



# PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES 2011

*a publication of the Friends of the Cache River Watershed*

## Changing of the Seasons

The landscape is always changing from year to year and with each season. The Cache River and its associated wetlands provide many opportunities to observe these changes and nature's events and happenings. We invite you to enjoy the seasons of the Cache while participating in one or many of the programs scheduled for 2011.

As winter is winding down, listen for frogs and toads bursting into song during the annual frog and toad survey. With spring's arrival, owls and other night life begin their evening serenades -- some with mysterious calls; we will explore these night sounds during a series of hikes between February and June. Spring also features the Cache River Nature Fest; this event highlights many aspects of nature including the area's rich history and abundant wildlife. The summer brings warm temperatures and a spice of life to the Cache; join us for an assortment of programs that feature native snakes, birds, fish, and plants. As fall approaches, monarch butterflies skip and float with the breeze, fluttering in a unique six-step dance that is presented in our program, "For the Love of Monarchs". During the winter months, thousands of birds rest and feed in the area; some species stay while others continue further south. Take note of the many winged winter residents from nuthatches to gadwalls during our Christmas Bird Count in December.

The Calendar of Events includes many wild outdoor excursions throughout the year that include a hike up the area's bluffs and glades for views of hawks, vultures, and eagles; canoe tours that meander the Cache River and its swamps as well as van excursions on the Tunnel Hill State Trail that pass through uplands, bottomlands, and wetlands. We encourage you to connect with this land and explore the wonders of the Cache through our Calendar of Events!

### Save These Dates

**Nature Fest:** April 30

**Cache River Days:** September 10

**Wild Weekend:** October 15



The Friends of the Cache River Watershed promotes natural resource conservation throughout the watershed. It works together with landowners and members of the JVP. The partnership is leading an effort to revitalize this watershed.



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### Movie Nights

**First Thursday of the Month, January thru May, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Grab your family and friends for a relaxing evening with your fellow nature lovers. Movies about nature will provide viewers of all ages with a fun and exciting way to learn about the outside world. Our AmeriCorps staff will hold a short discussion about the movie after each session. Don't miss this monthly opportunity to enjoy nature with the local community. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*



*Green Tree Frog*

### Frog & Toad Orientation

**Saturday, January 29, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Four times between February and June, volunteers gear up with thermometers, clipboards, and data sheets to venture out into the evening to conduct frog and toad audible surveys in the Cache River watershed. Join us at this orientation for volunteers who want to take part in this statewide monitoring program to learn more about the population trends of Illinois' anurans. For information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### Houses! That's for the Birds!

**Saturday, February 12, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

Spring to an early start this season by learning how to build bird houses. Draw birds to your yard by assembling homes for them and their young. Find out the differences in nest construction for and by different bird species and how to identify a bird species by the nest you see. Share in the excitement of birds taking up residence in your backyard! For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### Night Shift

**Saturdays, February 19, April 16, & June 18, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.**

Just as there are animals adapted to live during the day, there are animals adapted to be most active at night. Observe these "night critters" during a guided hike. Prepare to engage yourself in a world of mystery as we explore the lives of nocturnal animals. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *TBA*



**Don't Forget-** Movie Night the first Thursday of February



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### Leave No Trace

**Saturday, March 12, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

Develop new outdoor skills that will protect the Cache River wetlands and increase your opportunities to see and respect wildlife. This practical, hands-on program will demonstrate "Leave No Trace" methods that reduce human impact to the land. Whether you hike, bike, fish, hunt, camp, or paddle a canoe, you will gain new ideas on how to conserve the natural environment. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### All About Hummers!

**Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m. to Noon.**

Get ready for the spring migration of hummingbirds by preparing your yard or garden for their arrival. These jewels of the sky have specific needs when it comes to food sources and nesting habitat. Come learn what you can do to enhance your chances of having these fascinating birds as neighbors. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird*

### Fossilize This!

**Saturday, April 2, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

**(presentation), 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. (hike)**

Embark on a journey through time as we navigate backwards to the Mississippian period. Examine fossils dating back to a time when warm temperatures and shallow seas full of marine life ruled the area. Begin your time travel with a morning presentation about fossils. Afternoon trip will include an optional caravan to a popular fossil location. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center & Highway 146, Anna, IL*

