

Matthaei Botanical gardens and Nichols arboretum

friends

**Inside:
Community
Education
Brochure!**

In This Issue...

- 02** Children's Garden Groundbreaking
- 03** Director's Message
- 04** Get Lost Take a Child Outside
- 06** Updates
- 07** Calendar
- 09** Education
- 13** Curator's Corner
- 14** Development Matters
- 18** Get involved-Volunteer!
- 19** Making Connections with Children
- 20** Ask the Experts

On Behalf of Children

November 10, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama,

On November 4, 2008, you became a hero of children and dogs when you told your daughters, Sasha and Malia, they had earned their puppy. This final celebratory message of your speech suggests how the current economic crisis can obscure our most vital resources—children and the natural world. Rather than material objects—new TV, larger house, virtual pets—you pointed to a delight that hides in plain sight. Children are intrigued by a puppy's reaction to a butterfly or the first snow. They enjoy enticing a hermit crab out of its shell. These spontaneous activities for children provide the kind of "extraordinary inspiration" you find in the writings of Abraham Lincoln.

New research from the Alliance for Childhood suggests that many kindergarteners are spending two to three hours per day on literacy, math instruction and standardized tests, with 30 minutes or less immersed in play. In recent decades the distance the average 12-year-old travels independently by bike or on foot has shrunk from one mile to 500 yards. Recess threatens to become extinct. Eight to 18-year-olds spend on average 6.5 hours per day gazing at a screen, and children today engage far less in spontaneous play. Estranged from this vital activity, they lose touch with places that teach them how to become creative, flexible, and alive.

Children's imprint on the land is light. Adults tread more heavily, etching their ambitions on the environment.

As a sense of place marks itself on those growing up, the physical world is written upon by each new generation. Children require outdoor play for integrity, both physical and mental. Indeed, their right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness could be regarded as crucial to our constitution. Yet children are powerless to make choices about land use and the natural world.

Our relationship with the earth and its young is changing rapidly. We need to engage in a conversation about the connection that children and the natural world must have so both can thrive. Philosopher Simone Weil wrote, "To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul." Yet our ruptured root system has been dragged to the brink. Technology may have outrun us—not just in financial systems driven by supercomputers but also in the demise of outdoor play and direct experience.

Behavioral neural scientists are beginning to provide proof of the importance of play to learning and well-being. Supporting the intuitive knowledge of astute preschool and primary grade teachers, researchers are now understanding better the impact of play on the chemistry of the brain. As psychiatrist Stuart Brown, founder of the National Institute for Play, puts it, play fulfills a need as

Continued on p. 16

Special Features In This Issue



**Breaking
Ground**
Children's Garden
photos p. 2



**Choosing the
right plants**
Curator's Corner
p. 13



Growing minds
Making connections
with nature
p. 19

Breaking Ground on the Gaffield Children's Garden



Director Bob Grese looks on as the Gaffield family—Tom and Jeanette and their grandsons, Kenneth and Erich—turn the earth during the official groundbreaking of the Gaffield Children's Garden. (*top left photo*)

Education interns planned several fun activities for the young attendees. Erin Allen (*bottom left photo*) helps visitors choose vegetables for some print making.

Volunteer coordinator Tara Griffith and friends (*bottom right photo*) observe the chrysalis of Cat A. Pillar, the first of several monarch caterpillars that Tara raised this summer.

Children had the chance to dig in the dirt—such a popular activity that parents found it difficult to pry kids away. (*Top right*) That's what we are hoping for—an entire garden full of things kids want to do and explore.



friends

Winter 2009 / Vol. 5, No.2

Matthaei Botanical Gardens and
Nichols Arboretum Newsletter

Dorothea Coleman, Editor - theacole@umich.edu
Jenny Senko, Designer

Matthaei Botanical Gardens and
Nichols Arboretum
University of Michigan

Robert E. Grese, Director
Karen Sikkenga, Associate Director

© 2008 Regents of University Michigan
For permission to use, contact Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum

Director's Message

What are your most vivid childhood memories of nature? Perhaps you remember a particular snowstorm and your yard transformed into paradise overnight. Or perhaps you discovered a robin's nest in the spring and waited patiently for the young birds to hatch. One of my most vivid memories was discovering the flower of a maypop or "passion flower" vine (*Passiflora incarnata*) growing in a blackberry thicket in our yard in the hills of Tennessee. Never had I seen anything so delicate and beautiful! I was always on guard after that, carefully seeing if I could find another one. Chances are that similar memories of your own stayed with you your entire life.

At Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, we are dedicating the entire year to helping children make these types of magical discoveries. Through 2009, we will be celebrating children and nature in a wide variety of ways. At a time when children are spending more and more hours in front of TVs and computers, we want to start a revolution. We want to encourage you to get out and enjoy our trails and gardens, come experience our classes and tours, and carry ideas home for attracting wildlife, growing vegetables, or diversifying the plantings in your own backyard.

We'll get off to a start this winter with changing displays of photographs by Steve Nikkila in the Conservatory and a wide range of programs showcasing plants from biomes all across the planet. While winter snows pile all around, take a trip through a tropical paradise complete with banana trees, vibrant orchids, lush cycads and ferns. Experience an early spring in our Temperate House when the gardenias come into bloom. Marvel at the Venus flytraps and other insectivorous plants. Bask among the desert cacti on a sunny winter afternoon. Then, put on your coats and boots for a trek across one of our many trails at the Arb or Botanical Gardens to discover the beauty of our Michigan winters.

In the fall, we'll cap off our year of

children and nature with a special workshop/symposium, featuring Joseph Cornell, the renowned author of *Sharing Nature with Children*, along with the dedication of our new Gaffield Children's Garden. So, why are we doing this? Many studies have shown that unless children connect with the natural world at a young age they may never develop a deep, lasting commitment to caring for the environment. We're trying to address this challenge in many ways—through the Gaffield Children's Garden we're developing, through our Sue Reichert Discovery Trail and Sam Graham Trees & Trail, and through our many children's programs, including the hundreds of local schoolchildren who come take tours with our docents. We want to provide a new generation of children with a hands-on

experience with nature and memories that will last a lifetime.

So, whether you're a big kid or little kid, we hope that at least sometime during the year (but hopefully often) you'll turn off your TV, unplug your computer, leave your cell phone and Game Boys at home and come out to the Arb or Botanical Gardens to rediscover the magical world of nature. 🌱



Bob Grese
Director

*Matthaei Botanical Gardens
& Nichols Arboretum*



Intern Andy Sell leads a school group through the Sue Reichert Discovery Trail.

Take a Child Outside Week

Karen Sikkenga

Take a Child Outside Week (September 24 to 30) was the subject of some gentle teasing in the Botanic Gardens lunchroom last week. Of course, we all appreciate and support the concept of taking a child outside, but we'd like children to go outside every week of the year. I was reminded of a t-shirt my husband used to wear that proclaimed a "Day of Caring." If October 11 is the day of caring, what does that mean for the other 364 days?

In reality, instead of Taking our Children Outside on Saturday, September 27, my husband took Sam (10) to a soccer tournament in Lansing and I took Emma Jane (11) to swim practice, the grocery store, and the library. We all spent a good part of the day in the car. In the evening, we ate homemade pizza and watched a video.

I'd like to believe that my children don't suffer from nature-deficit disorder. After all, doesn't Sam know how to catch a frog? Didn't Emma Jane pick the pattypan squash we had for dinner last night herself? Yet I confess that they are probably having more of the "Take a Child Outside Week" childhood than the idyllic nature-based life of my dreams. Yes, they enjoy camping, fishing and a float trip as much as Rich and I do. But these are forays into nature, not part of the fabric of our day-to-day lives.

Contrast this to my own childhood; I grew up in a new subdivision on Frederick Drive off Green Road, not far from the Botanical Gardens. It was an Ann Arbor neighborhood setting, similar to my neighborhood now. I remember long hours spent in the little wetland at the corner of Green Road and Hubbard, splitting cattails with my thumbs, watching dragonflies, spying for crawdads. There was a woods behind my neighborhood park; I remember actually getting lost once. My brother, my sister and I walked a mile to and from King School every day, on a little footpath cut by neighborhood kids through golden fields. Probably invasive species, but



Karen's family enjoys being out on the lake.

who knew? I remember the smell and feel of the crackling grasses that brushed our arms and ankles as we pushed through. In our backyard, mature trees that my dad insisted on preserving during the construction, and a shady vegetable garden that yielded only chard. In fair weather, we spent every minute outside, every day, until the streetlights went on. This outdoor life is not one my children are leading, despite surface similarities in our situations.

What accounts for the difference? I mean, these are children whose parents not only value environmental stewardship, but actually love to be outside in nature. Rich and I courted on backcountry trails, vacation with a canoe strapped on top of the car, and have more camping equipment than kitchen gear. What gives?

