



# natural CONNECTIONS

Spring  
2009

Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves and Natural Resources

issue 5

## Nature Adventure Camp

**39181** Monday, August 3 - Friday, August 7  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Ages 10 - 12 • \$150  
Pre-camp is available 7:30 - 9 a.m.: Post-camp is 4 - 5:30 p.m.

(Additional fees apply for Pre and Post camp) Looking for adventure? Discover the Nature Preserves of Mecklenburg County. We'll go fishing, hiking, canoeing, and camp over night! All activities will begin at Reedy Creek Nature Center.

## Summer Science Camps

9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Ages rising grades 2nd -5th • \$250

Through collaborative efforts with Reedy Creek Nature Preserve, Discovery Place, Inc. offers summer camps for June through August 2009 at Reedy Creek Nature Center. We are very excited to offer specialty science camps that allow participants to explore science in a fun and hands-on way, using the spectacular 700 acre nature preserve as our classroom. We look forward to seeing you this summer. Register by phone by calling 800.935.0553 or 704.372.6261 ext. 309 weekdays 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

## Summer Science Camps:

### H2O Detectives

Jun. 22 - 26

Dive on in as you test the waters in this immersive camp! Test local water for pollutants, catch, study, and release pond wildlife while you learn about water habitats. Learn about precipitation, weather and its effect on the places we live and play.

### Animal Adventures

Jun. 29 - July 3

Have you ever wanted to get up close and personal with some of Charlotte's local wildlife? Join us this week and you will! Learn about the habitats these animals live in, the dangers that they face, and how we can help to protect them. Build your own backyard bird habitat and practice bird watching.

### Rock Hounds

July 6 - 10

What goes on beneath our feet, under the ground that we walk on? To the untrained eye, it can look like nothing is happening inside of the earth, but to those who love geology understand that this is not the case! Start your own rock collection, dig for fossils, and discuss how we use rocks in everyday life.

### Survival Skills

July 13 - 17

Find out what it's like to build your own shelter, start a fire, and navigate through the woods. Go hiking through the preserve to learn about trails signs and how to use a compass, and snack on edible plants along the way. Discover how to go fishing in the pond and

what to do if you or a friend gets hurt during your adventures in the wild.

### Our Culture

July 20 - 24

Become an archaeologist and time traveler in this camp as you learn how people of the past lived. Where and how did they build shelter? How did they get food and clean water? Discover these answers and more as you examine artifacts from cultures past. Learn Native American games and tell a story using only pictures.

### Going Green

July 27 - 31

Have you heard the word? The word is GREEN! How can we protect the earth and preserve it for the future? Learn how you can save the planet by discussing global warming and investigating alternative energy for the future. Create your own garbage and nature art, figure out how you can make your own paper, and discuss ways to exercise the 3 R's in your everyday life.

### Fun in the Forest

August 3 - 7

Tromp through the woods to find and identify species of plants. Create your own pocket tree guide by collecting leaves from the nature preserve. Identify edible and poisonous plants. Become a junior botanist as you learn to recognize plants that are native to our region. Learn about the parts of the flower and plant one to take home!

## Get Going Charlotte – Spring is Here!

Spring has sprung in Charlotte. The dogwoods are blooming and the frogs are calling, but you might not have noticed because your kids are bouncing off the walls, money is tight, and nobody can agree on what to do. Spring is a great time to get outside and enjoy nature before the hot days of summer arrive. Mecklenburg County's Nature Preserves have something fun for everyone at a price that won't bust even your child's piggybank. Here are some top pick activities to enjoy at your local Nature Preserves.

**Go Fishing** – Fishing can be a relaxing end to a busy day at the office or an afternoon well spent bonding with your son or daughter. Thanks to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, FREE fishing rods and tackle are available on loan for up to 24 hours at Reedy Creek, Latta Plantation, and McDowell Nature Centers. All you need to bring is bait and an adult with a valid North Carolina fishing license.

**Camp-out** – We call it the Great Urban Escape, Mecklenburg County's only public campground at McDowell Nature Preserve. Open 365 days a year and located only 30 minutes from downtown Charlotte, home is always just a short drive away. Camping is a great way to spend quality time with your family without spending a lot of money. Every weekend starting mid-April through September families and adults can participate in kayaking, campfire cooking classes, night hikes, stream hikes, fishing trips, live animal encounters and other programs designed for campground visitors.



**Take a Picture** – The next time that you visit your local preserve don't forget to bring your camera. Photography is a great way to express your

creative side while forcing you to slow down and look at your surroundings. You don't need a fancy camera to take great photos, only a little creativity. Try taking photos at extreme angles or up close. Before long, you will have an album full of photos ready to enter in McDowell or Reedy Creek Nature Centers' photo contest.



**Search for Treasure** – For those who still think a hike in the woods is boring, Letterboxing and Geocaching are great ways to change that perception. Here's the basic idea: someone hides a waterproof box containing at least a logbook, a stamp, and perhaps other goodies in a park or preserve (or in some cases an urban setting) and you must find it. The hider will give you clues in the form of riddles, references to map coordinates and landmarks, or GPS coordinates. Geocaching and Letterboxing are not only addictively fun, free, and a great way to get exercise, but educational as it teaches problem solving, math, and reading skills. Visit [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) or [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org) to gather the clues you need to get started.

For more information on how you can participate in these or other activities in your local nature preserve contact Christopher Horrigan, McDowell Nature Center, at 704-588-5224.

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### ADA STATEMENT

Mecklenburg County will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of ability.

Mecklenburg County will make reasonable accommodations in all programs to enable participation by an individual with a disability who meets essential eligibility requirements.

Mecklenburg County programs will be available in the most integrated setting for each individual. If any accommodations are necessary for participation in any program or service, participants are required to notify staff (at least 72 hours prior to program). This information is available in an alternative format for persons with disabilities upon request.

Mecklenburg County  
Nature Preserves and Natural Resources  
Latta Plantation Nature Center  
6211 Sample Road  
Huntersville, NC 28078



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COUNTY PARK &  
RECREATION

*"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder...he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it..."*

Rachel Carson

## Conservation Connection

### We're W.I.L.D. About Nature

by Mary Wyant, Natural Resources Assistant

**D**o you ever wonder why scientists are always running around collecting data? Well, mostly it's because scientists are curious and want to better understand the world around us. And what happens to all the data? In the case of animal observations from Mecklenburg and surrounding Counties, the data can go into the WILD (Wildlife Information and Location Documentation) database that is used to store wildlife records from many sources, some dating as far back as 1875. To date, the Natural Resources staff of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, who maintain the database, have compiled over 80,000 animal observations from the region.

Using this data we can learn many things about an animal's habits. For instance:

- The Eastern Box Turtle is one of the reptiles reported most often by observers.
- You are much more likely to see an Ovenbird, a species of warbler, during the spring and fall when they are migrating, than you are during the summer.
- We have learned that American Black Bears enter our county rarely, but when they do it is mainly during the summer when young males are looking for mates.
- Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterflies can be seen early in the spring, whereas Red Spotted Purple butterflies appear later and peak in the late summer.
- Fowler's Toads, which are common in our nature preserves, are most often seen during the spring and summer months but rarely seen during the winter when most amphibians are hibernating.

The Natural Resources staff also uses the data we've collected in WILD to create species checklists and to determine the conservation status of species



Ovenbird by Jeff Esely



Red-spotted Purple by William G. Cobey



Fowler's Toad by Sudie Daves

found in Mecklenburg County.

You can be a backyard scientist by collecting your own data. Just keep a log of what you see in your yard and the date you see it. After you've been collecting data for a while, look back to see if you can see any trends in your data. For example, noting observations of birds visiting your yard this spring can reveal when to anticipate them next year.

#### MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT NATURE PRESERVES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

#### PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich the lives of our children through the stewardship of the county's natural resources and the efficient and responsive provision of quality leisure opportunities, experiences and partnerships.

#### NATURE PRESERVES & NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

To protect the region's biodiversity and natural heritage for its inherent value and for the benefit of future generations by promoting open space preservation, conserving natural communities, and fostering awareness and stewardship through environmental education and outdoor recreation.

