

ECOEDGES

*A Publication of the Ellwood H. May
Environmental Park Association of Sheboygan County, Inc.*

Use snowshoes to see all Maywood has to offer this winter

Snowshoeing is a great way to explore nature in winter, allowing people to access places that are difficult to experience in warmer months. Although the popularity of snowshoeing at Maywood has grown tremendously, we have never had marked trails. With deep snow under foot, the snowshoer can go just about anywhere without harming the snow covered plants or leaving a permanent scar on the land, and people can more easily slip through tight spots than when wearing skis.

In 1974 I began cross-country skiing, doing exactly what the name implies. Exploring woods, bogs, and many other habitats by gliding my way through deep, virgin snow, my skis provided great joy especially on downhill runs. As cross-country skiing popularity increased, so did marked trails, groomed trails, and eventually skating trails. Getting off the beaten path was exchanged for speed and performance, and trails went from simple tracks made by the skier, to major thoroughfares.

When people have inquired about snowshoeing at Maywood, I always responded that snowshoers can go wherever they like, but stay off the groomed ski trails so as not to damage the track. However, this year I will be flagging some snowshoe routes that will provide an interesting look at Maywood that is definitely off the beaten path. These trails will be seasonal, evaporating with warm weather and disappearance of snow. Even though your chance to enjoy these routes will only be for a couple of months, you may find evidence of wildlife on your meanderings that a Spandex clad skier would likely never see.

So this winter, plan on snowshoeing to get you to hidden spaces at a slow enough pace to experience all that winter at Maywood has to offer.

By Dave Kuckuk



Photos provided

Last year the OWLS group found many interesting things to investigate while snowshoeing through Maywood.

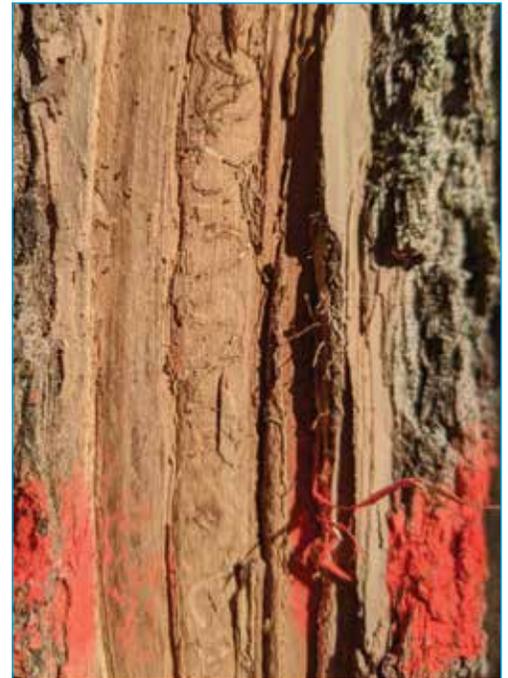


Maywood is helping with Emerald Ash Borer research



To assist in Emerald Ash Borer research, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be harvesting about 200 ash trees from Maywood this winter. Trees to be harvested are marked with orange paint and metal tags, and some have patches of bark removed revealing EAB galleries.

Photos by Sue Bohme



As many of you know, there is a tiny insect that is having major impact on our ash trees. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a metallic green color in its adult stage, but it is its cream colored larva that does extensive damage to ash trees just below the bark. The symptoms are easily recognizable with defoliation beginning at the top of the tree, bark that is flaking off, and sprouts emerging at the base of the tree. The infected tree will likely have 1/8” D-shaped holes in the bark as well.

Maywood currently has large stands of ash trees, many, if not most, are infected with EAB. Research is being conducted through the U.S. Department of Agriculture to investigate possible solutions to this devastating issue. To assist in this research, the USDA will be harvesting about 200 ash trees from Maywood this winter when the

ground is solid enough for heavy equipment. If you walk the trails in the southwestern part of Maywood on both sides of the Pigeon River you will see trees marked with orange paint and metal tags. You might also notice that some trees have patches of bark removed which reveals the EAB galleries.