A few things, I think. First, there just isn't as much nature where we live as we had in the neighborhood I grew up in. Yes, we live in a suburban area, but density and development have taken away the pockets of undeveloped land, leaving only city parks with their structured play equipment, ball fields and mowed grass. Second, even if there were undeveloped areas nearby, most parents

(including us) probably wouldn't give the kids free rein to play there. Gone are the days of my childhood, when my sister, brother and I were permitted to cross busy streets on our own, or play in the urban woods heedless of who or what might be hidden there. Although crimes against strangers have actually declined over the past decades, our fear has increased, and I think few parents are comfortable giving children hours of unstructured, unsupervised time where we simply don't know where our children are or what they are doing. Last and perhaps most important, the pressures of homework and extracurricular activities don't leave much time for unstructured play. Rich and I had resolved not to fill the kids' time with too many activities; we both feel that free time—time just to be kids—is important. But our whole circumstances conspire to make much free time only a dream. In reality, both our kids are serious athletes. They love their sports; far from resenting the time they spend in these structured activities, they crave it. Who can argue with the health and social benefits that come from participating in sports? Next are homework demands. I believe my children spend significantly

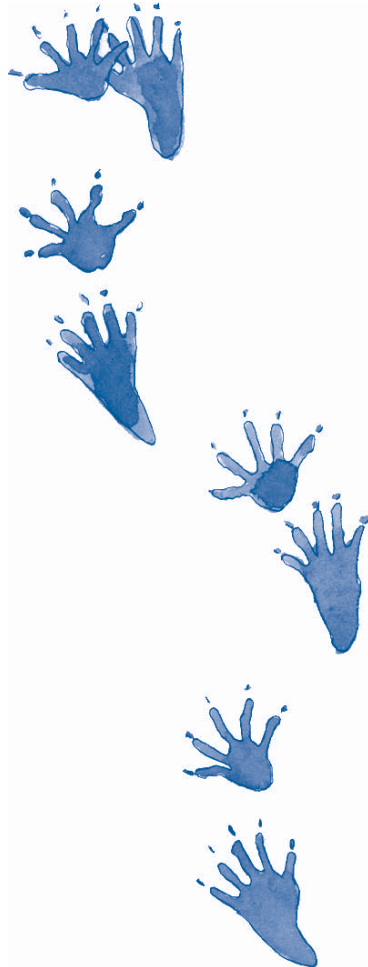
Get Lost!

more time doing homework than my sister, my brother and I spent. We are not going to excuse the kids from homework because we want them to have more free time.

And finally, the temptations of the built environment—video games, play structures and tennis racquets—are such that the subtleties of nature-based play simply don't draw their attention.

Ah, but I have left out our saving grace and great privilege. Family dinner! Every Sunday afternoon, we pile into the car and drive five miles out to my parents' home on East Delhi, a quarter mile from Delhi Park. As soon as the wheels stop turning, the kids disappear into the woods. When it's time to eat, we might find them catching falling leaves near the rope swing, building a fort at the woodpile, catching frogs at the pond, collecting pill bugs, or climbing boulders. My two-year-old niece already can say "hummingbird" and identify the little whizzers. Rich often brings his fly rod and waders. One night this summer, Dad, Sam, Rich and I stayed out late, sitting out on the treetop deck watching first the bats and then the stars, the satellites and the Milky Way emerge. Week after week, year after year, this paradise of nature continues to absorb and attract, capturing our imagination and bringing us to the end of the evening, knees stained, hair decorated with twigs, eyes sleepy and cheeks red.

The irony of environmentalism is that the more densely we live, the more removed from nature we are. Thus, my niece and nephew growing up in a Manhattan high rise and experiencing nature at Central Park on Saturdays have less environmental impact than we do in our old house near Burns Park; and we have less environmental impact than my parents in their big house in the country. My hope is that the Gaffield Children's Garden can offer this community a mirror of my family's joy at my parents' place: that special alchemy of safety, familiarity, wildness, beauty and magic that pulls us in, captures us and restores us. Week after week, year after year. 🌿



On the Trails

April Pickrel

Winter is a great time to lose yourself in the beauty of nature. Instead of a specific location to visit, this edition of *Get Lost* offers some simple suggestions for how to get there.

Lose your itinerary and follow a set of footprints in the newly fallen snow. See where they lead. Perhaps they'll take you down a trail you've never hiked.

Lose the cell phone and iPod and take in the muffled crunching of your footfalls in the snow. Soak in every sound around you, and see if you can figure out what they are.

Lose your memories of the trees with their leaves, and instead take in the beautiful shapes made by their trunks and branches.

Lose yourself in the sheer joy of sledding down some of the Arb's fabulous hills! Where else can you find such great slopes? Feel that rush of cold air as nips at your nose and feel the acceleration of a smooth ride in to the Main Valley.

Can you Get Lost?



Updates

Karen Sikkenga

Arb Boardwalk

We are pleased to announce the completion of the boardwalk in the Arboretum. The 120- and 250-foot recycled wood boardwalks are specifically designed to offer visitors a close-up view of the bird- and plant-rich wetlands, typically too delicate (and muddy) for human incursion. We built the boardwalks with generous gifts from Herbert Sloan and Carl Cohen, which we matched 100% with funds from membership dues. Thank you, members and donors!



Plant Sale

What can the plant sale be in the year 2025? Our staff and volunteers believe the event will be two things: a lot of fun, and a lot of knowledge. The core message? Just like today, we'll continue to be about environmental sustainability, but we won't be preaching to the choir. We think the whole community will be engaged. To see our complete vision, visit mbgna.umich.edu/plantsalevision. So, what can you expect this May? A fun member night party (yes, there will be wine!), food every day of the sale, and more activities and demonstrations on Sunday, especially for kids. Keep checking our web site for more plans as they unfold.

May 8 Members Only Preview Party and Sale
May 9 and 10 – Spring Plant Sale



MiSo House

If all goes well, MiSo House will be open for tours this winter! Members, you will be the first to get through the doors. Project staff will walk you through the nuances of this self-contained solar-powered house, answering the question on everyone's mind: does it work in the dead of winter? Also, you'll take a tour of the tunnels beneath the Conservatory for a first-hand view of our new mister and energy blanket controls. Non-members, you can join at the door! Stay tuned to mbgna.umich.edu for more details, and look for a postcard invitation in the mail.



¡Felices Fiestas!

In December, come warm up in the Conservatory, where you can learn about plants of Mexico against a backdrop of dramatic poinsettia displays (photo op!) and Mexican decorations. Look up in the temperate house to see Steve Nikkala's photographs taken at the Botanical Garden of the Institute of Biology, UNAM in Mexico City. This lovely display kicks off the Woman's National Farm & Garden Greens Market, Thursday December 4 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Brown Bag Lunches

Beginning in January, we will be offering you something new: a chance to eat lunch with MBGNA staff and learn with us. Various staff members will be reporting on a wide range of recent travel, symposia, workshops, etc. Please join us. Learn what we are learning as we Care for Nature and Enrich Life. For dates and subjects please refer to the Community Education listings on page 9.

Careful!

A little outdoor time every day helps keep winter blues away. We love to see people on the trails year round, but don't forget that many of our trails are rustic and are not plowed or salted in the snow and ice. So, join us for a hike one day... but step carefully! See our calendar section for winter walk offerings. 🌿

January

- 1**
Thursday New Years Day Conservatory open 10 am - 4:30 pm
- 5**
Monday Conservatory Closed
- 8**
Thursday Noon - 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
- 10**
Saturday 9 am - noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Arb ☺
- 11**
Sunday 11 am - 2 pm Ann Arbor Garden Club Meeting
2 - 4 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Meeting
2 - 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- 12**
Monday Conservatory Closed
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- 13**
Tuesday 10 - 11:30 am Docent Information Meeting ☺
- 14**
Wednesday 9 am - noon Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Winter 🌿
10 - 11:30 am Docent Information Meeting ☺
7 - 9 pm Wild Ones Meeting
- 15**
Thursday ROTC training at the Arb
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
- 17**
Saturday 9 am - noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Gardens ☺
10 am - 4 pm Rock Garden Society Meeting
10 am - 4 pm Great Lakes Judging Meeting
- 19**
Monday Conservatory Closed
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
7:45 - 9:30 pm Michigan Botanical Club Meeting
- 20**
Tuesday 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm Sierra Club Meeting
- 21**
Wednesday 9 am - noon Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Winter 🌿
7 - 8:30 pm Star Gazing 🌿 🌿
7:30 - 9:30 pm Audubon Society Meeting
- 22**
Thursday Noon - 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
- 26**
Monday Conservatory Closed
9 am - noon Docent Training ☺
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- 28**
Wednesday 9 am - noon Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Winter 🌿
7 - 9 pm Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Meeting 🌿
- 29**
Thursday ROTC training at the Arb
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿

