



# Bur Oak Tribune



Wildwood Nature Center

Park Ridge Park District

January 2012

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*And more...*

## General Information

During your visit to Wildwood Nature Center you will find an **Animal Exhibit Room** with a turtle pond, snakes, prairie dog, snapping turtles, and more.

Wildwood also offers an activity room called the **Nature Nook** complete with books, puzzles, puppets, and activities. Visit the Nook this month to learn about clouds!

### **Wildwood Nature Center is located at:**

529 Forestview Avenue  
Park Ridge, IL 60068

### **Contact Info:**

847-692-3570  
jclauson@prparks.org

**Website:** www.prparks.org

### **Visiting Hours:**

Tuesday -Thursday 10:00am-6:00pm  
Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm

**Admission :** FREE

### **Wildwood Nature Center Bur Oak**

**Editor:** Hillary Wells-Pranga

## Nature Feature

This month's feature is the black-capped chickadee. This chickadee is so named for the black cap of feathers on its head and its happy little chick-a-dee song. Black-capped chickadees are found in wooded areas throughout the United States and southern Canada.



You may also spot them in your backyard especially if you have a feeder with sunflower seeds. They prefer deciduous woods (not many evergreens) with shade trees and willow thickets. Besides the

sunflower seeds they get from feeders (which they take and stuff into bark crevices) they also eat other seeds, berries and in the summer they eat mostly insects, spiders and snails. Chickadees are often seed hopping along branches in search of food and have even been seen hanging upside-down or grabbing an insect in mid-air. Like squirrels they often store

food, returning to eat it later. In late winter, flocks break up and both the male and female of each pair choose and defend their nesting territory. Black-caps



allaboutbirds.com

typically use holes in trees for their nest, sometimes using an old woodpecker home. The female makes the nest out of moss and lines it with soft material like animal hair. She will lay around 6-8 white eggs with fine reddish-brown dots. In early spring, the male will often feed the female while she is incubating the eggs. When the young are first born the female stays and the male brings food, but later they take turns.

## Upcoming Events & Classes



### **Nature Friends: Winter Birds\* (Ages 3-4 without Adult):**

*Jan 17 , 10-11am (Class #22206) or 4-5pm (Class #22209)*

~Enjoy learning about nature and animals through fun games, crafts, and activities. Nature Friends is all about hands-on learning and ventures outside on nice days.

**Fee:** \$9 residents/\$14 nonresidents

### **Nature Kindergarten Kapers\* (Ages 5-6):** *Wednesday's,*

*Jan 18 - May 16, 9-11am (Class #22222) or 12:25-2:25pm (Class #22223)*

~ Get out, explore, and connect to the world around you. Kindergarteners will enjoy seasonal topics about nature, animals, and the outdoors. During each class, children explore the outdoors, record observations in their journals, create crafts, play games and activities related to the day's topic, and enjoy independent play.

**Fee:** \$288 residents/\$328 nonresidents

### **Nature Explorers\* (Ages 3-5 without Adult):** *Wednesday's, Jan 18—Mar 14,*

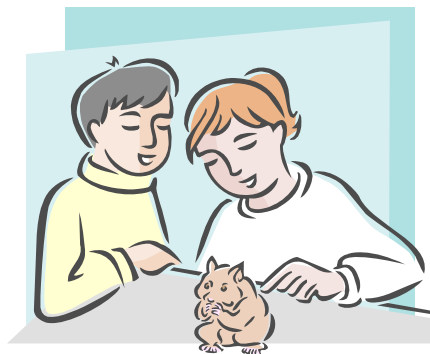
*3:30pm-5:00pm* ~ Explore the great outdoors! Hike the trails and make nature discoveries, record observations in your journal, create crafts, and enjoy independent play in this fun nature class.

**Fee:** \$79 residents/\$122 nonresidents, Class #22221

### **Picking a Pet\* (Families & Individuals):** *Jan 24,*

*7pm-9pm* ~ Looking for a critter friend to join your household but not sure which pet is right for you? Join us for an evening of pet inquiry and discovery. We will have a pet expert from Thee Fish Bowl in Evanston on hand to discuss what pet options are available, what care is involved, and answer your questions. Also meet some exotic animals from their pet store.

**Fee:** \$15 family (Class #22299)/\$10 individual (Class # 23317)



**\*Registration is required for all classes, for more information call 847-692-3570 or Discover the Fun on the Park District website at [www.prparks.org](http://www.prparks.org)**

## Volunteer News

Wildwood would like to wish a Happy Birthday to our new Program Volunteer Olivia!



# Family Fun Corner

## Carrot Top Garden

**Materials:** shallow dish/container, potting soil or gravel, 4-5 tops of carrots (ones with a little green are best), watering can

1. Next time you buy carrots buy ones with the green tops still on and save the tops.
2. Cover your workspace with newspaper to control the mess.
3. Trim the greens to about 1/2-inch and trim the carrots to 3/4-inch.
4. Fill your container with either sand, potting soil or gravel. (An Optional fun addition to this project is to paint or decorate the container you are going to plant your carrots in.)
5. Push the carrot tops (cut-side-down) into the dish.
6. Place in a sunny window.
7. Fill with water—make sure water/wet dirt is touching the carrot.
8. Water as needed and enjoy!
9. For a more adventurous growing technique—you can make a hanging basket with your carrots. See the link below for instructions.