#### LATTA PLANTATION NATURE CENTER

6211 Sample Road  
Huntersville, NC 28078  
704-875-1391 voice  
704-875-1394 fax

#### McDOWELL NATURE CENTER

15222 York Road  
Charlotte, NC 28278  
704-588-5224 voice  
704-588-5226 fax

#### REEDY CREEK NATURE CENTER

2900 Rocky River Road  
Charlotte, NC 28215  
704-598-8857 voice  
704-599-1770 fax

#### HOURS OF OPERATION

Mon. - Sat. 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

FREE ADMISSION

## Summer Camps

### Latta Plantation Nature Preserve Summer Camps

#### L.A.N.D. (Learning About Nature Through Discovery) Camp

Amazing Animals

Latta Plantation Nature Center

39690 June 15 - 19

39691 July 13 - 17

9 a.m. - noon each day • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

In this camp we will investigate what makes animals amazingly different from one another. Your child will get up close encounters with some animals and go out into the nature preserve to learn about where these animals live.

#### L.A.N.D. (Learning About Nature Through Discovery) Camp

Web of Life

Latta Plantation Nature Center

39692 July 27 - 31

39693 August 10 - 14

9 a.m. - noon each day • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

Join us for this weeklong, half-day camp where we will discover how everything is connected. Investigate why bees help you buy new clothes or why the smallest mushroom helps the tallest tree grow.

#### Outdoor Adventure Camp

Latta Plantation Nature Center

42379 June 22 - 26

42380 August 3 - 7

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. each day • Ages 7 - 10 • \$150

Explore Latta Plantation Nature Preserve as you have never done before. Canoeing, fishing, orienteering, wilderness survival, wild edibles and field games are just some of the many fun activities we will enjoy during this week-long day camp.

### McDowell Nature Preserve Summer Camps

#### Where the Wild Things REALLY Are!

41996 June 15 - 19 • 9 a.m. - noon

Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

42016 June 15 - 19 • 1 - 4 p.m.

Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

42005 August 10 - 14 • 9 a.m. - noon

Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

42017 August 10 - 14 • 1 - 4 p.m.

Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

Where are all the wonderfully wild things here at McDowell Nature Preserve? Discover animals and habitats at the Preserve while completing fun crafts and a variety of fun filled activities!

#### Outdoor Explorers Camp

42024 July 13 - 17 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 7 - 9 • \$150

42036 August 3 - 7 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 7 - 9 • \$150

Interest in nature and outdoor recreation starts at an early age, help your child get a jump on discovering both as we explore the nature around them through canoeing, fishing, hiking and other outdoor recreation opportunities. As always animal encounters, crafts, games, and lots of fun are included.

#### Icky Sticky Truth

42209 June 29 - July 3 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 7 - 9 • \$150

42061 Jul. 20 - 24 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 7 - 9 • \$150

Smelly scat, slimy slugs, and slithering snakes...discover that everyone and everything plays an important and valuable role in the world as we explore the not so cuddly side of nature.

#### Adventure Camp

42065 July 6 - 10 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 10 - 12 • \$160

Discover water ecology while learning to kayak, become skilled at shelter building as you learn about animal homes and explore the lives of nocturnal animals during an overnight camp-out. Interest in nature and outdoor recreation develops during youth, start them on a path filled with adventure today! (Camp ends at 10 a.m. on Friday July 10 following an overnight Campout)

#### Camp Wild Water!

42054 July 27 - 31 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ages 10 - 12 • \$160

Water makes up a good deal of our planet but what wild things are going on down there? Discover all the wonders that water contains and even participate in an overnight campout at the McDowell Nature Preserve! Everything will be wet and wild at Camp Wild Water! (Camp ends at 10 a.m. on Friday July 31 following an overnight Campout).

### Reedy Creek Nature Preserve Summer Camps

#### Eco-Explorers: Web of Life

39173 Monday, June 22 - Friday, June 26

9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 7 - 9 • \$150

39174 Monday, July 20 - Friday July 24

9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 7-9 • \$150

Join us for this exciting, hands-on adventure into the web of life! We will explore the web through various activities, crafts and field trips. This will be one web you won't mind getting caught in!

#### Herpetology Camp

39172 Monday, July 6 - Friday, July 10

9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 10 - 12 • \$150

This unique camp will get you up close and personal with slimy, slithering critters that call Mecklenburg County home. We will explore the lives of a variety of reptiles and amphibians and discover the many ways that scientist are studying them. This knowledge will be taken into the field as we help these scientists on a variety of field trips.

#### EcoCareers

38807 Monday, July 27 - Friday, July 31

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Ages 10 - 12 • \$150

Pre-camp is available 7:30 - 9 a.m.: Post-camp is 4 - 5:30 p.m.

(Additional fees apply for Pre and Post camp)

What do you want to be when you grow up? Join us for this special camp to meet environmental scientists. Get an inside look at how they help our planet. Learn how you can make a career out of being a nature lover!

#### L.A.N.D. Camp (Learning About Nature through Discovery)

39125 Monday, June 29 - Friday, July 3

9 a.m. - noon • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

39128 Monday, June 29 - Friday, July 3

1 - 4 p.m. • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

39126 Monday, July 13 - Friday, July 17

9 a.m. - noon • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

39127 Monday, July 13 - Friday, July 17

1 - 4 p.m. • Ages 4 - 6 • \$75

Bring your child out to discover the wonders of nature as we investigate different areas of the preserve including the forest, gardens, and meadows. This exciting camp will be packed full with fun activities, crafts, stories, and much more!

## Letterboxing

42296 Monday, May 25

10:30 a.m. - noon • All Ages • \$3

Join us for a letterboxing hike and discover how your family can participate in this modern day treasure hunt at parks throughout the Charlotte region. Letterboxing journal and stamp included in price.



## Reedy Creek Nature Center

2900 Rocky River Road, Charlotte

All programs meet at Reedy Creek Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.598.8857 for more information.

## P.L.A.N.T. Club Series: Edible Plants

(Preschoolers Learning About Nature Together)

38804 Tuesday, May 5

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 with adult • \$5

Explore the garden and forest for “wild” and not so wild edible plants. We will taste test these yummy plants and sow some seeds to grow our own.

## International Migratory Bird Day

Evergreen Nature Preserve

Saturday, May 9

8 a.m. - 1 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join us for a fun filled day of celebrating Migratory Birds! This is part of an international effort to raise awareness of the miraculous journey that takes place every year across the world. Activities will include birding 101, bird hikes, crafts, games and bird related merchandise.

## Critters of the Night

38847 Friday, May 22

7 - 8 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join a naturalist as we hike through Reedy Creek Nature Preserve looking and listening for critters of the night. Sharp eyes may catch a glimpse of our resident beavers. Alert ears may hear the call of an owl! All ages are welcome for this 2 mile hike.



## Biodiversity Series: Linville Falls

38848 Saturday, May 23

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Ages 10 and older (Ages 10 - 17 must be accompanied by an adult) • \$10

Picturesque and breathtaking, Linville Falls boasts great hiking, cool streams, ample bird watching and a chance to get up close and personal with a real North Carolina treasure. We'll hike about 2 - 4 miles over uneven and sometimes very strenuous terrain. Participants must be able to hike under these conditions! Please bring lunch, water bottle and wear comfortable shoes.

## Bioblitz at RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

Saturday, May 30 and Sunday, May 31

A Bioblitz is a 24-hour inventory of all living organisms in a given area, often an urban park. This is your chance to help us increase our inventory list of this special park. There will be various scientists on hand that will give you the opportunity to see and participate in their inventory techniques. Public participation is limited to specific times. Please call 704.598.8857 for more information.

## Spring Trail Spotlight

### Cove trail



Spring is the perfect time to enjoy the Cove Trail at McDowell Nature Preserve. As you begin your 0.8 mile hike, you'll discover a large wetland area as multiple streams converge and drain into the lake. This is a great nesting area for several species of birds, and you will notice the nesting boxes that have been placed to encourage these local bird populations. Be on the lookout for a variety of small mammals, including muskrats, which are easiest to find in the spring. The fresh vegetation grows up not a day too soon for these aquatic rodents.

Once you pass the wetland prepare yourself for an awe-inspiring view of Lake Wylie. When the sun falls at the right angle, a breathtaking view can be seen as the trees reflect off the water and the lake suddenly comes to life. If you are quiet and move slowly you may notice Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfishers, and a variety of ducks. Many of the birds you will find along this trail are found only near an aquatic environment such as Lake Wylie. By the trail's end, you will be inspired by the beauty and excitement of spring.

## Special Events

### Celebrate National Turn off the TV Week

Monday, April 20 - Friday, April 24

All Ages • FREE

Join us at one of Mecklenburg County's three nature centers during the week of April 20 for some great alternatives to watching the tube! Look inside this issue for details.