### Cache River Watershed

#### Van Tours

**Friday, April 22, 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m.**

Delight yourself in a spring van tour on the Tunnel Hill State Trail! The tour will highlight the forests, river, and wetlands of the Cache River uplands of the watershed and the plants and animals that find a home here. Uncover the mysteries of cultures past as we pass landmarks signifying tales and events dating back the late 1800s, early 1900s. These tours are for senior citizens and those with physical limitations. Reservations are required. For time schedule and to make a reservation, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Tunnel Hill State Trail Site Office*

**Don't Forget-** Movie Night on the first Thursday of March and April and Night Shift on April 16



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### **Cache River Nature Fest**

**Saturday, April 30, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Join us for the 10<sup>th</sup> year of this WILD event. Guided canoe tours, bike trips, hikes, and special presentations will be scheduled throughout the day and will highlight the area's rich history, abundant wildlife, and natural areas. Nature enthusiasts and birders are also invited to participate in Birding Blitz 2011, a fun competition to identify birds. For more information, visit [www.cacherivernaturefest.org](http://www.cacherivernaturefest.org) or call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### **Invaders of the Forest**

**Saturday, May 7, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. (presentation), 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. (pull)**

What are the most prominent exotic invasive plants of southern Illinois? As a part of Southern Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month, find out how to recognize exotic invasive species and what you can do to prevent them from invading your yard. After the presentation, celebrate the coming of spring by helping native plants emerge from their slumber through the removal of garlic mustard, a troublesome non-native plant that invades our native forest floor. We invite you to stick around for an afternoon of pulling and bagging garlic mustard in efforts to control its spread. Presentation and pull are flexible if you only wish to attend one of these events. Light refreshments and drinks will be provided. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### **Cache River Junior Naturalist**

**Saturday, May 14, Time – TBA**

Calling all future naturalists! Explore the ecology and history of the Cache River wetlands through art, interpretation, scientific research, and simply getting out into the wild! Those who complete the program booklet and activities become certified as a Cache River Junior Naturalist and will receive a patch and certificate. For more information, call (618) 634-2231.

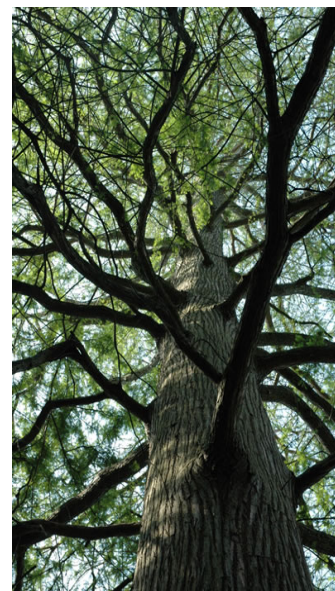
**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### **What's This Tree?**

**Saturday, May 28, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Do you know which tree's leaves smell like Fruit Loops? What tree does a bird species use as a weapon? Find out the answers to these questions and more fun facts on an interactive tree ID hike! Surround yourself in the diversity of trees native to southern Illinois and discover their intrinsic value to the Cache as we study basic tree identification skills. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Heron Pond Trail Access*



*Bald Cypress Tree*

**Don't Forget-** Movie Night on the first Thursday of May



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### Out of the Wild

**First Thursday of the Month**

**June thru September, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Get up close and personal with critters of the Cache River wetlands. Each month, we will feature one or more animals and provide opportunities to see, touch, and learn about wildlife that finds a home in the Cache River wetlands. For more information, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*



*Copperhead Snake*

### Canoe the Cache

**Saturday, June 4**

There's no better way to see the Cache than from a canoe! It's an amazing experience, paddling into Illinois' bayou for a close-up view of ancient bald cypress trees. Free guided canoe tours depart throughout the day and meander to the State Champion bald cypress tree or Eagle Pond. Space is limited; you can reserve your spot beginning May 4th. To make a reservation, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *Lower Cache River Access*

### Music in the Cache

**Saturday, June 25, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Music is everywhere you look, or rather hear. Frogs and birds sing in the swamps and forests. Winds and rain sweep through the trees and wetlands. We will listen to nature's melodies on a hike and create our own compositions through guided activities. So tune up, it's time to shake, rattle, and ribbit! For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

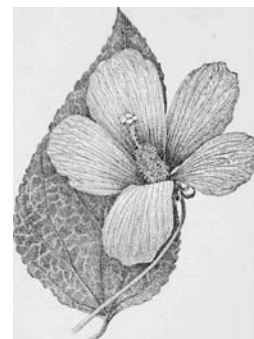
**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*

