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TROY TIMES

Go green this Earth Day with Troy nature programs

By: [Brendan Losinski](#) | Troy Times | Published April 9, 2022

TROY — Troy-area residents have a variety of options this Earth Day to enjoy nature or learn something new about the environment.

The Stage Nature Center in Troy offers numerous programs and activities for people to get outside for the holiday, which will take place on Friday, April 22.

"We have programming here year-round, and we are open year-round, so we hope people don't just enjoy nature on one day a year," said Debbie Williams, the lead naturalist at the Stage Nature Center.

The Nature Center will observe Earth Day with a nature walk and exploration stations set up outside.

"We have, on Saturday, April 23, an Earth Day celebration," said Williams. "There are four different start times. Basically, we will have stations and tables set up, if the weather cooperates, out around the outside of the nature center. People can go out in small groups and explore different activities and stations. We might have a table talking about recycling or talking about local plants. The library will have a table, and they will talk about their own programs. There may be a short hike out on the trails. ... We will have some things that adults will like to look at, but we want everything accessible to children as well."

The program is for ages 5 and up. It will cost \$8 for Nature Center members and \$10 for nonmembers. All programs at the Stage Nature Center require registration, which can be done by going to www.stagenaturecenter.org.

"Also happening around that time is a program about squirrels on Friday, April 22, from 6:30-8 p.m.," continued Williams. "It's called 'Nuts about Squirrels' and is for ages 8 and up. The fee is \$4 for Nature Center members and \$6 for non-members. ... From 7:30-9 p.m. on Saturday, April 23, we will also have a Woodcock Walk. It is for ages 7 to adult, and the fee is \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. There is a bird called the American woodcock, and around this time of year, they have a strange courtship display that they do. We always have them out in one of our meadows doing this, so we will have information on them and a hike out to try and spot some woodcocks."

For those who want to use Earth Day to do something that helps the environment, the nature center will offer a chance to clean up its hiking trails and keep an eye out for harmful invasive species on the grounds.



In honor of Earth Day, the Troy Public Library is presenting a program called "Climate Change as of 2022: Simple, Serious, Solvable with Chris Edwards" on Thursday, April 21. Edwards, pictured, is the former chief meteorologist for Fox 2 News.

Photo provided by Connie Doherty

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"On Saturday, April 30, and Saturday, May 21, both from 9-noon, we will have an invasive species removal program," said Williams. "There is no fee to attend, and it's for ages 14 and up. We will be working to remove invasive plants and try to clear and repair any damage to the nature trails. This helps the environment because it helps our native plants to grow and also keeps the nature center in good order."



The Troy Community Center, located at 3179 Livernois Road, will host a program presented by the Troy Public Library at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, in Room 304, called "Climate Change as of 2022: Simple, Serious, Solvable with Chris Edwards." Edwards, the former chief meteorologist for Fox 2 News, will host a presentation about climate change and what people can do at a local level to fight it.

"We're really thrilled to have Chris Edwards here," remarked Connie Doherty, the library's head of adult services. "People in metro Detroit know him and trust him, and he has a long career in meteorology, so with Earth Day coming he will be taking a science-based look at how climate change can affect our local area. I like this, because it isn't an abstract approach but it says how this topic can affect our own lives."

Those interested can register at troypl.librarycalendar.com/event/climate-change-2022-simple-serious-solvable-chris-edwards. More information is available by calling (248) 524-3560. There is no cost, and it is open to everyone.

"I believe he will be doing a video or PowerPoint presentation, and then he will open it up to questions at the end," Doherty said. "I think it's a great chance to have the benefit of Chris' experience. He has made a study of this issue for many years, so he is very knowledgeable, so he will make sure everything is based on facts and science. I think people will get a lot out of learning how they can address this issue on a local level. It's not just doom and gloom; he is talking about how the trajectory of this planet can be changed. He is always very positive."

Although the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department has no Earth Day program this year near Troy, they will offer people plenty of programs this month to study or enjoy the environment and wildlife. The Red Oaks Nature Center, located at 30300 Hales St. in Madison Heights, is offering a program called Bat Chat. It will take place 8:30-9:30 p.m. on Friday, April 22, and Saturday, April 23. The program is suitable for all ages and costs \$6 per person. Preregistration with payment is required. Call (248) 858-0916 weekdays to register. Bringing a blanket or folding chairs is encouraged.

As bats have returned from their wintering grounds, attendees can learn about how different Michigan bats have spent the winter and listen for bat echolocation sounds on an echometer touch device that brings high-frequency sounds into the range of human hearing.

"Some of the migratory bats include the red bat and hoary bat. There are more common bats that hibernate in our area, such as the big brown bat, which can live up to 19 years," explained Parks Naturalist Benjamin Prowse. "Even with the weather we've had in the last few weeks, we've had some flying insects emerge, so by the time of the program there is a high likelihood the bats will be out and active. We will use the echometer touch device, which puts their sound into something visible so we can see when they are near."

Prowse added that bats, once regarded as frightening or a menace, are becoming more popular as the public learns more about them.

"We try to do lots of bat programs in the late spring and early summer," he said. "This program is run two nights in a row because the previous ones have been so popular. This one will be a little different, since we will allow the bats to come to us at the nature center. Bats have had a pretty rough go of it lately between white-nose syndrome and climate change. We have come a long way in the last 50 years talking to people about how bats aren't scary or a menace. We love showing people the better aspects of bats. People are coming around on them. A single bat can eat 1,000 mosquito-sized insects in a single hour. They can have a huge impact on pest control. We hope to get more people to understand these numbers and facts, like 99% of bats don't have rabies."

Williams said that people should enjoy being outdoors and helping the planet throughout the year but that Earth Day is a great chance to rediscover how enriching that can be — especially coming out of COVID-19.

"I think people have discovered being outdoors much more during the pandemic," she said. "We saw an uptick during the pandemic. I think Earth Day is a good opportunity to take some time to appreciate what we have and focus attention on how we take care of the Earth. Everything we utilize to keep us alive comes from the Earth, so we need to take care of it."