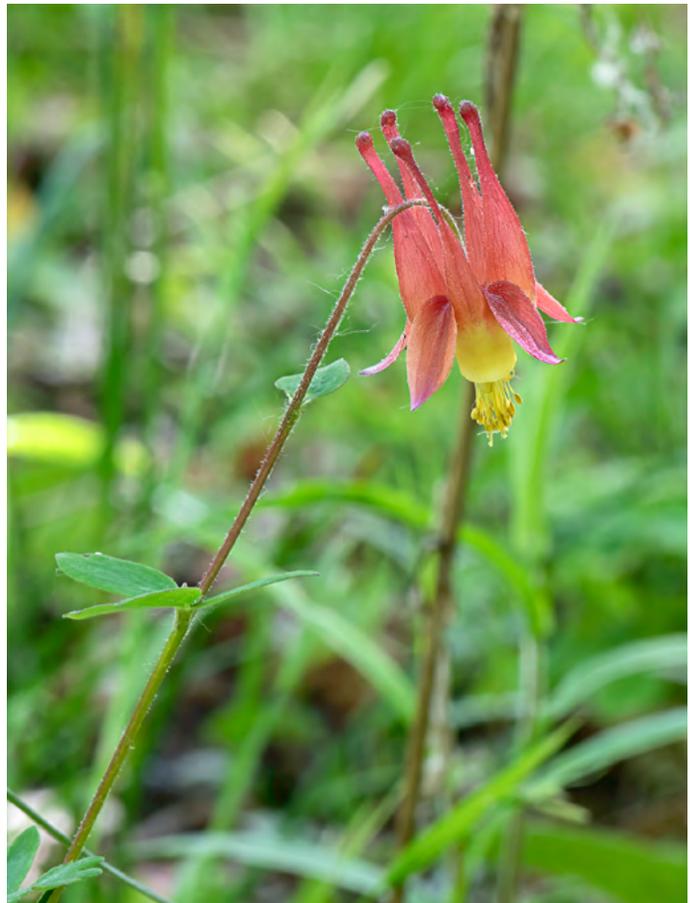
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*The mission of the Door County Festival of Nature is to cooperatively celebrate and promote the protection of Door County's natural landscapes and all its components. This is done through a variety of indoor and outdoor education sessions on wildflowers, birds and the important land and resource conservation efforts taking place in Door County.*

Registration opens Monday, March 16 for members,  
Wednesday, March 18 for the public.

Full Festival details on field trips, events, sponsors,  
and registration at [www.doorcountyfestivalofnature.org](http://www.doorcountyfestivalofnature.org)

Photo credit: Jacob Loyacano