### Biodiversity of the Cache

**Saturday, August 6, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

Biodiversity is the variety of life. Variety indicates health and vigor, an exciting and complex attribute of the Cache River wetlands. This presentation will cover the diversity of natural communities in the Cache River watershed and some of their notable plants and animals. Species and communities will range from the common to the rare and endangered, and from the familiar to the rarely seen. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*



*Hibiscus Rose Mallow*

**Don't Forget-** Night Shift on June 18



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### Cold-blooded Creatures of the Cache

**Saturday, August 27, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

How can you tell a male box turtle from a female? If you step on a cottonmouth snake will it bite? How can you tell a venomous copperhead from a harmless prairie king snake? What kind of skink has a blue tipped tail? Distinguish some of the unique characteristics and have the opportunity to experience an up close and personal interaction with reptiles native to the southernmost Illinois region! The program concludes with a hike to look for cold-blooded creatures at Heron Pond. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center & Heron Pond Trail Access*

### **Cache River Days – Ullin**

**Saturday, September 10—All Day**

Don't miss the 17th Annual Cache River Days in Ullin! Food, music, exhibits, and family activities are just part of the fun. Enjoy guided canoe tours through the wetlands, courtesy of the Cypress Creek Refuge. Participants will get an intimate look at ancient bald cypress trees while experiencing the sights and sounds of one of the largest remaining wetland resources in Illinois. To reserve your space on a canoe tour, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge beginning August 10 at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *City Park in Ullin*

### For the Love of Monarchs!

**Saturday, September 24, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Saturdays, October 1, 8, & 15, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

The monarch butterflies' 2,500-mile migration from various North American sites to Mexico is endangered due to habitat loss. Help us contribute to an international effort called Project Monarch Watch. Join us for a presentation about monarchs in the morning followed by netting, tagging, and releasing monarchs

during their migration south to Mexico. The next three following Saturdays in October we will continue to tag butterflies in

the afternoon in efforts to monitor their voyage. You will learn about the monarch, which native plants they are attracted to, the vital importance milkweed plays in their survival, and what you can do to help them thrive. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Cache River Wetlands Center*



**Don't Forget-** Out of the Wild first Thursday of September



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### Cache River Wetlands

#### Guided Hike

**Monday, October 10, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Indulge in the beauty of the Cache River wetlands as we show off our trails. This guided hike will orient you to the natural and cultural history of the area as you view some beautiful sites.

Start the day with a walk on a floating boardwalk that meanders into Heron Pond's cathedral of bald cypress trees. We will then hike to Little Black Slough on the Linkage Trail and onwards to Boss Island, where a cabin dating back to 1853 still stands! The hike in its entirety will be approximately five miles. Please bring a sack lunch and water for the journey. For more information, call (618) 657-2064.

**Location:** *Heron Pond Trail Access*

#### **WILD Weekend at Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge**

**Saturday, October 15**

In celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week, Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge will provide canoe tours along the Old Cache Channel. This abandoned section of river is maintained by the Ohio River flood gates. The area provides habitat for a diversity of wildlife and an opportunity to fish, hunt, canoe, and watch wildlife.

Reservations are required for the canoe tour; reserve your spot beginning September 15.

For more information, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *Cache Levee Access*

### Holiday Open House

**Thursday, December 8, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Come one, come all to celebrate the holiday season! Staff from the Cache River Wetlands Joint Venture have good food to share and festivities to go around. For more information, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *TBA*

### Christmas Bird Count

**December – TBA**

Join us for a holiday tradition! The Christmas Bird Count is an all-day census of early winter bird populations. This conservation effort has been conducted throughout the entire country during mid-December for more than 100 years.



*Northern Cardinal*

The information gathered has resulted in the longest running database in ornithology. The data shows trends of bird populations across America. Interested individuals of all skill levels are welcome to participate for a day to learn more about our region's winter avian residents. For more information, call the Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge at (618) 634-2231.

**Location:** *southern Illinois region*



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### Contact Information

**Henry N. Barkhausen Cache River  
Wetlands Center**

8885 State Rt. 37 South  
Cypress, IL 62923  
(618) 657-2064

**Cache River State Natural Area**

930 Sunflower Lane  
Belknap, IL 62908  
(618) 634-9678  
<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov>

**Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge**

0137 Rustic Campus Drive  
Ullin, IL 62992  
(618) 634-2231  
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/CypressCreek>

**The Nature Conservancy**

0139 Rustic Campus Drive  
Ullin, IL 62992  
(618) 634-2524  
<http://www.nature.org>

**Friends of the Cache River Watershed**

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