
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District to Host Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz in Celebration of Pollinators

Waukegan, Illinois (September 21, 2021) – The Waukegan Park District is partnering with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to raise public awareness of the importance of pollinators with the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz on Saturday, September 25 from 10am to 12pm at Bevier Park, located 2255 Yorkhouse Road. Organized by the NRPA and The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation, the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz will provide an outlet for families to enjoy a safe and educational experience in the outdoors during the pandemic.

During the Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz, individuals will use iNaturalist, a free app, to create a snapshot of the variety of wildlife that can be found in Bevier Park by taking photos of plants, insects, and animals. The photos submitted by participants will showcase what wildlife is present in the park and provide the community with more information about local pollinators, which are essential to the ecosystem.

A limited supply of pollinator plants and milkweed seeds will be distributed to participants. Other activities, including a children's nature craft, will be available. The Waukegan Park District is encouraging the community to plant milkweed and other pollinator-friendly plants at their homes to support pollinator populations.

Pollinators are a vital component of our ecosystem and an essential link to the world's food supply. According to the White House's Pollinators Health Task Force, during the last thirty years, the United States has seen a steady decline of pollinators, such as bees, bats and butterflies, at an alarming rate of thirty percent (30%) annually, making it vital to take action on pollinator protection. A recent NRPA poll found that nearly all adults in the United States agree that promoting pollinator health should be a conservation priority across the country. Promoting pollinator health includes protecting against the decline and death of pollinators, such as bees and other insects, and increasing their habitat.

Parks for Pollinators BioBlitz is aimed at positioning local parks as national leaders in advancing pollinator health and native habitat. More details, including instructions, are available at waukeganparks.org/nature.

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About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 53 properties and more than 742 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, Jack Benny Center for the Arts, Waukegan's Greg Petry SportsPark, Waukegan Skate Park, BMX Track, SplashZone, Percussion Playground, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, splash pads, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. A full range of programs and services are offered year-round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. We offer something for everyone!

The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA). The District employs 64 full-time and nearly 200 part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees and is recognized by the IPRA as an Exceptional Workplace.

Nationally accredited by the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and State accredited through the IAPD Distinguished Agency Accreditation. The District has received Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA) awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for ten consecutive years and received the coveted GFOA Triple Crown Award recognizing the District's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting and Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2019. The Waukegan Park District was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, 2019, and 2021.

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About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to building strong, vibrant and resilient communities through the power of parks and recreation. With more than 60,000 members, NRPA advances this mission by investing in and championing the work of park and recreation professionals and advocates — the catalysts for positive change in service of equity, climate-readiness, and overall health and well-being. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

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