### Spring Celebration

RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

Saturday, March 21

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join us as we celebrate all things spring! We will host various activities throughout the day to welcome in the spring season.



Activities include hikes, crafts, stories and games!

### International Migratory Bird Day

Evergreen Nature Preserve

Saturday, May 9

8 a.m. - 1 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join us for a fun filled day of celebrating Migratory Birds! This is part of an international effort to raise awareness of the miraculous journey that takes place every year across the world. Activities will include birding 101, bird hikes, crafts, games and bird related merchandise.

## Spring is here and so are the birds!!

Come out to Reedy Creek, Latta Plantation and McDowell Nature Center Gift Shops to pick up your very own Dr. JB's Hummingbird Feeder!

*Cut out this coupon and save 10%!*

**“Meet Dr. J.B. at Reedy Creek on March 14 from 12:00-5:00 pm”**



# March Programs

## Latta Plantation Nature Center

6211 Sample Road, Huntersville  
All programs meet at Latta Plantation Nature Center  
unless otherwise noted.  
Call 704.875.1391 for more information.

### Latta Homeschool Nature Club

Latta Plantation Nature Center

**39675** March 18, April 15 & May 13

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 5 - 7 • \$10/series

**39678** March 18, April 15 & May 13

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 8 - 12 • \$10/series

**39676** March 18, April 15 & May 13

1 - 2:30 p.m. • Ages 5 - 7 • \$10/series

**39677** March 18, April 15 & May 13

1 - 2:30 p.m. • Ages 8 - 12 • \$10/series

In this unique experience, homeschool students are given the opportunity to learn about a variety of topics at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. Series includes the following programs:

March 18 - Migratory Birds

April 15 - Spring Wildflowers

May 13 - Fantastic Fish

### Lesson From The Lorax

**40103** Tuesday, March 3

10 - 11 a.m. • 4 and older with adult • \$3

Hear one of Dr. Suess's classic works, The Lorax, and learn how we can speak for the trees! Includes short walk and craft activity.

### Latta Plantation Nature Center Junior Garden Club

Wednesday, March 4

**42298** 1 - 2:30 p.m. • Ages 3 - 4 • FREE

**42306** 2:30 - 4 p.m. • Ages 6 - 12 • FREE

Come out and let your little ones help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering and transplanting. Long pants and closed toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

### Latta Plantation Nature Center Adult Garden Club

**42347** Wednesday, March 4

4:30 - 6 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • FREE

Come out and help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering, mulching, pruning, and transplanting. Long pants and closed toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

### Walk with a Naturalist: Basic Birding

**40123** Saturday, March 7

10 - 11:30 a.m. • All ages • FREE

Are you interested in the natural world around you? Would you like to notice more when you are outside? Join us on these Saturday excursions that will focus on observing, exploring and appreciating the world around us. Terrain & Distance: Moderate, approximately 1.5 - 3 miles. No registration required.



### Reptile Mania!

**42359** Sunday, March 8

2 - 3 p.m. • All ages • \$4/adult \$3/child

Come out and learn to ID the different reptiles we have in the area and the benefits they create for us.

### Amphibian Night Hike

Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge

**39679** Friday, March 13

7 - 8:30 p.m. • All ages • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Just step outside and you will hear the frogs singing. Join us as we explore a wetland area and learn to identify the frogs by their calls.

### Girls in Science Day

**39790** Saturday, March 14

10 a.m. - 3 p.m. • Ages 8 - 18 • \$10

Join us for a whole day geared towards girls who like science. We will look at the differences between slimy and scaly animals, participate in a scientific bird study and even explore a wetland!

### Birding on the Greenway

Saturday, May 9

10 - 11 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

Hone your ornithology bone on International Migratory Bird Day while hiking with a trained naturalist on the Campbell and McAlpine Creek Greenway.

### International Migratory Bird Day Hike

**41858** Saturday, May 9

9 - 10:30 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

Some birds have traveled a LONG way to get here. Come search out both migratory and resident birds with our naturalist. For more information call 704.588.5224.



### Junior Birder

**41879** Tuesday, May 12 and 26

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 5 - 8 • \$8

**41892** Thursday, May 14 and 28

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 9 - 12 • \$8

The Junior Birder program is a fun way to learn about birds and how to help protect them. Once the courses are complete you will have earned a Junior Birder Patch through a series of activities and conservation challenges.

### Animal Tales: The Grouchy Ladybug

**40667** Friday, May 15 • 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40668** Friday, May 15 • 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Ages 3 - 5 • \$3 per session.

Children will enjoy listening to the book, The Grouchy Ladybug, and then participate in crafts and activities related to the story.

### Preschool Naturalist Series: Fun with Flowers

**41925** Saturday, May 16

10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3

Spring is blooming all around! Discover the parts of a flower and even plant one to bring home with you!



### Roadkill

**42285** Saturday, May 16

2 - 4 p.m. • Ages 16 and older • \$3

From bugs on your windshield to skunks on the road, roadkill has had an impact on our lives behind the wheel. But, what does it mean for wildlife? Hop on board for a guided tour of roadkill hotspots and a discussion of what they mean.

### Get Going Charlotte

**42290** Thursday, May 21

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 18 & up • FREE

Summer is almost here...what are your plans? Join us as we highlight the many free and low cost activities that Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation are offering this summer for adults, children, and families. All attendees receive discount coupons for program registration and free childcare during the program.

### Teddy Bear Picnic

**40660** Friday, May 22 • 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Ages 2 - 5 • \$5 per session

Enjoy a special picnic with your favorite teddy bear as we listen to a story, play games, make a craft, and have lunch. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Don't forget to bring your best teddy and a sack lunch (special dessert provided)! Meet at the McDowell Pavilion.

### Wildflower Greenway Hike

Saturday, May 23

10 - 11 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

Dazzle your senses with nature's spring decorations. Walk with a trained naturalist on the Campbell and McAlpine Creek Greenway and take in the beauty of Mecklenburg County's fantastic show of wildflowers!

## Segway Adventure Tour

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**40412** May 2 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40413** May 2 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40414** May 3 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40415** May 3 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40416** May 16 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40417** May 17 • 3 - 6 p.m.

Ages 18 and Older • \$35

Discover 1,300-acre Latta Plantation Nature Preserve - on a Segway! These two-wheeled personal transporters are a fun way to see the wildlife, natural areas, and trails of Latta Plantation Nature. Highlights include the Shady Trail, Catawba Trail, Buzzard Rock Trail, and gorgeous views of Mt. Island Lake. All equipment and training provided. Trail refreshments included. Tours last about 3 hours including a 30 - 45 minute training session.

## Sunset Segway Adventure Tour

**40533** Wednesday, May 6

**40534** Wednesday, May 20

5 - 8 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$35

Explore Latta Plantation Nature Preserve at sunset while riding a Segway! Learn to ride these self-balancing, two-wheeled machines and see nature like never before - at 8 mph! Highlights include the Shady and Catawba Trails. We will conclude the tour from the Buzzard Rock Overlook for a beautiful view of the sun set over Mountain Island Lake. Equipment and training provided.

## Kayaking

Horse Trailer Parking Lot

**39828** Saturday, May 2 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39823** Saturday May 2 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39830** Saturday, May 9 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39831** Saturday May 9 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39832** Saturday, May 23 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39833** Saturday May 23 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39834** Sunday, May 24 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39835** Saturday, May 30 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39836** Saturday May 30 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39837** Sunday, May 31 • 1 - 4 p.m.

Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join with us as we paddle on Mountain Island Lake. We will learn the parts of the boat, the four basic strokes, and how to enter and

exit the kayak. Then, we will paddle along the shoreline and explore the lake. All equipment provided. Please bring water and a snack.

## Sunset Kayak Tour

Horse Trailer Parking Lot

**39864** Wednesday, May 6

**39865** Wednesday, May 20

**39866** Wednesday, June 10

5 - 8 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join us to learn the fundamentals of flatwater kayaking as we enjoy watching the sunset as we paddle around Mountain Island Lake.

## McDowell Nature Center

15222 York Road, Charlotte

All programs meet at McDowell Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.588.5224 for more information.

## Wildflowers of McDowell Nature Hike

**41847** Saturday, May 2

10 - 11:30 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

Bring your family out to enjoy a guided nature hike as we begin to discover the Wildflowers of McDowell Nature Preserve.

