



FRIENDS *of* Retzer

FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER

SPRING, 2020 NEWSLETTER

**** Annual meeting scheduled for Monday, April 27th is cancelled due to mandated coronavirus restrictions ****

Recent Winter Events

Waukesha JanBoree – A Friday night snowstorm brought several hundred residents out to Retzer on Saturday, January 18th for an afternoon of hiking, tracking, and snowshoeing as part of Waukesha's annual winter celebration. Ongoing planetarium shows, center exhibits, craft tables, and hand-on nature learning tables offered indoor fun. Free hot chocolate was available to warm everyone.



Above: Satyendra and Jessica from Wauwatosa enjoy snowshoeing through the wooded trails
Board naturalists Elaine and Kathy share about the Friends with Karina and Jacob from Milwaukee

Below: Layla (front), Emmy and Nora from Lake Country get to know Tom the gerbil
Charlie and Audrey from Watertown meet Maizy the corn snake and Board naturalist Mary Kay



Wild Winter Night – Over 500 residents (a new event record!) enjoyed an evening of wild winter adventure at Retzer on Saturday, February 8th. Fan favorites included candlelight hikes, guided owl prowls, free snowshoe rental, and a blazing campfire with hot cocoa floats. In addition, the Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium offered a special winter show. Friends’ families enjoyed free admission to this sponsored “all things bird” theme event.

Retzer’s Spring Ecology Workshop – For those interested in backyard habitats, home composting, green living, container gardening, planting for pollinators, and invasive worm control (yes, they’re here!), the half-day workshop on Saturday, March 14th was certainly destined to be the place to be! Unfortunately, the nationwide coronavirus health issue forced cancellation of the event...

Upcoming Spring Events at Retzer

EARTH WEEK -- Sunday, April 19th through Saturday, April 25th: Weeklong activities were scheduled to include a recreational tree climbing activity, tyke hike, green home makeover presentation, captive bred animal presentation, wildlife photography presentation, morning bird hike, and Earth Day candlelight hike. All formal Earth Week activities have been **cancelled**...

ANNUAL MEETING and CHILI DINNER – Our Friends of Retzer Annual Business Meeting and Chili Dinner, scheduled for on Monday, April 27th, has also been **cancelled**. This year’s meeting would have included an encore presentation by Waukesha County Conservation Biologist, Julia Robson, regarding the successful implementation of the county’s citizen science program, funded this past year by a grant from the Friends of Retzer.

SPRING NATURAL HISTORY HIKE – Ice Age Trail at Monches Park: Experience spring wildflowers, returning migratory birds and Kettle Moraine ecology on this informative guided hike. Education Naturalist Emeritus Larry Kascht has *tentatively scheduled* this small group Ice Age Trail venture for **Saturday morning, May 2nd**. If interested, please call or email Larry for more information (ljkascht@hotmail.com or 262-853-6548). Prepare to dress for the forecast, wear good walking shoes, and bring water, walking stick, camera, binoculars, and insect repellent.

Maintaining Central America Connections

BELIZE/GUATEMALA: Needless to say, it has been a difficult spring for travel abroad programming. Nevertheless, a hearty group of ten Friends of Retzer members completed a wonderful 11-day “Rainforests, Ruins, and Reefs” tour of Belize and Guatemala this past February. With the coronavirus situation yet to be revealed, only chigger bites stood in the way of a risk-free, care-free venture. The first four days of the trip were hosted by *Programme for Belize* naturalist guides, who provided informative tours of their field stations, the Crooked Tree National Wildlife Refuge (featuring the hemisphere’s largest bird, the Jabiru stork), Belize’s lowland tropical forest, an undeveloped Mayan archeological site, and the prominent restored Mayan village at Lamanai. The group then journeyed inland to tour the cave region of Belize’s Maya Mountains and the awesome Guatemalan Mayan ruins at Tikal. The trip concluded with three days on Ambergris Caye in the Caribbean, where the group snorkeled on Belize’s famed barrier reef. (*see photo set below*)

Set 1: Programme for Belize naturalists, Vladimir and Marcos, host our group at la Milpa Field Station; Marcos guides us on a hike to an undeveloped Mayan ruin site.

Set 2: The group toured Lamanai archaeological site and climbed to the top of Belize’s second highest Mayan temple; Cathy Ward and Bev Zyga savor the tropical forest view from atop the structure.

Set 3: Touring Barton Creek Cave by canoe in Belize’s prominent karst region.

Set 4: The group poses before one of the tallest Mayan temples at Guatemala’s Tikal National Park

Set 5: Snorkeling on the coral reef amid nurse sharks and southern sting rays at Hol Chan National Park

Set 6: A vermilion flycatcher, massive Jabiru stork, and black headed trogon were high on our bird list





CUBA (April) – This trip is cancelled/postponed due to coronavirus travel restrictions

ECUADOR (May) – This trip is cancelled/postponed indefinitely due to coronavirus restrictions

COSTA RICA (August) – This trip is cancelled/postponed due to coronavirus travel restrictions

Membership Renewal Reminder – Reminder of Modest Changes in 2020

As mentioned in the previous Winter/2019-20 Newsletter, the Friends Board has approved minor membership rate changes in 2020 and assigned new names to the adjusted membership levels.

OLD Membership Levels:	NEW Membership Levels:
\$ 20.00 Hummingbird (Individual)	\$ 30.00 “Individual”
\$ 25.00 Robin (Family)	\$ 40.00 “Family”
\$ 50.00 Cardinal (Donor)	\$ 50.00 “Contributor”
\$ 75.00 Owl (Donor)	\$ 75.00 “Supporter”
\$ 100+ Eagle (Donor)	\$ 100.00 “Sustainer”
	\$ 250.00 “Benefactor”
	\$ _____ “other”

As always, if you need to renew your Friends of Retzer membership, you can do so by mailing a check to Retzer Nature Center, or by stopping at the center’s front desk, or by paying online via our website: www.FriendsofRetzer.org. Your membership truly helps support vital projects and programs at the Nature Center, and provides discount benefits for everyone on the list. Thanks!

Newsletter Mailing Preference

This is the first edition of a seasonal newsletter which is being sent out in two ways based on member preference and response: 1) either as a hard copy mailing to those of you who do not have email addresses or have indicated a desire to continue receiving the newsletter in traditional hard copy form; **or** 2) as an electronic document sent to your email address.

If you have received this spring newsletter the way you like it -- as mailed hard copy or as emailed document -- great! On the other hand, if you’d like to change your format from mailed hard copy to emailed document, or from emailed document to hard copy, now is the time to let newsletter editor David Block know. Just send him an email message indicating your desired change, OK? (You’ll find his email link below.)

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