February

- 2**
Monday Conservatory Closed
9 am - noon Docent Training ☺
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- 5**
Thursday ROTC training at the Arb
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
- 7**
Saturday 10 - 11 am Volunteer Orientation ☺
- 8**
Sunday 10 am - noon Tu B' Shevat
2 - 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- 9**
Monday Conservatory Closed
9 am - noon Docent Training ☺
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
7:45 - 9:30 pm Michigan Botanical Club Meeting
- 11**
Wednesday 5:30 - 6:30 pm Volunteer Orientation ☺
7 - 9 pm Wild Ones Meeting
- 12**
Thursday Noon - 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
7:30 - 9:30 pm Ann Arbor Garden Club Meeting
- 14**
Saturday 11 am - 1 pm Ann Arbor Garden Club Workshop (potluck lunch)
9 am - noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Arb ☺
7 - 8:30 pm Star Party 🌿 🌿
- 15**
Sunday 2 - 4 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Meeting
- 16**
Monday Conservatory Closed
9 am - noon Docent Training ☺
Noon - 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
7:45 - 9:45 pm Michigan Botanical Club Meeting
- 17**
Tuesday 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm Sierra Club Meeting
- 18**
Wednesday 7:30 - 9:30 pm Audubon Society Meeting
- 19**
Thursday 4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿
- 21**
Saturday 9 am - noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Arb ☺
11 am - 4 pm Great Lakes Judging Meeting
- 23**
Monday Conservatory Closed
- 25**
Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm Plant Identification 🌿
7 - 9 pm Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Meeting
- 26**
Thursday Noon - 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
4 - 5:30 pm ; 6 - 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity 🌿

Key

- 🌿 Adult Education - see listings in Education Brochure
- 🌿 Youth / Family Education - see listings in Education Brochure
- 🌿 Class by outside organization
- ☺ Volunteer Opportunity

March

- Conservatory Closed**
9 am – noon Docent Training ☞
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- 2 Monday** 7 – 9 pm Evening Herb Study Group
- 3 Tuesday** Spring Display and Exhibit opens
- 4 Wednesday** 6:30 – 8:30 pm Plant Identification 🌿
- 5 Thursday** ROTC training at the Arb
4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 7 Saturday** 10 – 11 am Volunteer Orientation ☞
10 am – noon Signs of Spring ☼
- 8 Sunday** 2 – 4 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Meeting
2 – 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- Conservatory Closed**
9 Monday 9 am – noon Docent Training ☞
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- Noon – 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
5:30 – 6:30 pm Volunteer Orientation ☞
6:30 – 8:30 pm Plant Identification 🌿
- 11 Wednesday** 7 – 9 pm Wild Ones Meeting
7:30 – 9:30 pm Ann Arbor Garden Club Meeting
- 12 Thursday** 4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 14 Saturday** 9 am – noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Arb ☞
10 am – 4 pm Great Lakes Judging Meeting
- Conservatory Closed**
16 Monday Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
7:45 – 9:45 pm Michigan Botanical Club Meeting
- 17 Tuesday** 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm Sierra Club Meeting
- 18 Wednesday** 7:30 – 9:30 pm Audubon Society Meeting
- 19 Thursday** 4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 21 Saturday** 9 am – noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Gardens ☞
9 – 11:30 am Seed Starting ☼
- 23 Monday** **Conservatory Closed**
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- Noon – 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
25 Wednesday 7 – 9 pm Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Meeting 🌿 ☼
8:30 – 10 pm Star Gazing
- 26 Thursday** 4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 27 Friday** 10 am – noon Volunteer Orientation, Gaffield Children's Garden ☞
- 30 Monday** **Conservatory Closed**
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿

Key

- 🌿 Adult Education – see listings in Education Brochure
- ☼ Youth / Family Education – see listings in Education Brochure

April

- 2 Thursday** 4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 4 Saturday** 10 – 11 am Volunteer Orientation ☞
10 am – 4:30 pm Michigan State African Violet Society Show and Sale
- 5 Sunday** 10 am – 2 pm Michigan State African Violet Society Show and Sale
2 – 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- Conservatory Closed**
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
7 – 9 pm Evening Herb Study Group
- 6 Monday** 7 – 9 pm Evening Herb Study Group
- 8 Wednesday** 7:30 – 9:30 pm Ann Arbor Garden Club Meeting
- 8 – 11 am Migration Walk in the Arb
Noon – 1 pm Brown Bag Lunch 🌿
4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 9 Thursday** 4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 11 Saturday** 9 am – noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Arb ☞
- 13 Monday** **Conservatory Closed**
- 15 Wednesday** 7:30 – 9:30 pm Audubon Society Meeting
- 16 Thursday** 8 – 11 am Migration Walk in the Arb
4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 9 am – noon Volunteer Eco Workday at the Gardens ☞
1 – 3 pm Gardening for Children ☼
18 Saturday Noon – 4:30 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Show and Sale
- 9 – 10 am Photographer's Hour-Ann Arbor Orchid Society Show and Sale
10 am – 4:30 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Show and Sale
2 – 4 pm Ann Arbor Orchid Society Meeting
2 – 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- 19 Sunday** 2 – 4 pm Huron Valley Rose Society Meeting
- 20 Monday** **Conservatory Closed**
7:45 – 9:45 pm Michigan Botanical Club Meeting
- 21 Tuesday** 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm Sierra Club Meeting
- 9 am – noon Wednesday AM Hiker, Spring
7 – 9 pm Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Meeting
22 Wednesday 8:30 – 10 pm Star Gazing ☼
- 23 Thursday** 8 – 11 am Migration Walk in the Arb
4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼
- 25 Saturday** 9 am – noon Garlic Mustard Volunteer Challenge at the Gardens
1 – 4 pm Garlic Mustard Volunteer Challenge at Horner Woods
- 26 Sunday** 1 – 4:30 pm Michigan Dahlia Association Tuber Sale
- 27 Monday** **Conservatory Closed**
Noon – 1 pm Yoga at the Gardens 🌿
- 29 Wednesday** 9 am – noon Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Spring 🌿
- 30 Thursday** 8 – 11 am Migration Walk in the Arb
4 – 5:30 pm; 6 – 7:30 pm Youth Group Activity ☼

- 🌿 Class by outside organization
- ☞ Volunteer Opportunity

Come Learn at MBGNA!

Star Gazing

Field Astronomy

Wednesday January 21, 7 - 8:30pm #09-AE-04

Wednesday March 25, 8:30 - 10 pm #09-AE-13

Wednesday April 22, 8:30 - 10 pm #09-AE-16

It's been 400 years since Galileo first used a telescope to gaze upon the stars. This winter we want to bring the stars to you. Bundle up and join us for an evening of star gazing. There will be a short talk inside and a guided naked eye stargazing experience outside.

Afterward hot chocolate and cookies will warm you up.

Led by the UM Astronomy department.

All ages are invited. Advanced reservations required, you may pay the evening of the event (exact amount only).

Fee: \$5 per person (no discounts- no refunds), \$2 per child (through high-school) UM Students free.

Star Party

Saturday February 14, 7 - 8:30pm #09-AE-06

Come as a pair or come on your own to our special Star Party with the University Lowbrow Astronomers. They will bring telescopes and set up for guided viewing of the night sky. Afterward hot chocolate and cookies will warm you up. All ages are invited. Advanced reservations required. You may pay the evening of the event (exact amount only).

Fee: \$5 per person (no discounts- no refunds), \$2 per child (through high-school)

UM Students free. Tonight only – We will have a University bus to bring UM students to and from the gardens for this special event.

Brown Bag Sessions

Join MBGNA staff as we learn and grow professionally at our brown bag lunch training! Registration requested –pay when you come.

Fee: \$3 non-members; free to members

Visits to Gardens and Arboreta – A Director's Perspective

Thursdays January 8 and January 22, noon - 1 pm #09-AE-01

Director Bob Grese spent some of his sabbatical time visiting botanical gardens and arboreta across the country. Come learn what he learned! How can we infuse some best practices from these great places into our own Gardens and Arb?

Sustainably-Centered Operations

Thursday February 12, noon - 1 pm #09-AE-05

Associate Director Karen Sikkenga, Project Manager Sarah Weiss and Facilities Manager Mike Hommel attended an American Public Gardens Association conference on Sustainably-Centered Operations. They toured the Phipps Conservatory and green roof buildings in Pittsburg, and heard experts speak about incorporating sustainable practices into our own public gardens. Come hear what they learned, how we can apply these concepts at MBGNA.

Summary of the Stewardship Network Conference

Thursday February 26, noon - 1 pm #09-AE-08

Jeff Plakke and Tom O'Dell attended a Stewardship Network conference on Restoring Native Ecosystems in late January. Come hear what they learned, and how we might incorporate this new knowledge into our natural areas plan!

Understanding UM Library Resources

Wednesday March 11, noon - 1 pm #09-AE-11

Are you a U-M faculty member, staff person or student with a Kerberos password? Ever wondered what University library resources –books, magazines, journals and data – are available to you from your own computer? Two U-M librarians will offer tips and information tailored to gardeners and land managers about what, exactly, Mirlyn has to offer.

Fire and Biodiversity in SE Michigan

Thursday March 25, noon - 1 pm, #09-AE-19

This presentation by Jeff Plakke, with slides and research material generously provided by Ryan O'Connor and the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, will provide background as to why fire is THE most important tool for land stewardship and conserving biodiversity in SE MI. You'll learn how prescribed burning at different times of the year and at different frequencies over time can increase floral diversity, "pyro-diversity leads to biodiversity", and the historical context for this.