## Dogs in the Park

Wednesday, May 6

10 - noon • All Ages • FREE

Pamper your favorite pooch at McDowell Nature Preserve as we celebrate International Pet Week. Give your dog some exercise and meet with various pet professionals to discover what Mecklenburg County has to offer our canine pals.

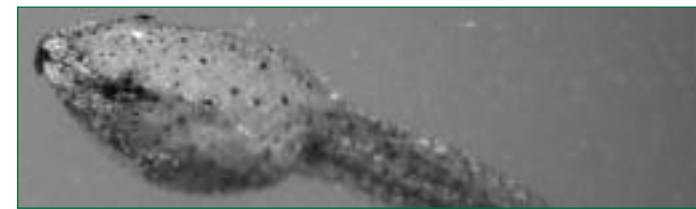
## Terrific Twos: Lil' Ladybugs

**40634** Friday, May 8 • 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40635** Friday, May 8 • 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Age 2 • \$3 per session

Join us as we have some fun and learn about ladybugs in age appropriate group time and parent-child activities.



## Toadally Wild About Amphibians

**40109** Sunday, March 15

2 - 4 p.m. • Ages 3 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Explore the underwater world of Mecklenburg's most mysterious creatures as they start life "toadally" different! We'll meet tadpoles by building a simple underwater scope and taking it to a vernal pool.

## Bird Bingo

**40110** Thursday, March 19

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 with adult • \$3

Join us for a fun and easy game of Bird Bingo! As we play the game we will talk about birds living in the nature preserve, and then we'll go out for a short walk to find them!

## NC Tree ID

**40119** Sunday, March 22

2 - 4 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Become a tree detective! Learn North Carolina's most common trees and how to identify those beauties using simple techniques.

## Bird Call Hike

**39680** Saturday, March 28

9 - 11 a.m. • Ages 16 and older • \$4

Come out for this program and learn how to identify birds by their songs. We will then go on a hike to practice our new-found skills.

## Geocaching and Segways

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**39871** Saturday, March 28

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$50

Join us as we combine the sport of Geocaching with the adventure of riding on a Segway personal transporter. In the morning you will learn how to use a basic GPS unit as we hike through the woods on a "treasure hunt." In the afternoon, you will experience the trails in a whole new way - on a Segway! All equipment and training

provided. Trail refreshments included. Tours last about 3 hours including a 30 - 45 minute training session. Please bring a sack lunch. Terrain is level to moderately hilly on gravel and dirt trails. Geocaching - 3 miles; Segways - 5 miles.

## NC Tree ID

**42360** Monday, March 30

4 - 6 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Become a tree detective! Learn North Carolina's most common trees and how to identify those beauties using simple techniques.

## Segway Adventure Tour

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**40141** March 7 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40142** March 7 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40143** March 8 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40144** March 8 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40145** March 21 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40146** March 21 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40147** March 22 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40148** March 22 • 3 - 6 p.m.

Ages 18 and Older • \$35

Discover 1,300-acre Latta Plantation Nature Preserve - on a Segway! These two-wheeled personal transporters are a fun way to see the wildlife, natural areas, and trails of Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. Highlights include the Shady Trail, Catawba Trail, Buzzard Rock Trail, and gorgeous views of Mt. Island Lake. All equipment and training provided. Trail refreshments included. Tours last about 3 hours including a 30 - 45 minute training session.



## Kayaking

Horse Trailer parking lot

**39802** Saturday, March 7 • 9 a.m. - noon or **39803** Saturday March 7 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39804** Saturday, March 14 • 9 a.m. - noon or **39805** Saturday March 14 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39818** Sunday, March 15 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39811** Saturday, March 21 • 9 a.m. - noon or **39812** Saturday March 21 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39809** Saturday, March 28 • 9 a.m. - noon or **39810** Saturday March 28 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39813** Sunday, March 29 • 1 - 4 p.m.

Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join with us as we paddle on Mountain Island Lake. We will learn the parts of the boat, the four basic strokes, and how to enter and exit the kayak. Then, we will paddle along the shoreline and explore the lake. All equipment provided. Please bring water and a snack.

## Sunset Kayak Tour

Horse Trailer Parking lot

**39860** Wednesday, March 11

**39861** Wednesday, March 25

5 - 8 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join us to learn the fundamentals of flatwater kayaking as we enjoy watching the sunset while paddling around Mountain Island Lake.

## McDowell Nature Center

15222 York Road, Charlotte

All programs meet at McDowell Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.588.5224 for more information.

## The Great Urban Escape!

From April through September staff from McDowell Nature Center will be offering a variety of fun, family activities at McDowell Campground. Free to campground guests or at a small fee for park visitors, programs include campfires, night hikes, fishing, scavenger hunts, live animal encounters and more. Weekly kayak, canoe, and campfire cooking classes are offered at a reduced rate for campground guests. See below for details. Campsites range from \$12 - \$36 per night. To reserve your

campsite contact McDowell Campground at 704.583.1284. All programs meet at McDowell Campground unless otherwise noted.

### Urban Escape (Weekend 1)

(Campground Guest/Public)

Friday - Apr. 10, 24, May 8, 22, Jun. 5, 19, Jul. 3, 17, 31, Aug. 14, 28

7 - 8:30 p.m. Scavenger Hunt • Free/\$3

8:30 - 9:30 p.m. Campfire • Free/\$3

Saturday - Apr. 11, 25, May 9, 23, Jun. 20 Jul. 4, 18, Aug. 1, 15, 29

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Canoeing/Fishing • \$18/\$24 per boat, \$9/\$12

per person, child in boat of 3 Free.

1:30 - 3 p.m. Forest Hike • Free/\$3

4 - 4:30 p.m. Live Animal Talk • Free/Free

Sunday - Apr. 12, 26, May 10, 24, Jun. 7, 21 Jul. 5, 19, Aug. 2, 16, 30

8:30 - 10 a.m. Breakfast with the Birds • \$3/\$5

10:30 - 12 p.m. Waterfront Activities • Free/Free

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Kayaking • \$9/\$12 per person

### Urban Escape (Weekend 2)

(Campground Guest/Public)

Friday - Apr. 17, May 1, 15, 29, Jun. 12, 26, Jul. 10, 24, Aug. 7, 21

7 - 8:30 p.m. Campfire Cooking: Desserts • \$3/\$5

8:30 - 9:45 p.m. Night Hike • Free/\$3 or Free with

Campfire Cooking

Saturday - Apr. 18, May 16, 30, Jun. 27, Jul. 25, Aug. 8, 22

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Kayaking • \$9/\$12 per person

1:30 - 3 p.m. Stream Hike • Free/\$3

4 - 4:30 p.m. Live Animal Talk • Free/Free

Sunday - Apr. 19, May 3, 17, 31, Jun. 14, 28, Jul. 12, 26, Aug. 9, 23

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Fishing • Free/\$3

10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Waterfront Activities • Free/Free

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Canoeing • \$18/\$24 per boat, \$9/\$12 per

person, child in boat of 3 Free.

**Scavenger Hunt** - McDowell Nature Preserve is home to numerous natural treasures. How many can you find? Work together as you explore the preserve to find out.

## Mother's Day Madness

**40113** Sunday, May 10

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$8

Mad about crafts? Treat yourself and your daughter or best friend to a relaxing afternoon of simple terra cotta decoupage artistry in the great outdoors!

## Go Green in the Garden

**40120** Sunday, May 17 • 1:30 - 3 p.m.

**42377** Wednesday, May 20 • 4:30 - 6 p.m.

Ages 8 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Help your garden get back to nature this spring! This hands-on workshop shows beneficial gardening techniques using native plants and natural pest control.

## Kids in Nature Workshop

**42376** Tuesday, May 19

3 - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$4/adult

Nature can be lot of fun for kids! Discover ways to get kids outside more and have fun instead of staying inside. Topics may include outdoor activities, games, crafts, and health benefits. If you want to find ways to spend more time yourself with kids outside this is a good workshop for you.

## CSI: Critter Scene Investigation

**40116** Thursday, May 21

9 - 11:30 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5

with adult • \$3

Animals leave many clues to their behavior. Join our team of "investigators" as we search for tracks, scat and other signs that creatures are afoot!



## Paw Prints and Poop

**39685** Saturday, May 23

10 a.m. - noon • All Ages • \$3/child, \$4/adult

Discover the wildlife in our area by the signs they leave behind. Bring your family for some hands-on activities and a trail hike as we learn to track wildlife.