Once the trees are cut, they will be removed and hauled to Michigan where the research is being conducted. Since these trees would have been a detriment to park visitors using our trails, it was necessary to remove the trees. Hopefully the use of these trees in research will help produce a remedy to stop the spread of EAB. Many of the ash trees that are well away from trails will be left, serving as habitat for cavity nesting wildlife.

Although tree removal is something we never like to do at Maywood,

we’re hopeful this project will make Maywood visitors safer from falling branches and increase the possibility for an EAB solution. We have already begun replanting these areas and have plans for future planting. Just like all of the habitats at Maywood, the areas of ash removal are evolving into new habitats due to a very successful invasive species. This is one of many examples of how our natural environment is always changing, requiring a keen eye to predict the outcome.

By David Kuckuk

Earth Miles 4 Maywood got people moving

From September 1-30 people logged Earth Miles 4 Maywood. Miles on foot. Miles on bikes. Miles in canoes. Even miles up and down stairs! It was truly inspiring to hear about the activities that had people outdoors enjoying time in nature. We sincerely hope the event will motivate everyone to continue making those nature connections throughout the year.

Maywood's first virtual event was a huge success and raised over \$16,000 (net) for our community programs and park projects. We are very thankful to everyone who sponsored and participated in this year's event. Your support will help us continue to provide modified programming now and return to our in-person events when it's safe to do so.

A big thank you to the members of Team Sargento. The team had an impressive 104 participants join us this year.

We would like to extend special recognition to everyone who raised and gave pledges for the event. Jeff Meyer, who is a longtime Earth Ride participant, raised over \$2,300 in pledges this year. When combined with his years of Earth Ride pledges, Jeff has raised over \$61,000 in support of Maywood. Thank you Jeff!

Our event sponsors also contributed to this year's success. Thank you to Event Sponsor Dan Merkel; Platinum Level Sponsors Kohler Co. and MUTH Mirror Systems LLC; Gold Sponsor Van Horn Automotive; Silver Sponsors Miller Engineers & Scientists, the



Photo by Richard Soerens

Janna Soerens and her husband Richard each completed 100 miles during the Miles 4 Maywood challenge.

Plymouth Review & Sheboygan Beacon, and Wolf's Cycle & Fitness; and Bronze Sponsors Greg Monson – Edward Jones and Lakeside Pepsi Cola. Thank you also to the individuals who contributed door prizes that were awarded throughout the month.

While we do not know yet what 2021 will hold for the Earth Ride or Earth Miles, we are looking forward to creating nature connections anyway we can.

By Angela Doell

The advantages of a nature-based facility this year

No matter our wishful thinking to “normalize” life, the increasing cases of coronavirus have affected attempts to bring back in-person learning in schools. Canceled field trips have made this a much quieter fall than usual at Maywood. However, parents have recognized the benefits of outdoor classes during a pandemic of this type. This has resulted in increased enrollment in our preschool.

Parents had to quickly dig out cold weather clothing for their kids as everything takes place outside and early morning temps in October were into the 30s. Despite our unwillingness as adults to accept the colder temps, the preschoolers are far more interested in playing, learning, running, singing, and climbing to be discouraged by a

temperature drop.

Holding outdoor meetings in a beautiful setting, providing self-guided educational hikes, and using nature as a safe recreational alternative are just three adjustments individuals and groups have made with Maywood as the right location. If you're looking for a very convenient spot to explore, meet with a few friends, or observe nature's seasonal changes, Maywood is the place to be.

The Ecology Center's is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., but the beauty of our 135 acres is yours to enjoy seven days per week.

By Dave Kuckuk



Keeping OWLS Engaged

OWLS (Older, Wiser, Livelier, Scholars) is a group of adult learners that have been regularly meeting for several years. The group usually scours Maywood's acreage learning about its flora and fauna. They also explore other topics like astronomy, survival skills, and just about anything that relates to nature or the outdoors. Participant's safety has been the primary decision to greatly limit our in-person learning. What has made these classes so successful has been the array of topics and the hands-on learning. But how do you continue to engage folks during a pandemic?

