



A publication of the
WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE AT SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE

Nature's View



Seasons of Nature

By Angela Belli, Director

Whether at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve, your backyard, or a community park – nature is all around you, regardless of the time of year. Although some creatures may take shelter, move on, or perish during the winter months, each new season will bring unique discoveries when you take the time to explore nature. You do not need a naturalist or professional to go along with you. Just take your curiosity and your senses and get outside during every season of the year!

A winter walk can refresh your soul and lift your spirits. There is something about the crisp, fresh, cold air on a sunny winter day that is invigorating. In boots or on skis or snowshoes, the Reserve is a unique spot to take a walk and spy on the marvels of winter along the 1.5 miles of trails. Stop and do some winter birding from the observation deck along the Thicket Trail; sit and reflect by the semi-frozen pond and see what creatures may visit for a drink; search for snow trails made by subnivean animals such as moles and voles; or even find some fresh bird or mammal tracks in the snow along the Meadow or Tall Grass Trails. Creatures forage for food, move to stay warm, and play during winter days so there is always a great chance to see some winter wildlife at the Nature Reserve!

Snow may still cover the ground in February, but a subtle sense of spring is in the air. The coming change of the season brings the awakening of the creatures that have spent most of the winter resting. While the snow still lies on the ground, search for springtails! Roll a ball of snow and place it in a sandwich bag...with some luck, you will soon see these wingless creatures waking up in early spring!

As spring arrives, new life begins and returns in nature. Twigs burst forth their buds on the birch, oak, and maple trees near the Children's Garden and the Learning Center Barn. Borrow a guide and see if you can identify a tree or two. Investigate the ground for those winter weeds awakening to the warm spring sun and melting snow in the Butterfly Garden. How many songbirds can you see at the feeders as they return from their long migration?

Soon, summer is here and the Reserve takes on a new hue all its own. The fields are green and showing color; the bees are buzzing at the Pollinator Gardens; and the frogs are calling at the pond edge. Come see the wildflowers in the gardens and along the trails in their finest displays of bright colors!

As the seasons change, the Reserve grows. Each new season brings sights and sounds that make taking a Nature Discovery Hike or a Habitat Trek along the trails gratifying. There is always something new and interesting to explore here at the Reserve. Stop at the trail boxes for exploring ideas! The barn doors may be closed, but nature's doors are always open for you to hit the trails in search of treasures each season.



Ring-Neck Pheasant Visitor
Photo: Allison Petris

**The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve
at Saint Vincent College**
744 Walzer Way
Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650
Phone 724-537-5284
Fax 724-537-5286

Officers of the Board:

Chairman: Arnold D. Palmer
Secretary/Treasurer: Donald W. Giffin

Trustees:

Arnold D. Palmer
David M. Roderick
Peggy Palmer Wears
Amy Palmer Saunders
Archabbot Douglas R. Nowicki, O.S.B.
Donald W. Giffin
Barbara Nakles
Robert L. Saunders III
Milfred J. Palmer
Robert F. Demangone
Terrance Ferguson, General Counsel

Officers of the Corporation:

President: Arnold D. Palmer
Secretary/Treasurer: Donald W. Giffin
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer: Robert F. Demangone

Staff Members:

Director: Angela Belli
724-537-5284
angela.belli@email.stvincent.edu
Coordinator and Newsletter Editor: Beth Bollinger
724-537-5285
beth.bollinger@email.stvincent.edu
AmeriCorps Member: Allison Petris
allison.petris@email.stvincent.edu

Website:

www.wpnr.org

Hours:

Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
First Saturday of Each Month: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturdays at the Barn Programs Begin: 10 a.m.

Contributors to this Issue:

Angela Belli & Beth Bollinger, WPNR Staff
Photographs: Allie Petris

Nature Play

by Beth Bollinger, Coordinator

It is common knowledge in today's society that children do not play outside as much as their parents did when they were young. Studies have now revealed that "Children are spending half as much time outdoors as they did 20 years ago." (Juster et al 2004); (Burdette & Whitaker 2005); (Kuo & Sullivan 2001). Even when it is cold, it is important for children (and adults) to spend time outdoors.

As the winter months kick into high gear, you might begin to notice fewer people walking around the neighborhood or out on the trails at the Nature Reserve. As the temperature drops and the days get shorter, what a better excuse to cuddle up with a blanket in front of the television, right? The staff at the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve challenges you to get out this winter and do something that connects you to nature!

The term "Nature Deficient Disorder" was coined by Richard Louv, a renowned author of the book "Last Child in the Woods." In the introduction of his book, Louv writes about a question his sons had asked him, "Dad, how come it was more fun when you were a kid?" Think back to when you were a child; do your best memories take place inside with your phones, video games, and electronic devices? I can almost guarantee your best memories took place outside in nature!

I remember playing outside as a child with my cousins, neighbors, and siblings for hours on end. We would play hide and seek at our campfires – in the dark, without flashlights (or flashlight apps), build HUGE snow forts, have awesome snowball fights, and go sled riding! Nowadays, kids seem to be more interested in

video game fights as opposed to snowball fights. As I gather with family members after 20 years and reminisce about our childhood, we find ourselves tattling on each other about things our parents never knew. We always talk about the time my brother cut his head open while sledding. My dad told him "If you want to sled ride, then quit crying and sled ride."