## Nature Journaling: Who Shares Your Neighborhood?

**40117** Saturday, May 23

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 8 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child.

Meet your wildlife neighbors! Let us show you how to use simple writing and drawing techniques or even photography to create your own neighborhood field guide.

## Geocaching at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

Volleyball Court at Picnic Area

**39874** Sunday, May 24 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39875** Saturday, May 30 • 9 a.m. - noon

Ages 12 and older • \$8/Adult \$6/child

Seeking adventure? Well, join us for the high tech treasure hunt of Geocaching at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. You will learn the functions of a Garmin e-Trex GPS unit and how to locate and find various types of caches. GPS units are provided or bring your own. Please bring water and a snack. Terrain & Distance: level to moderate. Approx. 2 miles.

## Stream Science Hike

Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

**39686** Saturday, May 30

9 a.m. - noon • Ages 12 and older • \$3/child, \$4/adult

Come out for a hike through the northern part of Latta Plantation Nature Preserve to find a stream teeming with life and information. Once we arrive at the stream, we will hunt for critters and test the waters to see how clean our environment is.



## Biodiversity Series: Hanging Rock State Park

**38845** Saturday, April 25

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Ages 10 and older (Ages 10 - 17 must be accompanied by an adult) • \$10

Hanging Rock State Park boasts breathtaking views and vistas from the lofty peaks and ridges of the Sauratown Mountains. Many spring wildflowers will be in bloom and birds will be in flight, so you may want to bring your camera and binoculars. We will be hiking over 4 miles of trails on uneven and moderate terrain. Please bring lunch, a water bottle and comfy hiking shoes.

## Spring Beauties: Discover the Flowers of the Sky

**38846** Sunday, April 26

2 - 3:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Discover the beauty and intrigue of butterflies! We will begin with stories and folklore of these magical creatures and then venture outside in search of live specimens. Participants must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

# May Programs

## Latta Plantation Nature Center

6211 Sample Road, Huntersville

All programs meet at Latta Plantation Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.875.1391 for more information.

## Walk with a Naturalist: Signs of Wildlife

**40125** Saturday, May 2

10 - 11:30 a.m. • All ages • FREE

Are you interested in the natural world around you? Would you like to notice more when you are outside? Join us on these Saturday excursions that will focus on observing, exploring and appreciating the world around us.

Terrain & Distance: Moderate, approximately 1.5 - 3 miles. No registration required.



## Oh! My! Butterflies!

**42374** Sunday, May 3

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 5 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

More butterflies are flying around now. Learn about the life cycle of butterflies and why they are attracted to gardens. You will also get a chance to catch them and look at them up close in our garden.

## Latta Plantation Nature Center Junior Garden Club

Wednesday, May 6

**42300** 1 - 2:30 p.m. • Ages 3 - 4 • FREE

**42312** 2:30 - 4 p.m. • Ages 6 - 12 • FREE

Come out and let your little ones help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering and transplanting. Long pants and closed toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

## Latta Plantation Nature Center Adult Garden Club

Wednesday, May 6

**42349** 4:30 - 6 pm. • Ages 18 and older • FREE

Come out and help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering, mulching, pruning, and transplanting. Long pants and closed toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

## Bird Walk for International Migratory Bird Day

**42533** Saturday, May 9

8 - 10:30 a.m. • all ages • FREE

May is the peak of migration for many colorful species returning from far away places. Look and listen for these migrants with an experienced birder. No registration required. Binoculars recommended - limited number available to loan. Terrain: moderate, up to 2.5 miles.



**Campfire** - Join us for an evening of stories, laughs, fun, and marshmallows around the campfire.

**Fishing by Canoe** - Practice the basics with experienced and patient instructors. All gear is provided; program is catch and release only. Participants 16 and over require a current North Carolina fishing license. Children 6 and over must be accompanied by an adult with a North Carolina fishing license.

**Forest Hike** - Fantastic forest flora and fauna await with our Nature Center Staff as your guide! Meet at McDowell Nature Center for an easy hike around McDowell Nature Preserve! Hike is approximately 1 mile over moderate terrain.

**Breakfast with the Birds** - Enjoy breakfast around the campfire before venturing out into the Preserve in search of our feathered friends. Birdwatchers of all abilities are welcome, binoculars are provided.

**Waterfront Activities** - Stop by our tent near the waterfront deck and enjoy exhibits and activities that highlight the many plants and animals that make their homes in McDowell.

**Kayaking** - An easy, fun, and beautiful way to explore Lake Wylie. Learn the basics with experienced and patient instructors before hitting the water for a guided tour. All gear is provided, kayakers of all abilities (ages 10 and up) are welcome.



**Campfire Cooking: Dinner, Dishes, and Desserts** - Learn to prepare, cook, then SAMPLE delicious dishes that are all easy to make around a campfire. Who says camp food can't taste good? Program meets at McDowell Campground.

**Night Hike** - What creatures come out at night? Can I see in the dark? Whooo is making that sound? Come explore the answers to these questions and more as we take a nighttime adventure.

Leave the flashlights behind for this 1 mile, moderate terrain hike.

**Stream Hike** - Cool down and discover salamanders, crawfish, water pennies and more as we explore the 4 seasons creek! You will get wet, comfortable water shoes are encouraged. Meet at McDowell Nature Center for this 1 mile hike on moderate terrain.

**Live Animal Talk** - Explore the secret lives of reptiles while you get up close and personal with several animals that call McDowell Nature Center, the Preserve, and even your backyard. Program meets at McDowell Nature Center.

**Let's go Fishing!** - Bait that hook, throw that line and reel in a great catch. All gear is provided, including bait. Participants 16 and up require a valid North Carolina fishing license.

**Canoeing** - Enjoy a leisurely afternoon on the water with experienced and patient instructors as your guide. A staff Naturalist will be along to interpret the local flora and fauna of Lake Wylie. All gear is provided, families with children as young as 6 are welcome. Program meets at McDowell Campground.

## Passport to Adventure

**40593** \$3/family

The Passport to Adventure program encourages families to participate in and discover all aspects of McDowell Nature Preserve. A passport will be given to each family who chooses to participate. The activities are divided up into four categories and valuable incentives are given to any family who completes any section of the passport. A Family Adventure Pack will be given to families who complete all portions of the passport. Families can register at any point for this program at McDowell Nature Center and will have one full calendar year to complete the passport.

## Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss

**40599** Tuesday, March 3

10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3

You are cordially invited to a Birthday Party Celebration! We will read a story and complete related crafts all in honor of Dr. Seuss.

## Home School Special: Radical Reptiles

**40600** Thursday, March 5

2 - 3 p.m. • Ages 5 - 7 • \$3

Turtles, snakes, and lizards, oh my! We will introduce some reptile friends from the nature center and learn what makes a reptile unique.

## Frogwatch USA

**42281** Thursday, March 5

6:30 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Become a frog watcher! Frog Watch USA is a frog and toad monitoring program that gives YOU the opportunity to help scientists conserve amphibians! Learn how you can collect essential information in your own back yard to help protect frogs and toads in as little as 20 minutes a week.



## Animal Tales: The Icky, Sticky, Frog

**40602** Friday, March 6 • 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40664** Friday, March 6 • 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Ages 3 - 5 • \$3 per session.

Children will enjoy listening to the book, *The Icky, Sticky, Frog*, and then participate in crafts and activities related to the story.



## Women's Day Greenway Social

**42204** Friday, March 6

9 - 10:30 a.m. • Women of All Ages • FREE

Celebrate being a woman with old friends and make new ones while socializing and exercising on Lower McAlpine Greenway.

## Girl Scouts Week Badge Workshop

**41522** Saturday, March 7

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. • All Scouts • \$10

Learn to navigate and with a GPS or compass, identify birds and use binoculars, or cook outdoors! Bring yourself or your entire troop and be ready to earn badges!

## Trees of McDowell Nature Hike

**40603** Saturday, March 7

10 - 11:30 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

Bring your family out to enjoy a guided nature hike as we begin to discover the Trees of McDowell Nature Preserve.

## Preschool Naturalist Series: Slitherin' Snakes

**40604** Thursday, March 12

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3

Slide on out to learn about the slithering life of a snake!

## Junior Naturalist Series

**41525** Saturday, March 14 • 10 - 11:30 a.m.

**41697** Saturday, April 11 • 10 - 11:30 a.m.

**41703** Saturday, May 16 • 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Ages 7 - 10 • \$3

Want to know all about nature and its creatures like naturalists Jack Hanna, Jeff Corwin, or Terri Irwin? Join us for a monthly series designed to train the young mind to explore and interpret nature.