Commercial Composting

Thursday April 9, noon - 1 pm #09-AE-14

Mike Hommel learned about commercial-level composting and recycling at a Michigan Recycling Coalition conference. Can we start a commercial composting program at MBGNA? Come learn.

Yoga

Yoga at the Gardens

Mondays January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 9, and 16

Session A: #09-AE-02

Mondays March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, and April 6

Session B: #09-AE-09

Mondays April 27, May 4, 11, 18, June 1 and 8

Session C: #09-AE-18

All Sessions: noon - 1 pm

Vinyasa Yoga is for those who enjoy a flowing sequence of sun salutations and postures coordinated with music. Moderately paced, with emphasis on the integration of breath and movement to increase strength and flexibility, this is a class for students with an understanding of yoga fundamentals. Please enter at the west entrance and bring a yoga mat and bath-sized towel.

Drop-ins welcome, \$10/class.

Instructor: Janine Bennett

Fee: \$48 Members and U-M Students (\$60 Non-members)

Classes with Ellen Elliott Weatherbee

Ellen is an excellent botanist, and her classes are something everyone should experience.

Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Winter

Wednesdays, January 14, 21, and 28, 9 am - noon, #09-AE-03

The fabric of these invigorating forays is always interwoven with plants, habitats, and the effects of cold on natural environments. Appropriate but inexpensive clothing and footwear will be emphasized, making any winter situation comfortable, no matter how weird the weather.

Fee: \$76 Members and U-M students (\$95 Non-members)

Plant Identification

Wednesdays: February 25, March 4, and 11, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, #09-AE-07

Learn to use field guides and other botanical texts to improve your skills identifying wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. Learn which books to buy and how to find meanings of Latin words. Emphasis will be on the three volumes of Michigan Flora by Edward G. Voss, as well as other helpful sources. Texts will be furnished for use during class

Fee: \$52 Members and U-M students (\$65 Non-members)

Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Spring

Wednesdays, April 22, 29, May 6, 13, and 20, 9 am - noon, #09-AE-17

Weekly hikes take the inquisitive plant seeker to the more remote habitats of woods and wetlands. Edible plants and mushrooms, as well as the interesting plants and intriguing habitats of little-known and out-of-the-way places, are emphasized in our usual academic, but playful, atmosphere. Potluck lunch the last day. This class fills early.

Fee: \$124 Members and U-M students (\$155 Non-members)

Trip to Mecosta County with Ellen Elliott Weatherbee-

To be scheduled May/June Friday through Sunday. Visit and learn about diverse habitats in this west central Michigan county with a wonderful and engaging instructor.

During the Spring Plant Sale

Saturday May 9 and Sunday May 10

(members preview on Friday May 8)

Saturday – free demonstrations will take place that will engage the curious gardener. Patricia Pennell will speak about Rain Gardens, their construction and design. Rain gardens use native plants to filter rain water, while improving water quality within the watershed. In a second talk Patricia will discuss Xeric Gardening and the benefits of having a drought proof garden. Kids will have special demonstrations just for them. Check our website for the demonstration schedule in early April.

Sunday – We will host a special speaker series. This will be a ticketed event, during the plant sale. Registration and details will be posted on our web site in early April.

Janet Macunovich, professional gardener, author and educator, will be sure to engage and entertain. From the organization Rain Gardens of West Michigan,

After the Spring Plant Sale

Sunday May 17, 1 - 5 pm

Bim Willow will return for a workshop on making willow furniture. Last fall the class was really enjoyed by those attending so don't miss out!

You choose what you'd like to make, we will have an example piece on display during plant sale. For more information please see our web site.

**Outdoor gardens and trails
open every day 8 am - dusk,
free admission**



**The Reader Center at
Nichols Arboretum**

Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 4:30 pm



Matthaei Botanical Gardens Conservatory

Mon. closed

Tues. 10 am - 4:30 pm

Wed. 10 am - 8 pm

Thurs. - Sun. 10 am - 4:30 pm

Youth & Family Programs

Youth Group Activities

offered every Thursday by reservation

4 - 5:30 pm or 6 - 7:30 pm

Phone: 734-647-7860 or 734-763-6667

Fee: \$5 per child

Discover the World of Plants: Join docents on a guided adventure in our conservatory of plants from around the world. Learn about the basic needs of plants and build a terrarium to take home. For children **ages 7-10**.

Trail Treks: A docent leads you through woodlands, savanna, wetland, and fen. Activities might include quick sketching in nature or exploring different plant communities. These nature explorations happen at both Nichols Arboretum and Matthaei Botanical Gardens. For children **ages 9-13**.

Environmental Careers: Learn what is needed to become a horticulturist, a landscape architect, a natural areas preservation specialist and more. Explore our gardens and nature trails and learn how to plan a garden or natural area for your home. For children **ages 10-15**.

Outdoor Surroundings: Artists and Scientists: With our interpretive guides, discover the similarities and differences in how artists and scientist perceive the natural world. Take a walk through our conservatory or trails and observe the special traits that help identify plants. Using a quick sketching technique, make sketches of what you discover. For children **ages 7-15**.

Family programs

Families may also consider the Star Gazing & Star Party described above.

Signs of Spring

Saturday, March 7, 10 am - noon, #09-YE-10

We're all eagerly waiting for spring! Bundle up for a docent-led walk in the woods and open fields at the Gardens. Help us look for the first signs of spring! Will it be a robin? Or a skunk cabbage? Or something else? It's always a mystery. Afterwards, you'll warm up inside with hot cocoa and a treat.

Fee: \$2 per person

Seed Starting

Saturday, March 21, 9-11:30 am, #09-YE-12

Learn about seeds, seed starting and garden planning. Children will plant seeds to take home. They will receive instructions on how and when to transplant into a garden or larger pot. They will also plant seeds which will be cared for in our greenhouse and planted later in the Gaffield Children's Garden.

Fee: \$5 per person.

Gardening for Children

Saturday, April 18, 1-3 pm, #09-YE-15

You can turn a sunny spot in the yard (or on a patio!) into a small vegetable plot. Learn how to plant seeds, and how to care of seedlings until it's time to harvest. Children will also create a garden diary to keep track of everything that happens in their gardens.

Fee: \$5 per person

Help Plant a Section of the Gaffield Children's Garden

A Saturday in May – to be announced via e-newsletter and website; weather dependent.

Children will transplant seedlings that were started in March (see Seed Starting above) into the Children's Garden. They will have the opportunity to take a few extra seedlings home for their own garden. After planting, we'll clean up, have a snack, and celebrate the start of the new growing season.

Here's How to Register:

(form on opposite side)

Phone: 734 - 647-7600 *(During Conservatory hours listed bottom of pg 10)*

Fax: 734 - 998 - 6205. Send completed registration form with credit card information.

Mail: MBGNA - University of Michigan
1800 N. Dixboro Road
Ann Arbor MI 48105

On-line: www.mbgna.umich.edu

In Person: Stop by the Information Desk at Matthaei Botanical Gardens during the hours listed on page 10.

Make checks payable to "MBGNA."

Note: Adult Education classes are open to those at least 16 years of age. Classes meet as designated at Matthaei Botanical Gardens or Nichols Arboretum. Classes may meet off-site (call for location and directions if you miss a class). Field trips may be physically challenging – call if you have questions about the difficulty of any class or trip. Classes are popular and fill quickly – early registration is suggested.

Are You a Member?

To become a member of Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, send a **separate** check made out to "MBGNA." Fees are \$55 for a family membership, \$45 for a single membership, and \$20 for University students. (See form page 16.)

Community Education

Winter 2009
January - April

Registration is required by contacting Tara Griffith, Volunteer Coordinator at 734-647-8528 or tgriffit@umich.edu

Volunteer Training

Information Session – Docents

Tuesday January 13 or Wednesday January 14, 10 - 11:30 am

Do you hug trees or stop to smell the flowers? Do you enjoy children and their natural curiosity? Then you should consider becoming a docent. Docents work in teams to lead school children on tours of the Conservatory and trails. They also lead evening and weekend activities for youth groups and families. Please join us for an information session to learn more.

Docent Training

Mondays, January 26, February 2, 9, 16, March 2, and 9, 9 am - noon

This class will prepare you to become a Docent. You will learn basic botany and ecology, specifics about the Conservatory and its plants, the art of interpretation, and much more. **Free.**

Pre-requisite: Information Session – Docents.

Volunteer Orientations - NEW for 2009

General Volunteer Orientations (Pick one only)

Saturdays, February 7, March 7, April 4, 10 – 11 am

Wednesdays, February 11, March 11, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

Learn the basics of volunteering at MBGNA. Enjoy a tour of the facilities. All new volunteers need to attend one session before starting to volunteer.