<http://www.weekendgardener.net/blog/2007/09/grow-carrot-top.htm>

## Earth Stewards

**You can be an earth steward by making recycled crayons.**



### **Why should I recycle my broken crayons?**

- ~ So they do not take up space in the landfill.
- ~ You can give your broken crayons a new life and use them again.

### **How do I make recycled crayons?**

Materials you will need: bowls, old cooking pot, soup or coffee can(s), broken crayons, molds or ice cube trays, oven mitts, and fine glitter (optional)

- ~ Pre-soak your crayons in a bowl of warm water—this will help you get the labels off.
- ~ Sort the crayons into color piles (if you want to make one-color crayons).
- ~ Fill pot halfway with water and bring to a boil. Pinch part of rim of can to make spout, and place can in the water.
- ~ Put in crayon pieces and glitter and check periodically to see if they have melted.
- ~ Once they are melted remove can with oven mitts and pour into molds/trays. To cool quicker you can place them in a freezer.
- ~ Have fun combining and mixing different colors to see what you get!



# Junior Naturalist Pages



## Wild Wonders

Happy New Year everyone! My name is Merry Mouse and I am here to tell you about the wildlife news at Wildwood. I went to the pond the other morning and saw Maynard Mallard Duck flying away. I asked him why he was leaving and he said he could not go in the water. Do you know why? It was frozen! So, where do animals get water to drink in the winter if the pond is frozen? Well for me I get it from my food. Did you know that nuts and seeds have water in them? By eating mostly seeds, we rodents can survive without drinking much water! Other animals like Bonnie Black-Capped Chickadee can get water from the seeds too. With the pond being frozen you are probably wondering what the animals that live in the water do when it freezes. Well I asked Mandy Muskrat last time I saw her, she says she stays in her lodge most of the time, and when food is hard to find she eats the inside of her lodge (which is made of plants and mud)! Now what about the fish with all that ice on the pond? They do just fine hiding down in the bottom of the pond where there is no ice. You see, when the pond freezes, it does not freeze solid. Only a layer on the top freezes, and this layer acts like a blanket, keeping the rest of the water deep down warm enough that it does not freeze. Although it is cold outside and there is not much food, some animals can still hunt so they are starting families. Pretty soon Gabriella Great Horned Owl's 4 eggs will hatch and then I will have to be extra careful with more hungry owls around! Speaking of animals hunting, a few days ago I almost became dinner! Lonnie Least Weasel snuck into my burrow looking for a meal! Lonnie is very tricky this time of year, her fur coat turns white so you cannot see her in the snow! This also helps Lonnie hide from Calvin Coyote and Gabriella Great Horned Owl. Well, Gabriella's not the only one with a family; I hear my little ones squeaking for milk so I have to go. See you in February!



**Merry's Challenge: Can you help Lonnie Least Weasel hide in the snow? Color his coat with a white crayon or glue white cotton balls on him to change his fur and help him camouflage.**





# Junior Naturalist Pages



On some cold clear January days you can see something beautiful in the sky. When the sunshine hits ice crystals in the air it creates patches of rainbows on either side of the sun. Solve the puzzle below to find out what these special rainbows are called.

A letter that is in...



1. PASTE but not in TAPE
2. ROACH but not in ARCH
3. MEANT but not in TEAM
4. NIGHT but not in THIN
5. SOUND but not in NODS
6. DANGER but not in RANGE

1 5 3 6 2 4 1

## Animal Feeding Times

Watch the Wildwood staff feed some of your favorite animals! Call the Nature Center for more information at 847-692-3570.

### **This Month:**

Saturdays 10:30am and 3:30pm

Wednesdays 10:30am and 3:30pm

**Location:**  
Animal  
Room



## Critter Connection

Get up close to a Wildwood animal during a short, family friendly presentation. Learn about the featured animal, what makes him special, what he eats, and more. Make sure to pet him before he heads back to the animal room. Visit different animals each month.

**Day:** Saturday s

**Time:**  
10:30am & 3:30pm

**Location:**  
Nature Nook

## Ask the Naturalist

Wildwood is a great place to find answers about the natural world.



**Q:** Can Jaws really eat a bunny or a chicken?

**A:** No, the biggest thing he could eat would be slightly larger than his head.

Submit your questions to Wildwood's mailing address (2701 W. Sibley Street) or email them to: [jclauson@prparks.org](mailto:jclauson@prparks.org). We encourage people of all ages to write in with their questions!

## Pet Connection

### **Needs a home:**

- ~ Two female 1.5-2 year old, short-hair guinea pigs, Piggers and Teddy. Come with cage and supplies.
- ~ Female 3 1/2 year old, short-hair guinea pig. Comes with indoor and outdoor cages and supplies.
- ~ Female 2 year old, short-hair guinea pig named Lucy. Comes with cage and accessories.
- ~ Male, short-hair guinea pig (not neutered). Comes with cage, food and accessories.
- ~ Cumberland slider turtle (semi-aquatic), 2 1/2 years old.

**To respond to these ads or to post an ad, please contact Wildwood at 847-692-3570.**