## Girls In Science: Spotlight on Rachel Carson

**41521** Saturday, March 14

2 - 3 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Named as one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century, Rachel Carson was an American marine biologist and nature writer. Join us as we become like Carson and learn to observe, write, and predict our natural world.

## Preschool Naturalist Series: Moles, Voles and Underground Critters!

**40605** Saturday, March 14

10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3

Come learn about the lives of our underground friends! How do they know where they are going? What do they eat?

## Reedy Creek Nature Center

2900 Rocky River Road, Charlotte

All programs meet at Reedy Creek Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.598.8857 for more information.

## P.L.A.N.T. Club Series: April Showers

(Preschoolers Learning About Nature Together)

**38818** Tuesday, April 7

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 with adult • \$5

Water is necessary for life on Earth. And it is especially needed for our garden plants to grow. Discover how water travels around the world and to the plants.

## Full Moon Hike

**38803** Thursday, April 9

7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Here is your chance to hike in the preserve guided by the light of a full moon. We will talk about what animals come out at night and may even catch glimpses of them on our hike! Must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

## Busy Bugs & Beautiful Blooms

**38805** Saturday, April 11

1 - 2:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join us as we welcome the sights of Spring! From the busy bugs to the beautiful blooms, come out and discover what the natural world is up to! Participants must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

## Frogs & Toads: Sights and Sounds of the Night

**38806** Friday, April 17

7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • \$3 adult, \$2 child

From the peep of a spring peeper to the growl of a leopard frog, the evenings of early spring are alive with the sounds of frogs and toads. Hike through the darkness as we listen to these wonderful sounds of the night. Must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles over uneven terrain.

## Breakfast with the Birds

**38808** Saturday, April 18

9 - 11 a.m. • All Ages • \$5

Join a naturalist for a continental breakfast while learning the basics of birding! We will then get a chance to test our skills in the beautiful

preserve (while walking off breakfast)! Must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

## Wildflower Wander

RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

**38813** Saturday, April 18

1 - 2:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join a naturalist as we wander the beautiful preserve looking for spring wildflowers! Time will be taken along the way to identify the various wildflower species and learn a little about their fascinating natural history and folklore. Must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

## Turn off the TV Week

### Nature Art

**42649** Monday, April 20

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. • Ages 5 and older • FREE

Come and join us at Reedy Creek for a session of creativity and inspiration around nature. We will use all the supplies that our forest provides us to create master pieces. No previous experience is required.

### Night Hike

**42651** Wednesday, April 22

7 - 8:00 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Ever wonder what happens in the forest at night? There are certain species of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects that are more active at night. Join us for an exciting adventure as we explore the nature preserve in the dark! We will hike the trails of Reedy Creek Nature Preserve in search of anything wild and learn about how these creatures survive in the dark. Ages 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Space is limited and pre-registration is required.

### Owl Prowl

**39043** Friday, April 24

7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Ever wonder whoooo is watching you in the night? Discover the variety of owls that live in Mecklenburg County as we enjoy a night hike. Lucky participants may hear the awesome call or see the majestic flight of one of our resident species. Participants must be able to walk 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.



## Week of the Young Child

### Little Explorers

**41804** Thursday, April 16

10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3

From little ants to towering trees bring your little explorer and begin to notice the natural world around them.

### Teddy Bear Picnic

**40659** Friday, April 17 • 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Ages 2 - 5 • \$5 per session

Enjoy a special picnic with your favorite teddy bear as we listen to a story, play games, make a craft, and have lunch. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Don't forget to bring your best teddy and a sack lunch (special dessert provided)! Meet at the McDowell Pavilion.

### Doughnuts with Dad & Muffins with Mom

**41815** Saturday, April 18

10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3- 5 • \$3

Bring out that special mom/dad in your life for a small continental breakfast and nature related games and activities

## Turn off the TV Week

### Sunset Family Fishing

**42286** Monday, April 20

6 - 8 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Bring the whole family out anytime between 6 and 8 p.m. for an evening of fishing and fun. Fishing gear, bait, and entertainment will be provided, just bring chairs to relax in and watch the sunset. Children 15 and under do not need a NC fishing license.



### Family Night Hike

Tuesday, April 21

7:30 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Bring your family and experience McDowell Nature Preserve at night. Play games and listen to stories to learn how wildlife hear, see, and feel to get around in the dark.

### Family Game Night

Thursday, April 23

6 - 8 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Come and play with your family! We have a variety of games to suit everyone from Sorry and Uno to capture the flag and flashlight tag!

### Family Cookout and Hayride

**41838** Friday, April 24

6 - 8 p.m. • All Ages • \$5/adult, \$3/child

Turn off the TV and spend some family time at McDowell Nature Preserve. The evening will start out as a family cookout with hotdogs and beverages and continue with a fun hayride through McDowell!

### Home School Special: Macroinvertebrate Mayhem

**42205** Thursday, April 23

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 7 - 12 • \$3

In streams or ponds the presence or absence of certain organisms can reveal much about the quality of the water. Participants will use a biotic index to determine the health of the McDowell Stream system throughout this hands on activity.

### Animal Tales: Bluebird's Nest

**40665** Friday, April 24 • 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40666** Friday, April 24 • 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Ages 3 - 5 • \$3 per session

Children will enjoy listening to the book, Bluebird's Nest, and then participate in crafts and activities related to the story.



### Home School Special: Water, the Incredible Journey

**41515** Thursday, March 19

2 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 7 - 12 • \$3

Where in the world has the water went? Travel as a water droplet and travel to all the places the water has been.

### Incredible Kid Day!

Thursday, March 19

4 - 5 p.m. • Ages 5 - 12 • \$3

Being a kid is great and so is getting messy. Help us celebrate International Kid Day by getting messy with us while we make goo, gack, and slime for all to take home!

### Terrific Twos: Fabulous Frogs

**40620** Friday, March 20, 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40624** Friday, March 20, 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Age 2 • \$3 per session

Hop on over with your little ones and have some froggy fun in age appropriate group time and parent-child activities.



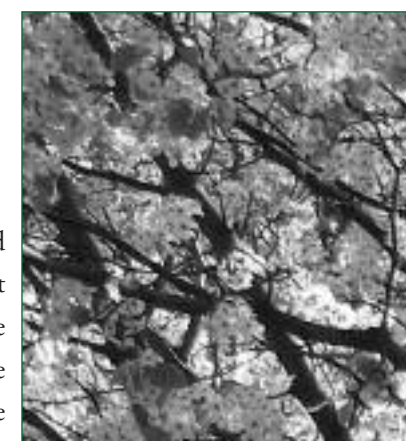
### Signs of Spring Greenway Hike

Friday, March 20

10:30 a.m. - noon • All

Ages • FREE

Walk with a trained naturalist as they point out the wonders of the first signs of spring on the Lower McAlpine Greenway.



### Spring Creations

**41516** Friday, March 20

2 - 4 p.m. • All Ages • \$6

Celebrate the start of spring by stopping by and creating your own piece of the season. Each participant will get to paint a flower pot and make "petal" pens to keep inside!

### Bubbles

**41518** Saturday, March 21

10 - 11 a.m. • All Ages • FREE

If you enjoy blowing bubbles then this hour of fun is right up your ally! Enjoy interactive bubble fun and even create some bubble art before the day is through!

### Teddy Bear Picnic

**40658** Friday, March 27

11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Ages 2 - 5 • \$5 per session

Enjoy a special picnic with your favorite teddy bear as we listen to a story, play games, make a craft, and have lunch. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Don't forget to bring your best teddy and a sack lunch (special dessert provided)! Meet at the McDowell Pavilion.



### Family Scavenger Hunt

**41519** Saturday, March 28

10 a.m. - noon • All Ages • \$5/family

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to have a rip roarin' fun time as you discover the many things found within McDowell Nature Preserve. Bring your cameras (Digital or Polaroid) and a thirst for adventure as you embark on a hunt for the most artifacts and pictures of the wonders within this protected oasis.



### Outdoor Cooking

**42149** Saturday, March 28

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$10

During this class we will learn some easy outdoor cooking techniques and recipes you can use on your next camping trip. We will be using a box oven, pie iron, and Dutch oven to cook our food.

## Reedy Creek Nature Center

2900 Rocky River Road, Charlotte  
All programs meet at Reedy Creek Nature Center  
unless otherwise noted.  
Call 704.598.8857 for more information.