Gaffield Children's Garden Volunteer Orientation

Friday March 27, 10 am - noon

We are delighted to introduce new opportunities for volunteer involvement in our new and growing Gaffield Children's Garden. Discover how you can help maintain and develop this new garden area designed especially with little folks in mind! A guided tour will also be provided.

Spring Plant Sale Volunteer Orientations

Saturday, May 2 9 - 11 am or Monday, May 4 6-7:30 pm

It takes hundreds of volunteers doing many jobs to make our annual spring plant sale such a bloomin' success! It also takes some advance training to make sure that our volunteers are well prepared to greet the crowds. Volunteers are asked to attend one of these informational sessions prior to the sale.

Volunteer Workdays

Volunteer Eco Workdays

At the Arb: Saturdays, January 10, February 14, March 14 and April 11, 9 am – noon

At the Gardens: Saturdays, January 17, February 21, March 21 and April 18, 9 am – noon

Join MBGNA staff in working to remove invasive plant species from the Arb or Gardens to promote native plant growth. We typically mix a little bit of hard work with education about the site and restoration ecology work here and in the local area. Dress to work outside! Snacks and tools provided, but you are welcome to bring your own loppers or pruners. Locations vary from month to month, so call the number above for details.

Garlic Mustard Challenge Volunteer Workdays

Saturday, April 25

Matthaei Botanical Gardens – 9 am - noon

Join Natural Areas Steward, Aunita Erskine, to tackle the garlic mustard that is invading our lovely oak openings area, Kirk Woods. Volunteers should meet in the west lobby at Matthaei for orientation. Dress to work outside. Snacks and tools will be provided.

Horner Woods – 1 - 4 pm

Natural Areas Steward, Dr. Sylvia Taylor, and members of the Michigan Botanical Club will lead volunteers on a hunt for garlic mustard in this beautiful woodland. Volunteers meet in the west lobby of Matthaei Botanical Gardens for orientation and directions to the worksite. Dress to work outside. Snacks and tools will be provided.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Parent's name (if student is under 18): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Member of Friends of MBGNA (Member Exp. Date _____)

Non-member

U-M student: (Student ID Number _____) Is this your first class? Y N

 UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Matthaei Botanical gardens
and Nichols arboretum

Student's Name	Class Code	Also attending (if family class)	Member Fee	Non-member Fee
List additional classes on a separate sheet and include with original form.			Total	

Payment: Check made payable to: MBGNA
 Visa Mastercard Discover
 American Express

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____
 Cardholder Signature _____

Curator's Corner

Garden Building Blocks

David C. Michener

Several visitors have asked: What do you, the curator, do in relation to new gardens such as the Gaffield Children's Garden? It's a fair question, as most curatorial roles are behind the scenes. Being curator brings a range of engaging, challenging, and outright fun roles as well as its own harvest of routines. So in the spirit of our children's theme, let's imagine the consequence of poor curatorial review on two occasions. As one of my early teachers directed, "Now we'll don our Imagination Hats." At the end I'll highlight some of the constructive ways I engage with the planning process.

- How would Rachael feel after she chewed a handful of bright red yew berries?

She would start to feel terrible, wouldn't she? And her parents would be very, very angry. And with whom would they be angry? US! Rightfully so! One of my curatorial roles is to review proposed plants for a wide range of safety issues. Depending on the audience, locations, and activities, use of toxic plants may be a bad idea. For our Gaffield Children's Garden, we are planting nothing that can be dangerously toxic. Additionally, in natural areas within the garden we are removing existing toxic plants – and that's more than just the native poison ivy! No nettles, even though some butterfly caterpillars love them. No foxgloves, even though they are classic fairy

tale plants. No yew hedges for the maze, even though they are soft and pliable. [FYI – the fleshy red part of yew "berries" is considered harmless, but the seeds inside are horribly toxic if chewed and ingested. Thank goodness the seeds are so hard to chew open.] When student or staff designers propose a plant that can't be used due to safety concerns, I need to understand what the aesthetic, functional or educational objectives are, and then propose acceptable alternatives.

- How bored would Mark be if he saw just more and more of the same kind of plants?

He'd be easily distracted, wanting to go home now; especially if he began by thinking plants are boring. Diversity and visual appeal are key to excitement and fun – we all want something new and different because it helps us see with refreshed eyes. What if the plants in the Gaffield Children's Garden were the same as those in the nearby perennial garden? Likewise, over-use of the same plants sets us up for serious disease and pest problems. So I must consider the degree of repetition among all our collections, not just the area under development. Some degree of redundancy is a safeguard; too much is the portal to boredom and pestilence. Once again, it is my responsibility to propose alternatives that meet the myriad criteria of our student and

staff designers, and to work through the series of repercussions so that our visitors have a wonderful time and have the opportunity to learn a lot while they're at it.

One of the pleasures of being curator is proposing plants that meet needed objectives.

When the program needs are child-oriented, it can bring out one's own 'inner child.' How well I remember my grandmothers' gardens – furry plants as lamb's ears for petting or achilleas for the finely dissected foliage that is so wondrous when caressed. Visual textures, as the patterns in two-ranked leaves of iris or the elfin depth in the narrow tubes of morning glories and salvias, add their own excitement. Do we need perennials with bright flowers that will attract butterflies from June to July? That requires thinking and cross-checking through 'generalist' flowers as echinaceas and eupatoriums that may be later in the season to 'specialist' flowers as pale *Ipomopsis* or selected phlox that will be a bit earlier. Plants must be able to grow in the light, soil, and other conditions offered by the garden. Such cases result in a team discussion about which criteria are more important than others. From the prioritized criteria, I propose back different sets of plants that I believe will grow in that site without exceptional care. Of course, the student and staff designers need to make their design decisions as designers – my role is to see that their decisions are well-informed. So now it's your turn – come on out and experience the Gaffield Children's Garden – and think beyond the surface. Let me know your thoughts. If you don't find me on your visit day, just drop me an email at michener@umich.edu 🌱



Brownies learning how cauliflower grows.

Michigan native, black eyed Susan (Rudbeckia).



Development Matters

Ericka Bigelow

I vividly remember my first field trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science. After a 20-minute ride through the heart of Houston, we descended the bus steps to a sidewalk awaiting us with all the planets in the solar system. A few of us turned it into a hopscotch game, but all the while, we were learning. Learning the names, the order, and the magnitude of our solar system.

That day, I went home and asked my parents for a mobile of the solar system I saw in the gift shop. My father was so excited about my newfound love of the solar system that he went out and bought me the solar mobile, a light tray that had the constellations, and a deck of cards with the planets. My love of the solar system lasted only until the next great thing that impressed me came along, but to this day, I can name every planet and constellation there is. And I owe it all to one thing - A Field Trip!

Field trips are a powerful part of a child's education experience. They teach outside the classroom, and often leave students with a new impression of the topic they've been watching their teacher write about on a chalkboard. How can we teach nature on a chalkboard? How can we engage kids to interact with our natural world inside the white walls of a classroom?

Each year MBGNA hosts over 3,000 students for interpretive tours by our docents. Our docent program was established in the 1980s to extend our mission of teaching and research to the community. Where else can students of all ages experience such an enormous diversity of plants within a scientific and cultural framework?

A reduction to our public educational system funding has led schools all over Southeast Michigan to cut their field trip programs. Though our costs for the field trip are minimal, the busses and prices of gas are not. But, we are not without hope to get students to our sites. Woman's National Farm and Garden Association has granted MBGNA funds to subsidize field trips to MBGNA. Their generosity removes some of the financial burden of the field trip from the schools and opens doors to many students throughout Southeast Michigan. We appreciate all that WNFGA has done and continues to do to help our outreach to Southeast Michigan children and their families.

If you are interested in helping our school tour program, either financially or as a docent, please let us know. Together, we can make a difference in a child's life ... maybe even teach them to hopscotch through the kingdom of plants! 🌱

Thank you to our new and renewing members

July 1 – September 30

Benefactor \$500

Craig Hammerberg

Sponsor \$250

David S. Bach and Jill M. Latta

Gwen Ball

Barbara Black

Alice Cohen

Irwin Goldstein and Marty Mayo

Roberta W. Knox

Sarah Newman

Sustaining \$100

George and Mary Adamski

Rhona Ahmad and David Fields

John and Sandra Awood

Bill and Fran Beckley

Marjorie Berndt

Gene and Kay Berrodin

Frederick and Jean Birkhill

Gil and Mona Borlaza

Bob and Jan Brimacombe

Carol Sue Brodbeck

Kathy Carter and Mack Ruffin

Tom Chettleburgh and Kathy Sargeant

Scott and Beth Clipper

Ann Cook and Daniel Siivola

Diana Devereaux

Andrzej and Cynthia Dlugosz

Claudine Farrand and Daniel Moerman

Joan Farrell

Gail Gentes and Phil Hanlon

Liz Glynn and Greg Keoleian

Robert Green

Joan Harris and Edward Sarath

Susan K. Harris

John and Joyce Henderson

Lynn Hobbs

Dave and Susan Horvath

Rebecca Horvath

Teresa and Che Huang

Jeff Hunter

Anthony and Joyce Kales

Hans-Peter and Carol Kappus

Josephine Kelsey

Russ and Bonnie King

Larry and Joan Kobylarz

Ronald Kustra

James and Jeanne Montie

Jay and Wanda Moon

Dr. A. John Neerken

Great news!

