

About CCFPD

The forest preserves are great places to visit year-round, with loads to see and do in the spring.



Make more of your spring with CCFPD

- Visit the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Gardens at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve for the beautiful arrangements of flowers and to see the Koi fish in the newly renovated pond/waterfall.
- Take a bike ride on the Kickapoo Rail Trail.
- Listen to frogs at wetlands throughout the forest preserves.
- Pick up a Spring Wildflower guide for Rayburn Purnell Woods at Lake of the Woods. You can also print one off here: <https://www.ccfpd.org/Museum-Education/Self-Guided-Adventures>

What's Inside

Spring is a wonderful time of the year to go outside to explore all the changes that are taking place and watch everything come to life after the winter.

This booklet is full of ideas and activities to guide you as you explore nature, whether you are at one of the forest preserves or in your own backyard.

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Butterflies

With spring here, butterflies are starting to re-appear. Some butterflies overwinter as eggs, caterpillars, or pupa, often in leaf litter. Others overwinter as adult butterflies, finding dry areas in building cracks or hollow trees. Some actually migrate to a warmer areas, like the Monarchs.

Here are just a few of the butterflies you can find in early spring. Can you find them all?



Monarch: migrates to Mexico in the winter and comes back north as early as April.

They can be found in prairies and open fields.



Cabbage Whites: overwinter as a chrysalis and emerge as a butterfly in early spring.

They can be found in a variety of habitats including prairies, fields, along roadsides and gardens.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail: They spend the winter as a chrysalis and will emerge as butterflies in early spring.

They can be found in prairies and home gardens.

Name the Animal Baby

Many animals have their young as the days are getting warmer, and plenty of food is available. Can you match the animal to the name it is called as a baby?

Answers on the bottom of page 5.



Red Fox



Cottontail Rabbit



Opossum

Catch a Breath

In the spring, plants are starting to grow. They breathe in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen. You can see this happening by trying out this experiment.

What you will need:

- A patch of grass or a plant outside in the sun.
- Two glass jars



1. Place a clean, empty glass jar over a patch of grass or a plant that is in the sun.
2. Place the other jar over concrete or asphalt.
3. Leave the jars for an hour and then return to examine them. The inside of the jar over the plant will be coated with droplets of water while the other jar should be mostly dry inside.

Explore Nature With Your Senses

Spring is here! Every season has its own sights, sounds, and smells. Try out four of your senses outdoors this spring.

Sight



How many different colors of flowers can you find?



Virginia Bluebells



Trillium



Bloodroot



Smell

Smell flowers.



Do all flowers have a scent?

Does the scent remind you of something?

Does it smell sweet?
Stinky? Good? Bad?



Be careful that you aren't smelling flowers that have visitors like bees.



Migrating Birds

Birds that migrated to warmer areas for the winter are flying back to their breeding grounds this spring. Some may continue flying past Illinois but make a stopover to rest before continuing on. Have you seen or heard any of these birds?



Eastern Phoebe

They can be found in wooded areas especially near water.

What to listen for: Males sing their name, "*fee-beeee*"



Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

They can be found in wooded areas.

What to listen for: A high pitched, sharp "*spee spee*".



Indigo Bunting

They can be found along the edges of woods and fields.

What to listen for: They love to sing, and can sing as many as 200 songs per hour! Their song can differ but some phrases they repeat are "*what! what! where? where? see it! see it!*"



Sandhill Crane

Around 20,000 sandhill cranes migrate through Illinois from mid-February to mid-April. You may see them resting in wetlands.

What to listen for: loud, rattling bugle calls. They can be heard up to 2.5 miles away.

Celebrate Earth Day

Be a planet protector; here are some ways to do that!



Go outside and play! Take a hike, play in your backyard or go to your local park. Being outside will help you understand and appreciate the environment.

Using energy wisely is always very important. Save energy by turning off the lights when leaving the room or the house.



Water is usually cleaned before it is piped into your home, and water is often cleaned after it leaves your house. Cleaning water takes energy, chemicals, time and money. One way to conserve water is shutting it off when brushing your teeth.

Learn more about the world. Read books about the earth and visit websites. Share the information you learn with other people.