### Fit in Nature:

#### Hike for Your Health

**38777** Every Tuesday Evening  
5 - 6 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • FREE

Take in the fresh air and sunshine that your body needs while enjoying a hike through our beautiful nature preserve! Get outside, get moving, and get healthy! Participants must be able to walk 2-3 miles. Wear comfortable shoes and bring water.

#### Yoga in the Preserve

Every Tuesday Evening  
6:15 - 7:15 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$12 per class or 6 classes for \$60

Relax with yoga as you take in the sights and sounds of the preserve. Classes are taught by a certified yoga instructor. All levels are welcome and you may join at any time. Please wear comfortable clothing, bring a mat and water (there are a limited number of mats and props available).

#### Tai Chi

Every Wednesday Evening  
6 - 7 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$15 per class or \$40 a month  
Join us for Tai Chi in the preserve! Known as “moving meditation” Tai Chi promotes relaxation and improved health. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring water. Classes may be held outdoors, weather permitting.

#### P.L.A.N.T. Club Series: Beautiful Birds

(Preschoolers Learning About Nature Together)  
**38793** Tuesday, March 3  
9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 with adult • \$5  
Birds are regular visitors to the garden. We will learn how birds find food and create homes by watching them up-close and personal.

#### Ribbon Walk Nature Preserve Photo Contest

Ribbon Walk Nature Preserve  
**36932** Tuesday, January 1 - May 23, 2009  
Gallery & Reception at Reedy Creek Nature Center May 23, 2009  
All Ages • Free

Enjoy taking pictures? Participate in our nature preserve photography contest. The theme is “Ribbon Walk Nature Preserve is a special place.” The entries can include people enjoying the Ribbon Walk Nature preserve, wildlife, or landscapes. Complete rules available upon registration

#### Home School Science Series: Spring into Discovery

**39169** Ages 6 - 8  
**39170** Ages 9 - 11  
Tuesday 1 - 3 p.m. March 10, March 24, April 14, April 28, May 12, May 26  
\$30 includes all six courses

Join us for this exciting series that will take us on a journey of discovering our surroundings. Each session will help your child to develop a sense of place and a connection to the natural world. Topics include your ecological address, habitats, birds, mammals, herptiles and insects.

#### Full Moon Hike

**38778** Wednesday, March 11  
7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • FREE  
Here is your chance to hike in the preserve guided by the light of a full moon. We will talk about what animals come out at night and may even catch glimpses of them on our hike! Participants must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

#### Owl Prowl

**38779** Friday, March 13  
7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • \$3 adult, \$2 child  
Ever wonder whoooo is watching you in the night? Discover the variety of owls that live in Mecklenburg County as we enjoy a night hike. Lucky participants may hear the awesome call or see the majestic flight of one of our resident species. Participants must be able to walk 2 - 3 miles on uneven terrain.

#### Wild Edibles Greenway Hike

**42210** Friday, April 3  
10:30 a.m. - noon • Ages 18 and older • FREE  
Take a walk on the wild side with a trained naturalist as they teach you to identify the smorgasbord of food nature has to offer on the Campbell and McAlpine Creek greenway.

#### Wildflower's of McDowell Nature Hike

**41520** Saturday, April 4  
9:30 - 11 a.m. • All Ages • FREE  
Bring your family out to enjoy a guided nature hike as we begin to discover the Wildflower's of McDowell Nature Preserve.

#### Family Outdoor Cooking

**42177** Saturday, April 4  
11 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Ages 10 and older • \$10/adults, \$8/child (10 - 17)  
Join us for this class as we learn some great camping recipes that the entire family can help prepare. We will be cooking over a campfire, using a box oven, pie iron, and Dutch oven.

#### Keep America Beautiful

**42211** Saturday, April 4  
9 - 10 a.m. • All Ages • FREE  
Bring a trash bag and a can do attitude and be mother earth's maid for a day. Pick up litter at the Little Sugar Creek Greenway at Huntingtowne Farms Park and we'll reward your good deed with a light brunch.

#### Composting for Beginners

**41800** Saturday, April 4  
12:30 - 2 p.m. • Ages 16 and older • FREE  
Learn how easy it is to start and maintain your own compost bin by Master Gardener and Master Composter Nancy DeVries. Have young ones? Sign them up for the Nature Time Class.

#### Nature Time Class

**41810** Saturday, April 4  
12:30 - 2 p.m. • Ages 3 - 12 • \$3/child  
Let your children enjoy crafts and a stories while you learn how to compost.

#### Mad Scientist Spring Break Camp

**41524** Monday, April 6 - 8 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Ages 7 - 9 • \$100  
Drop your child off for three days of wacky experiments, rocket creations, and colorful eruptions. Your child is promised to take home something new everyday!

#### Home School Special: Amazing Amphibians

**41721** Thursday, April 9  
2 - 3 p.m. • Ages 5 - 7 • \$3  
Learn about the fascinating world of amphibians and their life cycles. Also, get to meet some real live amphibian friends!

#### Preschool Naturalist Series: Froggy Days

**41746** Saturday, April 11  
10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3- 5 • \$3  
Hop your way over for a fun and froggy day. See frogs and toads at their finest and discover how they change through life starting as a tiny tadpole and becoming a leaping amphibian.

### Week of the Young Child

#### Babes in the Woods

**42283** Monday, April 13  
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. • Ages Infant - 2 • FREE  
Take your baby on a journey to experience all the good things about nature! Discover ways to spark the sense of wonder in your little one.

#### Mini-Monet

**41785** Tuesday, April 14  
10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • \$3  
Allow your child's inner Monet to appear as they create different pieces of nature art and express their inner artist.

#### Kids Can Cook

**41823** Wednesday, April 15  
10 - 11 a.m. • Ages 5 - 12 • \$3  
Lean how to follow a recipe, measure, and mix together ingredients to make delicious and healthy snacks for you and your family!

## Kayaking

Horse Trailer parking lot

**39814** Saturday, April 4 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39815** Saturday April 4 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39819** Sunday, April 5 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39820** Saturday, April 11 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39821** Saturday April 11 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39822** Saturday, April 18 • 9 a.m. - noon or

**39823** Saturday April 18 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39824** Sunday, April 19 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39825** Saturday, April 25 • 9 a.m. - noon

**39826** Saturday April 25 • 1 - 4 p.m.

**39827** Sunday, April 26 • 1 - 4 p.m.

Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join with us as we paddle on Mountain Island Lake. We will learn the parts of the boat, the four basic strokes, and how to enter and exit the kayak. Then, we will paddle along the shoreline and explore the lake. All equipment provided. Please bring water and a snack.



## Sunset Kayak Tour

Horse Trailer Parking lot

**39862** Wednesday, April 8

**39863** Wednesday, April 22

5 - 8 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$20

Join us to learn the fundamentals of flatwater kayaking as we enjoy watching the sunset while paddling around Mountain Island Lake.

## McDowell Nature Center

15222 York Road, Charlotte

All programs meet at McDowell Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.588.5224 for more information.

### Sunset Kayak Tours for Beginners

**42152** Tuesday, April 21 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

**42153** Tuesday, April 28 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

**42154** Tuesday, May 5 • 7 - 8:30 p.m.

**42155** Tuesday, May 12 • 7 - 8:45 p.m.

**42156** Tuesday, May 19 • 7 - 8:45 p.m.

**42157** Tuesday, May 26 • 7 - 8:45 p.m.

Ages 12 and older • \$15/Adult, \$10/Teen (12 - 17)

Join us as we learn the basic essentials of flat water kayaking while watching the sunset over Lake Wylie.

### Advanced Sunset Kayak Tours

**42165** Thursday, April 9 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

**42166** Thursday, April 16 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

**42167** Thursday, April 23 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

**42168** Thursday, April 30 • 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

Join us for a relaxing tour on Lake Wylie as we watch the sunset and paddle around the Nature Preserve. Prior kayak experience is required.

### International Children's Book Day

**42282** Thursday, April 2

10:30 - 11:30 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 • FREE

Celebrate the value of reading to your children with three short children's books that will tickle their imagination and spark an interest in wildlife around the world.

### Terrific Twos: Bouncin' Bunnies

**40628** Friday, April 3 • 10 - 10:45 a.m.

**40632** Friday, April 3 • 11 - 11:45 a.m.

Age 2 • \$3 per session

Bounce this way with your little ones and enjoy some bunny fun in age appropriate group time and parent-child activities.