The IRA Charitable Rollover has been renewed and extended to December 31, 2009, so you can still make a 2008 gift. This provision offers a wonderful way to support scholarships, research or other U-M programs that are important to you.

About the legislation:

- Exclusively for donors who are 70 1/2 or older
- It's a simple, one-step disbursement from your IRA to the University
- Charitable IRA distributions are limited to a total of \$100,000 per year
- The gift counts toward your required minimum distribution for the current tax year
- Your taxable income is not affected, because no taxes are due on the distribution
- You can still make a 2008 gift.

If you are interested in making a gift to MBGNA from your IRA, please call Ericka Bigelow at 734-647-7847.

Farm and Garden has supported the bus subsidy for many years and we continue to do so to encourage and assist students to visit the Gardens and Conservatory. It helps fulfill our mission and supports our goals. Our relationship with MBGNA is important to us and we hope to partner with MBGNA on many projects in the years to come.

Mildred Matthaei founded the Ann Arbor Branch of the Woman's National Farm & Garden Association in 1946 and we hope to honor her by developing a strong collaborative partnership with MBGNA.

Claudia Scioly, President,
Ann Arbor Branch of WNFGA

Helen O'Connell
 Malcolm and Marilyn Pierce
 Richard and Candice Rosowski
 Sally Rutzky
 John and Carolyn Sampsel
 Edward and Donna Schumann
 Kenneth Shaw
 Karen Sikkenga and Richard Richman
 Helmut and Candy Stern
 Doris H. Terwilliger
 Jim and Carol Thiry
 Jackie Tonks
 Catherine Ward and Wally Gauthier
 Frank and Ruth Whitmyer
 Smilka Zdravkovska and Dan Burns

Family \$55

Alfred Ackerman and Nancy Schieb
 Scott and Pam Adair
 Elizabeth K. Adams
 Arun Agrawal and Rebecca Hardin
 Mahmoud and Wesal Al-Khafaji
 Eric and Nancy Aupperle
 Jason Baldwin and Jennifer Cartsonis
 Mickey Barley and George Kilbreath
 Jack and Jane Bender
 Rosemary Berardi and Carolyn Zaleon
 Laura Berarducci and Mike Pslug
 Ray and Susan Berger
 David and Diane Bloom
 Frederic Blow and Dwight Lewis
 Dennis and Sharon Blumenfeld
 Fred and Shawn Bonine
 Dianna Borel and Norman Samuelson
 Jane Bridges and Beverly Buchanan
 Ron and Barbara Broadley
 Howard and Maria Bromberg
 Michael and Ruth Brooks
 Kevin Brown and Marcella Fox
 James Buschmann and Shirley Sampier
 Kevin Bushre and Sarah Kelly
 Louis and Anne Caballero
 John and Mary Caldwell
 Misty Callies and Bill Secrest
 William Chapman and Michele Cherniga
 Robert and Margaret Chase
 Peter and Carol Cherry
 Raymond and Pat Coleman
 Arlan and Bonnie Connell
 Thomas Cook and Kathy Van Alstine
 Robert and Janice Crowe
 Robert and Joyce Damschroder
 George and Margaret Darling
 Robert and Deborah Devereaux
 Seta and Rita Dilanian
 Edward Domino
 Peter and Grace Duren

Charles and Shirley Eagen
 Tom and Karen Elliott
 Eugene and Janice Ezop
 Susan Falcone and Tom McClanahan
 Jeff Ferguson and Ilene Spring
 Dennis and Claire Fernly
 Brad Ferszt and Amanda Czop
 Matthew Fiems and Wendy Lukianoff
 Sally Fink and Stephen Josephson
 Lydia Fischer and Daniela Laumann
 Patrick Gibson and Helen Kales
 Beth Gilford
 Ed and Mona Goldman
 Jim and Gail Graham
 Robert and Elaine Greene
 Dale and Barbara Greiner
 David Gunter and Angie Musiel
 Scott Hardest and Lisa Gaines
 Bill and Bernie Heston
 George and Nancy Hewens
 Kurt and Heidi Hochrein
 Gary and Catherine Hoepfner
 Bernard and Sue Huang
 Amanda Jackson
 Dana Jackson and Kristen Hogue
 Lawrence and Ruth Jones
 Connie Kelly and Mark Saur
 Erica Kempter and Mike Levine
 Trevor Kilgore and Alison Scofield
 David and Lynn Kirkpatrick
 Peter and Susan Klaas
 Ralph and Faith Krug
 Lucinda Kurtz and Oran Hesterman
 John and Peggy Laird
 Joseph Lam and Amy Stillman
 Sandra Lambert and Trisha Miller
 Doug and Patricia Langs
 Jeffrey and Barbara Laufer
 William Lawrence and Nicole Hukkala
 Mary Layher
 Darlene Ledwon
 Glenn and Maria Lehr
 Cherie and Robert Levy
 Michael Linkevich
 Joan Lowenstein and Jonathan Trobe
 Robert and Wilma Majors
 Leonard and Elaine Male
 Johanna Mangahas and Cagatay Kutluhan
 Chad McGovern and Marta Zakoscielna
 James McIntosh and Elaine Gazda
 Donald and Patricia McLennan
 Drake and Nancy Meadow
 Barb Michniewicz and Gerald Nordblom
 Don Moczulski and JoAnne Golles
 Karen Moore and Paul Shapiro
 Jerry Morris and Lynn Parklan
 Wayne and Dorothy Morsfield
 Bob and Carol Mull

Richard Murphy
 Bob and Dawn Needham
 Laura and Many Newton
 Larry and Sarah Nooden
 Gail Ochs
 James and Catherine Palm
 Mike and Chris Palmer
 Susan Parrish and Bruce Judge
 William Paz and Karyn McKey-Paz
 Charles and Margaret Pekarek
 Gary and Cheryl Perrine
 Brian Perron and Barb Hiltz
 Gregg Peterson and Lissa Oliver
 Wilsy Philips
 Sara and Rosemary Pike
 Larry and Holly Pilon
 David Pitts and Joanna Hanks
 Mike and Mary Pulick
 Scott and Sue Purvis
 Melissa Rebb and Todd Fairbairn
 Bill and Kim Rice
 Dennis and Trish Ritchie
 Leslie Roberts and Laura Gray
 Jim and Lisa Rohrborn
 Susan and Jay Sandweiss
 Kesari and Candace Sarikonda
 John and Laura Shaw
 Jeff Shufeldt
 Brad and Sarah Shugart
 Michael and Wendy Simon
 Scott and Frankie Simonds
 Laurence and Joanne Smith
 Kurt Sonen and Megan Beardsley
 David and Ann Staiger
 John and Beryl Stimson
 David and Carlin Stockson
 Eric and Sherry Stone
 Christine Stuart and Lindsay Pritchard
 Susan and Anne Swantek
 Richard Szpara and Meghan McDonald
 Tom and Sylvia Taylor
 Andy Tenka and Ping Kho
 Chris Thomas and Kaite Prentice
 Lewis and Laura Tillman
 Nub and Jan Turner
 Jim and Gail Valensky
 Fred and Sharon van Hees
 Steven and Jane Vass
 Nancy Vettorello and Kincaid Brown
 Sandy and Sarah Wiener
 Frank and Judy Wilhelm
 Kay Windram-Brown
 Stewart and Carolyn Work
 Naomi and Ben Wright
 Wen Ye and Fan Bai
 Erik and Lineke Zuiderweg

Individual \$45

Natalie Aho
 Linda Atkins
 Lisa Barley
 Deanna Beyer
 Barbara Boddy
 Francine Bomar
 Beverly L. Braden
 Linda Britt
 Barbara Carr
 Anne Chase
 Bernadine Cimprich
 Nora Clark
 Judith Connert
 Celia Copeland
 Caroline Dieterle
 Mary Dolan
 Ilene H. Forsyth
 Geraldine Frenette
 Candy Friedman
 Enid Galler
 Sarah Geisler
 Marie Gentz
 Jeanne Giltrow
 Richard Ginberg
 Karl Gordon
 Phyllis Gracie
 Carl Guldberg
 Mary Hamilton
 Agnes Hannahs
 Carol Hellman
 Erin Helmrich
 Gloria Heym
 Joanne Hulce
 Jean Hunt
 Edith Hurst
 Mary Jackman
 Elizabeth Krafchak
 Ann Kruszewski
 Eleanor Kuhl
 Julius Kusey
 Joyce Lai
 Daniel Laleski
 Rita Laurance
 Earlene LaWall
 Linda Lawrence
 Sarah Lawrence
 Pat Levine
 Dorothy Lieffers
 Paula Mac
 John Macorkindale
 Penelope Martinak
 Patti McCall
 Sarah Miller
 Kaoru Mineishi
 Natalie Mobley
 Linda Monroe
 Halla Motawi

Sarah Mullins
 Elizabeth Neidhardt
 Elaine Owsley
 June Powers
 Mary Ann Rickelmann
 Marnita Scott
 Mary Ann Sellers
 Nancy Souly
 Marion Spencer
 Gloria Stapp
 Lorilyn Sweet
 Francoise Tamres
 Aubrey Thomason
 Marie Tront
 Mercedes True
 Kristin Vonreesema
 Nancy Weber
 Ruth Wiens
 Amy Wilson
 Norene Woodcox
 Fran Wright
 Chiachen Wu
 Mary Yamamoto
 Susan Zalusky
 Student \$25
 Diane Arnold
 Kelly Bakulski
 Norma Lesnick
 Cheryl Simpson

Become a Member Today!