Maywood Director, David Kuckuk sends weekly email posts to 50+ OWLS enrolled. The email could be a scavenger hunt, a highlighted trail section with seasonal discoveries, a natural phenomenon they need to investigate, or an assignment that they can choose to do at their convenience. In this manner, participants can choose to work with others or independently, all while having access to a seasoned naturalist via email.

Certainly, there is no substitute for in-person learning, but these independent investigations can often lead to further investigations since people can work at their convenience and at their pace. There are also no requirements or obligations from participants, there are no grades, and no assignments to turn in. It's just fun way to learn about the natural world.

If you would like to be part of our OWLS and receive the weekly posts of exciting natural things you can experience, simply send your email address to maywood@sheboyganwi.gov and we'll put you on the list. Should you decide you're no longer interested, just let us know and we'll remove you from our email list. There is no cost, although we greatly appreciate your donations. You will also be notified as soon as we plan to meet in-person again, but until then feel free to use our weekly posts to open a new world into nature and the outdoors.

By Dave Kuckuk



Photo by Angie Doell

OWLS may be learning independently this year, but always have access to Dave Kuckuk, a seasoned naturalist, via email.

**The Ecology Center will be closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 3.
Park & trails will be open 6 am–10 pm daily.**



The Leading Edge

Here's a grab-bag of items we have been working on since the last edition.

The search committee for Maywood's new director will be posting the job description in November. We want to hire the new director in March so we'll have a month overlap. Dave can do an unhurried orientation prior to his April 22 Earth Day retirement. Dave originally wanted to do 50 programs to celebrate the 50th Earth Day, but Covid-19 trampled those plans.



**Ed Abell, President
Ellwood H. May
Environmental
Park Association of
Sheboygan County, Inc.**

At the beginning of 2020, a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed upon between Maywood and the City of Sheboygan. There was a new City Administrator hired in 2020 as well. I reached out to Todd Wolf and he assured me that the new MOU will be honored. We also established a new list of maintenance items at Maywood that can be prioritized and considered for the city budget. We also agreed that we should touch base every quarter to review the list.



Photos provided

The sandwich board outside the Ecology Center highlights special hikes.

2020 has been a tough year. All of Maywood's traditional fundraising programs were canceled. However, Dave, Angie and Barb spearheaded Earth Miles 4 Maywood and the Fall Breakfast Basket fundraisers. Both were brand new and, in the case of Earth Miles 4 Maywood, required learning how to run a virtual event. I wish to commend our staff and the volunteers that helped make these programs possible. Also, a special thank you to Barb for creating the sandwich board that highlights special hikes at Maywood and her work making the Gift Shop Covid-19 friendly.

Thank you to all our members for your patience and support through these difficult times.

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Environmental Park Staff

Park Caretaker: Chad Prisinger

Our Mission

To foster environmental stewardship
through educational and outdoor experiences
that connect our community with the natural world.



Find something for everyone at Maywood's Nature Store

Check out our monthly specials! November is Young Naturalist's month in the Maywood Nature Store. We're featuring nature discovery books for kids of all ages, including *Frogs, Toads and Turtles*; *Birds, Nests and Eggs*; *The Icky Bug Counting Book*; *Cutest Critter*; *Backyard, Night Sky and Woods*; and *The Butterfly Alphabet Book*.

In November, when you buy a children's book, you'll get \$2 off a finger puppet. Choose a black bear, shark, otter, butterfly, deer or one of the many other woodland creature finger puppets we have to offer. A great holiday gift for the young naturalists in your life.

In December save \$2 on all guide books, quick guides and folding guides. A great gift for nature lovers of all ages.

The Nature Store is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

All proceeds from Nature Store sales support Maywood and Maywood programs.

By Barb Sorcic



Bird Houses

Guidebooks

Biking Jerseys

WALKING STICKS

Maywood Maple Syrup

Nature-Themed Books & Toys

AND MORE