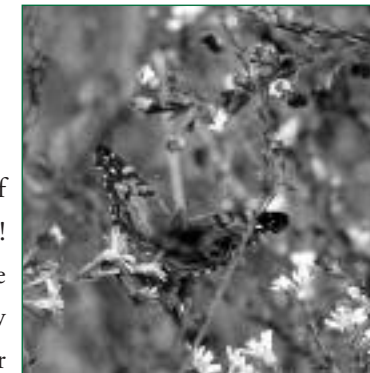
## Nature Journaling

RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

**38786** Saturday, March 14

1 - 3 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Capture the inspiration of nature through journaling! Love the idea of nature journaling but don't know how to get started? Join us for an exciting two hour introduction course. Participants should dress for the weather and must be able to hike 3 miles.



## Spring Celebration

RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

**38787** Saturday, March 21

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. • All Ages • FREE

Join us as we celebrate all things spring! We will host various activities throughout the day to welcome in the spring season. Activities include hikes, crafts, stories and games!

## Frogs and Toads: Sounds of the Night

RibbonWalk Nature Preserve

**38787** Friday, March 27

7 - 8:30 p.m. • All Ages • \$3 adult, \$2 child

From the peep of a spring peeper to the growl of a leopard frog, the evenings of early spring are alive with the sounds of frogs and toads. Hike through the darkness as we listen to these wonderful sounds of the night. Participants must be able to hike 2 - 3 miles over uneven terrain.

## Biodiversity Series: Congaree National Swamp Canoe

**38797** Saturday, March 28

8 a.m. - 6 p.m. • Ages 10 and older (Ages 10 - 17 must be accompanied by an adult) • \$20

Join us as we explore one of America's greatest natural wonders via canoe! Congaree Swamp National Monument is the largest expanse of old growth bottomland forest in the United States. It not only features a large diversity of wildlife, but it also contains some of the tallest trees in the East with one of the highest canopies in the world. Participants must be able to paddle for 3 - 4 hours.

# April Programs

## Latta Plantation Nature Center

6211 Sample Road, Huntersville

All programs meet at Latta Plantation Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Call 704.875.1391 for more information.

### Walk with a Naturalist: Exploring Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge

**40124** Saturday, April 4

10 - 11:30 a.m. • All ages • FREE

Are you interested in the natural world around you? Would you like to notice more when you are outside? Join us on these Saturday excursions that will focus on observing, exploring and appreciating the world around us. Terrain & Distance: Moderate, approximately 1.5 - 3 miles. No registration required.

### Awesome Animal Adaptations

**42362** Sunday, April 5

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. • Ages 6 and older • \$4/adult \$3/child

Animals have certain adaptations in order to survive. Come learn how animals have adapted to live in different environments. Some animals mentioned will be mammals, fish, birds, reptiles and amphibians. Let's not forget about those animals without backbones as well.



### BSA: Reptile and Amphibian Study Merit Badge

**39681** Monday, April 6

1 - 9 p.m. • Ages 12 - 18 • \$15

Upon completion of this course, all registered Boy Scouts in the Mecklenburg Council will earn the "Reptile and Amphibian Merit Badge." Make sure to dress for the night weather as we will venture out to Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge after dark. Dinner will be provided.

## Latta Plantation Nature Center Junior Garden Club

Wednesday, April 8

**42299** 1 - 2:30 p.m. • Ages 3 - 4 • FREE

**42311** 2:30 - 4 p.m. • Ages 6 - 12 • FREE

Come out and let your little ones help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering and transplanting. Long pants and closed toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

## Latta Plantation Nature Center Adult Garden Club

**42348** Wednesday, April 8

4:30 - 6 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • FREE

Come out and help our Naturalist make the garden look beautiful. Activities may include watering, mulching, pruning, and transplanting. Long pants and closed-toed shoes are recommended depending on the weather.

## BSA: Bird Study Merit Badge

**39682** Wednesday, April 8

8 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Ages 12 - 18 • \$15

Upon completion of this course, all registered Boy Scouts in the Mecklenburg Council will earn the "Bird Study Merit Badge." Lunch will be provided.

## Birds, Blooms & Butterflies

**40111** Thursday, April 16

9:30 - 11 a.m. • Ages 3 - 5 with adult • \$3

Meet us at the nature center for a short, easy walk to look for some of our favorite signs of spring - songbirds, wildflowers and beautiful butterflies. Feel free to bring your own butterfly net, or you can borrow ours!



## Spring Wildflower Hike

**39683** Saturday, April 18

10 a.m. - noon • Ages 12 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

The piedmont forests explode in a quiet riot of colorful woodland wildflowers throughout spring. Learn how to identify these delicate forest flowers along the Beechwood Trail at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve.



## Turn off the TV Week

### Nature Night Hike

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**42364** Monday, April 20

**40112** Thursday, April 23

6 - 7:30 p.m. • All ages • FREE

What better alternative to TV than an after-dinner sightseeing walk along scenic Mountain Island Lake? Join us for a stroll down the Audubon Trail as we search for nature's treasures. No registration required.

### Rockin' Reptiles

**42367** Tuesday, April 21

6 - 7 p.m. • All ages • FREE

Come see and learn about some of the rockin' reptiles found at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. No registration required.

### Free Family Fishing

Latta Plantation Fishing Pier

**42373** Wednesday, April 22, Friday, April 24

6 - 8 p.m. • All ages • FREE

Bring the whole family out between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. for an evening of fishing and fun. Fishing gear and bait will be provided, just bring chairs to relax in and watch the sunset. Children 15 and under do not need a NC fishing license. No registration required.

## Geocaching and Segways

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**39872** Saturday, April 25

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Ages: 18 and older • \$50

Join us as we combine the sport of Geocaching with the adventure of riding on a Segway personal transporter. In the morning you will learn how to use a basic GPS unit as we hike through the woods on a "treasure hunt." In the afternoon, you will experience the trails in a whole new way - on a Segway! All equipment and training provided. Trail refreshments included. Tours last about 3 hours including a 30 - 45 minute training session. Please bring a sack lunch. Terrain is level to moderately hilly on gravel and dirt trails. Geocaching - 3 miles; Segways - 5 miles.



## Wetlands Journey

Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge

**39684** Saturday, April 25

10 a.m. - noon • Ages 6 and older • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Explore a seldom seen part of Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge as we go off the path and journey into the wetlands! We will catch frogs, salamanders and a variety of macroinvertebrates.

## Geocaching at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve

Volleyball Court at Picnic Area

**39873** Sunday, April 26

1 - 4 p.m. • Ages 12 and older • \$8/Adult \$6/child

Seeking adventure? Well, join us for the high tech treasure hunt of Geocaching at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. You will learn the functions of a Garmin e-Trex GPS unit and how to locate and find various types of caches. GPS units are provided or bring your own. Please bring water and a snack. Terrain & Distance: level to moderate. Approximately 2 miles.

## Seeds to Fruit

**40118** Sunday, April 26

2 - 4 p.m. • All ages • \$4/adult, \$3/child

Where does that juicy apple come from? Join us in exploring flowering trees and plants and find out which ones produce our favorite fruits and veggies!

## Segway Adventure Tour

Picnic Area Parking Lot

**40404** April 4 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40405** April 4 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40406** April 5 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40407** April 5 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40408** April 18 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40409** April 18 • 3 - 6 p.m.

**40410** April 19 • 9 a.m. - noon or **40411** April 19 • 3 - 6 p.m.

Ages 18 and older • \$35

Discover 1,300-acre Latta Plantation Nature Preserve - on a Segway! These two-wheeled personal transporters are a fun way to see the wildlife, natural areas, and trails of Latta Plantation Nature. Highlights include the Shady Trail, Catawba Trail, Buzzard Rock Trail, and gorgeous views of Mountain Island Lake. All equipment and training provided. Trail refreshments included. Tours last about 3 hours including a 30 - 45 minute training session.

## Sunset Segway Adventure Tour

**40531** Wednesday, April 8

**40532** Wednesday, April 22

5 - 8 p.m. • Ages 18 and older • \$35

Explore Latta Plantation Nature Preserve at sunset while riding a Segway! Learn to ride these self-balancing, two-wheeled machines and see nature like never before - at 8 mph! Highlights include the Shady and Catawba Trails. We will conclude the tour from the Buzzard Rock Overlook for a



beautiful view of the sun set over Mountain Island Lake. Equipment and training provided.