As a member of MBGNA you will become part of our family of friends eager to enjoy all that MBGNA has to offer. Plus, you will receive exclusive **members-only** benefits:

- Free Conservatory admission all year round
- Subscription to our newsletter, *Friends*
- Free entrance to over 200 reciprocal gardens and arboreta all over North America
- 20% off all educational classes at the Botanical Gardens
- Invitations to members-only events
- Special discounts on ticketed events and bulb offerings
- 10% discount at the Spring Plant Sale and the Gift Shop

Your contribution will help us continue to care for gardens and plant collections, restore ecosystems, create public access and interpretation of natural areas, and offer more exciting arts and educational program opportunities.

Memberships

- **Student** (please include photocopy of ID) **\$20**
Basic Benefits
- **Individual \$45**
Basic Benefits
- **Family** (2 adults, plus children under 18, living in the same household) **\$55**
Basic Benefits
- **Sustaining \$100**
Basic benefits plus invitation to Curator's Tour
- **Sponsor \$250**
All benefits above plus perennial plant from Spring Plant Sale
- **Benefactor \$500**
All benefits above plus 2 free tickets for a ticketed event
- **Director's Circle \$1000**
All benefits above plus invitation to Director's Evening

If your company matches gifts, please include their form. Memberships are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

friends Winter 2009 / Vol. 5, No. 2

Continued from Cover

fundamental as vitamins or sleep. This core affect of mammals is shared by humans, first in games of peek-a-boo, then in hide and seek, spontaneous rough and tumble, embodied fantasy and fort building.

Play has probably been the most important factor in the evolution of social behavior among vertebrates...

Ashley Montagu

Focusing on the earth and its young, we must ask, what mutual exchange creates the best possibilities? How can those of us in the process of growing enhance multi-species living? How does caring for animals protect the lives of all species, particularly our own? Edward Hoagland explains what is missing when we employ authority and compulsion in dealing with children and other creatures: "In order to really enjoy a dog, one doesn't merely try to train him to be semi-human. The point of it is to open oneself to the possibility of becoming partly a dog."

Text messaging your 18- to 26-year-old supporters at your moment of victory marked a unique opportunity. The same forces your campaign unleashed can now enlist the technological skills of the young to use social networking for entrepreneurial greening. Civics curricula can engage middle and high school students suffering from what Kurt Hahn,



the founder of Outward Bound, called "the misery of unimportance." Crying for adults to make use of them, these young people can be major players in rebuilding schoolyards, conducting energy audits, identifying obstacles to free play, and mentoring younger children.

We underestimate our teenagers and undervalue their creative power. Young adults in the developing world with less education and technical skills are making significant contributions to solving social and environmental problems in their

own communities. Our students could identify local obstacles to universal access to recreation—whether these involve safety or transportation issues, a dearth of time and space, or the disinclination to play outside. Yet instead of lobbying for environmental justice and using their intelligence to preserve and recreate sanctuaries for free play, they are asked little more than to participate in giving money or cleaning up roadsides. Teens could be micro-financing their own projects for children with the support of agencies like Michigan's CommunityLink Foundation.

M UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Matthaei Botanical gardens
and Nichols arboretum

New **Renewing**

Name: _____

2nd Adult's name (Family or higher levels): _____

Mail to:
 MBGNA
 1800 N. Dixboro Rd.
 Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Fax credit card orders to:
 734-998-6205
Order by phone:
 734-647-7600

or join us online at:
mbgna.umich.edu

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Student** **Sustaining** **Director's Circle**
 Individual **Sponsor**
 Family **Benefactor**

Total \$

Payment: **Check made payable to: MBGNA**
 Visa **Mastercard** **Discover** **American Express**

Card # _____ **Exp. Date** _____

Cardholder Signature _____

For University Use Only

- Check** **Cash** **Credit Card**
 310447 AG BGA

Amount: \$ _____

Premium Value: \$ _____

Gift Amount: \$ _____

EID _____

Date _____

In “endless rows of individual houses, each opening out onto the same ribbon of sterile concrete,” the writer Bill McKibben finds “a sort of invasive individualism, a hyper-individualism that makes us a new species.” Yet at botanical gardens and parks we discover possibilities at the heart of every encounter of children with their landscape. They show how an early-years agenda chimes with an outdoor learning and play manifesto—one relevant to citizenship, geography and spiritual soundness.

Soothing identification with the cycles of season and mortality cannot be realized in the virtual. Stephen Talbott writes that “special effects wonder” does not lead to the same reverent curiosity that accompanies prolonged contact with nature. “The latter... grows from an awareness of one’s immediate connection to the phenomenon—from a sense that the inner essence of what one is looking at is somehow connected to the inner essence of oneself.” Friendships with animals matter; they can and should be bound up with the broader inquiry into childhood, play, and education.

To extend well-being throughout a lifetime, societies have to articulate why they care about outside play. A recent study from the University of Illinois found that children with attention hyperactivity disorder were better

able to focus after “green” walks compared to walks in other settings. Policy makers, city planners and landscape architects can learn from such research how to challenge some rock-hard assumptions. Too often, as former children ourselves, we believe we’ve been there—merely regarding the young as less complete versions of ourselves. “When adults seek to learn about and from children,” the sociologist Barrie Thorne tells us, “the challenge is to take the closely familiar and to render it strange.” Creative magic arises when children are allowed and even encouraged to explore freely. So many paths can be taken to personal identity!

For these reasons, play as a mode of experiencing emotion must be nurtured to persist into adult life. “The opposite of play,” states National Institute of Play founder Stuart Brown, “is not work. It is depression.” In *Homo Ludens* (1938), Johan Huizinga says play takes place in a dimension distinct from “ordinary’ life.” It creates “a second, poetic world alongside the world of nature.” With high stakes testing, we may be losing not just recess but also those psychic spaces where imagination and confidence grow.

Operating within schools and universities we need collaborative programs that look at

the places where children and adults learn best. The only way educators are going to create a good environment for children is through partnerships that enable our global village to understand the poet Gary Snyder’s words: “Nature is not a place to visit. It is home.”

President-elect Obama, you have our hopes up. In February you said, “We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” This winter we hope you’ll be the one the puppy’s waiting for on the grounds of the White House when snow falls.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Goodenough
Lecturer in Literature, Residential College,
University of Michigan

Parts of this letter appear in a special issue of *Encounter Magazine* featuring *Where Do the Children Play?* project, a film, website (www.michigantelevision.org/childrenplay), two companion volumes and outreach programs at the Ginsberg Center. WDCP? originated in 1998 with *Secret Spaces of Childhood* at the University of Michigan’s Residential College and Nichols Arboretum.

Elizabeth Goodenough co-edited with Mark Heberle and Naomi Sokoloff *Infant Tongues: The Voice of the Child in Literature* and with Mitzi Myers a special issue of *The Lion & the Unicorn* on “Children’s Literature and Violence.” Her other books include *Secret Spaces of Childhood*, *A Place for Play: A Companion Volume to the Michigan Television Film*, and *Under Fire: Childhood in the Shadow of War*. 🌱

Great Deal for Teachers!

Schedule a docent-led tour with your class anytime from January through March, and you’ll receive the CD “Children of the Earth: Environmental songs for kids of all ages,” by Joe Reilly. The music features Joe’s fun and educational songs, wonderful music, and a great batch of back-up singers—kids! The CD will also be for sale in the MBGNA shop for \$15. Come in and take a listen! For more information about the CD or Joe Reilly, visit his website at www.joereilly.org. 🌱



Get Involved – Volunteer!

Tara Griffith

Pre-registration is required for all of the volunteer activities. Contact me at 734-647-8528 or tgriffit@umich.edu.

Inspire Curiosity – Docent!

Do you remember school field trips to museums and parks? Weren't they more fun than sitting in a classroom? At MBGNA, our docents create that spark for kids of all ages through our school and youth programming. During the academic year, docents work in small teams to lead guided interpretive programs for school groups and also lead evening and weekend activities for youth and family events. Many of our docents say that it is the unique combination of personal interest coupled with educational development that inspires them to share what they love and learn with others. We invite you to join us in our mission to foster a love of nature and environmental stewardship in our young visitors by attending our 2009 Docent Training.

