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GRNA Volunteers,

The maple sap is running, which means that spring is in sight! As we look forward to colorful wildflowers once again lining the GRNA boardwalks and birds returning to their northern nesting grounds, we're also looking forward to more frequently getting together with you - our dedicated volunteers - during the busy warmer months. And whether "getting together" takes the form of virtual learning opportunities, outdoor citizen science events and stewardship days, or all-volunteer recruitment and training events, we've got A LOT in the works for you in 2021!

As always, thank you for being such unwavering ambassadors for GRNA, even through the difficult year we've all had. We quite literally could not protect GRNA's pristine lands and waters, nor could we share its treasures with so many visitors through educational programs and recreation, without you. We are forever grateful for your support, and we hope to see you at one or many of the following 2021 spring volunteer events!

Emily Burke
Conservation & Education Specialist

ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

FRESHWATER MUSSEL PRESENTATION

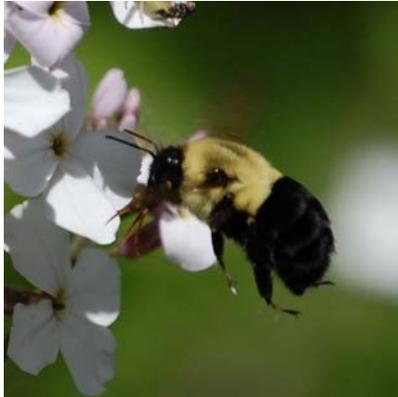
Monday, March 15th - 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm via Zoom

For the first in a two-part series of presentations from our scientist friends at Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI), we'll hear from conservation associate and zoologist Ashley Cole-Wick about freshwater mussels. Use the following log-in information to join us:

Zoom link: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/2692541771>

Meeting ID: 269 254 1771

Passcode: Flex



BUMBLEBEE PRESENTATION

Tuesday, March 23 - 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm via Zoom

For the second talk from MNFI, we'll hear from Logan Rowe about bumblebee ecology, habitat, and identification. Tune in to learn about these powerhouse pollinators with the following log-in information:

Zoom link: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/95151687020>

Meeting ID: 951 5168 7020

Passcode: bees

CITIZEN SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

VERNAL POOLS MONITORING TRAINING

Session 1: Saturday, March 27 - 9:00 am to 11:00 am via Zoom

Session 2: Saturday, April 3 - 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm via Zoom

GRNA is joining the Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership to begin collecting data on the natural area's 11 vernal pools this spring. To get trained in the monitoring protocol we'll use to survey these valuable natural features that serve as critical breeding grounds for several rare species like spotted salamanders and Blanding's turtles, tune in to the training sessions, led by the Michigan



Vernal Pools Partnership. You must attend both sessions. Please email emily@grassriver.org if you are interested and plan on attending the trainings so we can begin assembling our monitoring team. Zoom links to the training sessions to follow.

NEW ZEALAND MUDSNAIL MONITORING TRAINING

Thursday, April 8 - 11:00 am to Noon via Zoom

As part of a statewide partnership between multiple stakeholders to map the distribution



of this tiny, relatively new, and very harmful invasive species, GRNA will be integrating surveying for New Zealand mudsnails into our existing stream monitoring programs beginning this fall. If you are a stream monitoring volunteer, are interested in becoming one, or are just generally interested in this new threat to our waterways, tune into this training, led by Jeremy Geist of Trout Unlimited, at:

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98102287667?pwd=UWoyL2VCMdhpZW9XY1BIMm9wYlJvZz09>

Meeting ID: 981 0228 7667

Passcode: 523470

STREAM MONITORING TRAINING

Saturday, May 1 - 9:00 am to 11:30 am

In person at the Grass River Center

Twice each year, GRNA monitors several sites along the 3 major streams running through the natural area to assess the health of our waterways. Every year, we train new volunteers to help us collect this data and contribute to keeping GRNA's creeks healthy. If you're interested in learning how to collect this data, join us! Pre-registration is required - email emily@grassriver.org. Please note: most of this training will occur outside, but masks must be worn inside the Grass River Center.



SPRING STREAM MONITORING

Saturday, May 8 - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

In person at the Grass River Center

New and seasoned volunteers of all ages are invited to join us as we collect data as part of our biannual stream monitoring program. This year, teams will be collecting habitat data and macroinvertebrates (creek "bugs") at three sites along Shanty Creek and then will return to the Grass River Center to sort through their critter samples. For everyone's safety, we will attempt to sort outside under the pavilion, but if we are forced inside due to weather, masks must be worn. Pre-registration is required - email emily@grassriver.org.

Note: we highly encourage new volunteers to attend the Stream Monitoring Training on May 1st to become familiar with collection and sorting methods.

STEWARDSHIP EVENTS

SPRING STEWARDSHIP DAY

Saturday, May 22 - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

In person at the Grass River Center

Care to give our trails a good trimming, spruce up our gardens, or shine up some windows? Come one, come all to help us freshen up our Center and grounds in preparation for the busy summer and fall seasons! No experience is necessary, just a pair of work gloves and an open spirit. Pre-registration is encouraged; email stewardship@grassriver.org. Work will be outside, but masks must be worn if you enter the Grass River Center.



GENERAL VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING



VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, May 22 - 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

In person at the Grass River Center

If you've never volunteered with GRNA before or want to start volunteering on more projects, this event is for you! We'll be set up on the lawn outside the Grass River Center (weather

permitting) with different stations representing our different types of volunteers, including stewardship, education, citizen science, events, and administration. Come anytime during the open house to learn about opportunities as diverse as maintaining the native plant gardens around the Center, assisting naturalists during school field trips, or joining one of our Board committees.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING DAY

Wednesday, June 16 - 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

In person at the Grass River Center

This event is designed to provide our volunteers - whether you're new or seasoned - with new or improved skills to help with the valuable work that you do at GRNA. The event will be a series of breakout sessions covering topics like invasive species ID, front desk/docent training, and much more, so you will be able to choose sessions that are applicable to your volunteer role. You must pre-register for this event. To register, or if you

have an idea for a specific topic you'd like covered,
contact Emily Burke at emily@grassriver.org.



CONSIDER A DONATION

Our financial well being is dependent on programming dollars and donations, and with the former sidelined for the most part at the moment, donations are of paramount importance. Your generous support is always greatly appreciated, but in these difficult days, your willingness to help us continue our mission with a personal donation promotes you to Nature Warrior status at GRNA.

Grass River Natural Area is a nonprofit organization that has flourished for fifty-one years because of the generous support of people who value our mission "to manage the Grass River Natural Area, conserve and protect its watershed, and provide opportunities that increase knowledge, appreciation and community-wide stewardship of the natural environment".

If you believe in our mission and want to help us fulfill it for many years to come, please click on the Donate button below. Your support is greatly appreciated.

DONATE



Our mailing address is:

PO Box 231
Bellaire, MI 49615

Natural area address:

6500 Alden Highway, Bellaire MI 49615

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