As a docent you will:

-  Gather in-depth knowledge of the outdoor trails and Conservatory at MBGNA
-  Develop your knowledge of basic botany and ecosystems
-  Develop skills in interpretation and active learning
-  Lead school age children in programs that emphasize discovery and wonder while meeting the Michigan Science Education standards
-  Lead youth, families and adults in activities that promote environmental enjoyment and stewardship
-  Share your enthusiasm & knowledge of the natural world with learners of all ages!

Last year, docents contributed 1,847 hours of volunteer service to this vital outreach effort!

Docent Information Sessions

**Tuesday, January 13, 10 - 11:30 am or
Wednesday, January 14, 10 - 11:30 am**

Learn more about how to become a docent, what is required, and have the opportunity to ask questions. **Attendance required before taking the Docent class.**

Docent Class

**Mondays, January 26, February 2, 9, 16,
March 2, and 9, 9 am - noon**

This class will prepare you to become a docent. You will learn basic botany and ecology, specifics about the Conservatory and its plants, the art of interpretation, and much more. **Free. Pre-requisite: Information Session - Docents.**

Orientations - NEW for 2009

General Volunteer Orientations (Pick one only)

**Saturdays, February 7, March 7, April 4, 10 – 11 am
Wednesdays, February 11, March 11, 5:30 – 6:30 pm**

Learn the basics of volunteering at MBGNA. Enjoy a tour of the facilities. All new volunteers need to attend one session before starting to volunteer.

Gaffield Children's Garden Volunteer Orientation

Friday March 27, 10 am - noon

We are delighted to introduce new opportunities for volunteer involvement in our new and growing Gaffield Children's Garden. Discover how you can help maintain and develop this new garden area designed especially with little folks in mind! A guided tour will also be provided.

On the Horizon

Spring Plant Sale Volunteer Orientation

Saturday, May 2, 9 - 11 am or Monday, May 4 6 - 7:30 pm.

It takes hundreds of volunteers doing many jobs to make our spring plant sale such a blooming success! It also takes some advanced training to make sure that our volunteers are well prepared to greet the crowds. Be sure to visit our website this spring to submit your volunteer application and register for an orientation.

Garden Training for Ambassadors

Saturday, May 16 9 am – noon

Check website or next newsletter for details.

Work Days

Volunteer Eco Workdays

**At the Arb: Saturdays, January 10, February 14, March 14 and April 11
At the Gardens: Saturdays, January 17, February 21, March 21, April 11
9 am – noon**

Join MBGNA staff in working to remove invasive plant species from the Arb or Gardens to promote native plant growth. We typically mix a little bit of hard work with education about the site and restoration ecology work here and in the local area. Dress to work outside! Snacks and tools provided, meet at the Reader Center for Arb workdays and in the west lobby at Matthaei.

Garlic Mustard Challenge Workday

Saturday, April 25

Volunteers from the City of Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation, the local chapter of the Stewardship Network, and MBGNA will join in the Garlic Mustard Challenge! Our Natural Areas Stewards will lead this community wide effort! Garlic mustard is an aggressive invasive plant which can quickly overrun an area, choking out natives. There will also be some beautiful native wildflowers to enjoy at both sites!

Volunteers should meet in the west lobby at Matthaei for orientation. Dress to work outside. Snacks and tools will be provided.

Matthaei Botanical Gardens – 9 am - noon

Natural Areas Steward, Aunita Erskine, leads the battle in Kirk Woods.

Horner Woods – 1 - 4 pm

Natural Areas Steward, Dr. Sylvia Taylor, and members of the Michigan Botanical Club lead volunteers in this beautiful woodland.

Making Connections with Children

Liz Glynn

The halls, Conservatory and trails at Matthaei Botanical Gardens are filling again with the sounds of children's voices. During the school week, buses full of children empty out and students pour into the lobby.

Kids line the steps in small groups, waiting for their docents to take them on a guided exploration of the Conservatory and the Sue Reichert Discovery Trail or the Sam Graham Trees Trail. Kids are eager to learn and are ready to soak up new experiences. They let us know if they've visited us before, and if so, will tell us all about the Venus flytrap or the Massasauga snake "in a box" in the lobby.

It's a joy to work with children in this setting. Walking with them on the trails, or in the Conservatory, I learn quite a lot from them. They observe the colors, textures, and smells of plants, make comparisons and share what they know about the environment. We're inspired by the children's sense of wonder.

There is a lot of excitement this fall with our school bus program. We are emphasizing the connections between MBGNA's unique style of interpretation of nature and Michigan's K-7 grade level content expectations. School systems and teachers are under increasing pressure to justify that a school field trip is worth the time away from classroom learning and standardized test goals. That is one reason we've made it a priority this fall to connect programs at MBGNA and science standards, and make this connection more apparent and accessible to teachers. Our school programs are designed to meet the guidelines for Michigan's K-7 Grade level content expectations (GLCEs) for science, while taking a hike on the trails or a walk through the Conservatory. Educators can use MBGNA's website (www.mbgna.umich.edu) to learn about school program topics, key vocabulary terms and concepts which address grade-level content goals. Perhaps equally important, we emphasize that school programs at MBGNA provide children with an experiential style of learning.

What children learn on our trails and in the Conservatory has a positive impact on them and it reinforces the lessons taught in the classroom. These experiences also create lasting memories.

Docents at MBGNA are instrumental in achieving our goals. They cover a wide range of plant and ecosystem information in a fun, informal setting and engage children at the child's level. Children make observations, ask questions and are provided the space for silence and reflection. Sometimes more can be learned during these quiet times than an entire talk by their leader.

Children learn about the fundamentals of ecology, biomes of the world and the functions of plant parts. Basic ecology and botany lessons are connected to children's everyday lives. They learn about bananas, chocolate, cattails, sunflowers and other familiar plants. Connecting a concept to the familiar reinforces the information and makes it easier to absorb.

MBGNA provides a learning opportunity that can't be found in the classroom. When we talk about leaves and photosynthesis, the children understand the power of the

sun by feeling the warmth on their hands and faces outdoors. What better way to learn about emergent plants than to walk up to them? We explore the pond, get up really close to the cattails, and discover the pond weed. Children really grasp the differences in biomes when they feel the moisture and temperature changes in the three biomes in the Conservatory. Our programs provide a very balanced, holistic approach to learning about the environment.

We are developing training materials for docents and resource materials for teachers which help close the circle of learning from the classroom to visiting MBG and returning to the classroom with new knowledge. In the future we plan to create pre- and post- activity sheets that can be downloaded by teachers for their classrooms, and we hope to develop interactive activities for children on our website. These web-based activities will be closely tied to the outdoor or conservatory experience.

This is an exciting time for MBGNA and for children's programs. There is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for creating more opportunities to engage children and families and provide children with the tools to become environmental stewards. 🌱



MUNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Matthaei Botanical gardens
and Nichols arboretum

Caring for Nature, Enriching Life

For information

734 - 647-7600
mbgna.umich.edu

Matthaei Botanical Gardens

1800 N. Dixboro Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Nichols Arboretum

1610 Washington Heights
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

U-M Regents

Julia Donovan Darlow, Ann Arbor
Laurence B. Deitch, Bingham Farms
Olivia P. Maynard, Goodrich
Rebecca McGowan, Ann Arbor
Andrea Fischer Newman, Ann Arbor
Andrew C. Richner, Grosse Pointe Park
S. Martin Taylor, Grosse Pointe Farms
Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor
Mary Sue Coleman (*ex officio*)



Printed on 100% recycled fiber, with 100% / 50% (inside / covers) post consumer content. Processed chlorine free, using non-oil-based inks.

Non-Profit
Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Ann Arbor, MI
Permit No. 144

Date Sensitive Material

Children and Nature Ask the Experts

Q: How can I introduce my children to nature?

A: Get outside! Explore with your kids. Follow where their curiosity leads. Encourage them to get down in the grass or weeds and watch bugs. Allow them to pull flowers apart to examine their intricate parts. Watch hummingbirds flit amongst the flowers. Plant different seeds and watch how they grow. Cut open fruits and vegetables to explore their interiors. (This was my personal favorite biology lab because the results could be eaten!)

Ask questions. What do you think the butterfly is doing? Why do baby corn plants look so different from baby beans? If your children seem particularly interested in one aspect of nature over the others, borrow or purchase books on the subject, explore online for more information, gently guide and instruct and learn with them.

Expect to get muddy or dirty, so dress accordingly. Give them the freedom to explore, touch, smell, listen and look. But do so safely: familiarize yourself with the appearance and preferred habitat of the Massasauga rattlesnake (Michigan's only poisonous snake), poison ivy



and poison sumac, as those are things you don't want them to examine too closely. (Google, field books, etc. are good sources to consult.)

You can do this anywhere: in your own yard, at school, in a park, and, of course, at MBGNA. We have child-centered activities for the Conservatory, Sue Reichert Discovery Trail, Sam Graham Trees and Trails, and the display gardens. Just stop by the front desk and ask.

Let us help. We have educational programs geared towards families; children and parents learning together.

Above all, have fun! 🌱