Only when we got home did we discover a cut big enough to need stitches. While some of our outdoor excursions led to injury, they are the most memorable times of my childhood. Try to think about how many specific memories you have playing video games 10 years later. That would be hard for most people, but I bet you can remember the time you went frog catching and fell in the water in stunning detail.

Before cell phones made us and our children reachable at all hours, we knew it was time to come home when our mom stood on the back porch and called us in for dinner. I often wonder how my 5 year old daughter will remember her childhood. As an only child with no cousins nearby, I am sad to say that she does not have as much of a chance to play outside as I would like for her to. Of course there are numerous excuses, but they all lead to the same question of how families find the time to get outside with their children. I always ask how a household with both parents working outside the home find the time to go outside and play. By the time I get home from work, make dinner, and eat, there is not much time before baths and bed. The shortened daylight hours make getting outside in the winter absolutely impossible. I think the goal for cold winter months is to get out as much as you can - even if you can only find time on the weekends. At least a couple hours outside on the weekend are better than nothing at all.

The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve is a great place to get out with your family and explore nature during all months of the year. The 1.5 miles of trails are open from dawn to dusk every day, and there are so many things to do here other than just walk. Children can play and discover by exploring the pond, gardens, and children's area. Families can come together to create memories in nature at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve that they can reminisce over 20 years from now.



Today, kids 8-18 years old devote an average of **7 hours and 38 minutes** using entertainment media in a typical day (more than 53 hours a week).

(Kaiser Family Foundation)

In a typical week, only **6%** of children ages 9-13 play outside on their own.

(Children & Nature Network, 2008)

Children who play outside are **more physically active**, more creative in their play, **less aggressive**, and show **better concentration**.

(Burdette and Whitaker, 2005; Ginsburg et al., 2007)

WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE CALENDAR

Registration forms and additional information are available on the web site (www.wpnr.org) and at the Nature Reserve. **No phone or e-mail reservations will be accepted.** ALL EVENTS ARE HELD AT WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE UNLESS INDICATED.

Monthly Meeting: 3rd Wednesday - 7 PM - Forbes Trail Trout Unlimited Meeting - www.forbestrailltu.org

Special Programs at the Reserve

TINY WONDER TIME - Tiny Wonder Time is an hour of nature play for children ages 2-4 on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Each session includes an outside activity (weather permitting), an interactive activity, a craft, and a story. Children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. **COST: \$1/month, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

NATURE STORY TIME - Nature Story Time is a literature hour for children ages 2-5. Each session includes a story and a craft. Children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

COST: \$10.00/5 Week Session, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. NO PARTIAL SESSION REGISTRATIONS.

JANUARY

1 Barn Closed – Enjoy the Trails

5 Barn Closed – Enjoy the Trails

16 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Tunneling Our Way Through"

Registration Required

FEBRUARY

1 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Hanging Around" - Session 1 - Week 1

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

2 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Groundhog Day Story Time

Join the Nature Reserve Staff for a Groundhog Day Story Time. A book and craft will be used to learn about these common rodents.

8 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Fuzzy and Furry" - Session 1 - Week 2

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

15 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"A Valentine Search" - Session 1 - Week 3

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

20 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Teeth Chattering Fun"

Registration Required

22 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Drumming Up a Storm" - Session 1 - Week 4

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

MARCH

1 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Busy, Busy Beavers" - Session 1 - Week 5

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

2 9 AM - 2 PM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Backyard Composting Workshop

The workshop consists of an in-depth lecture given by an experienced Penn State Master Gardener. Learn how to compost yard waste, what kitchen wastes are safe to compost, and receive literature covering composting techniques and how to construct a compost bin out of readily available materials.

Registration Required: \$10.00

To register, contact Westmoreland Cleanways at 724-836-4129 or email info@westmorelandcleanways.org.

15- Pennsylvania Association of
Environmental Educators Conference
16 "Peak Experiences: Climbing the Summit of
Environmental Education"

Two days of informative workshops for Environmental Educators at the Bushkill Inn and Conference Center in Bushkill, PA. For more information, visit www.pae.net.

16- Wilderness First Aid
17

A two-day class in Wilderness First Aid that includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and a two-year certification.

Registration Required: \$240.00 Additional information and Registration: (703) 836-8905 or visit <http://wfa.net>

20 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Maple Syrup Season"

Registration Required

23 1 PM - 4 PM
Lyme Disease Screening Clinic and Symposium on
Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases of Pets and Horses

A Lyme disease screening clinic and educational symposium to help the community's efforts to reduce the epidemic pet and livestock tick infections in Western Pennsylvania.

Registration Required - Deadline: March 15, 2013

Information at: <http://tinyurl.com/dogtickclinic>

29 Barn Closed – Enjoy the Trails

APRIL

1 Barn Closed - Enjoy the Trails

5 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Egg-stravaganza" - Session 2 - Week 1

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

6 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Taxidermy from Start to Finish

Learn first hand how taxidermist, Bill Hise, owner of Bear's Den Taxidermy in Finleyville, PA, prepares and finishes deer mounts. Discover how a deer hide is tanned, mounted, and customized to make the finished product life-like.

Registration Required: FREE

6 9 AM - 11 AM
Beatty County Road Clean Up

Join the Nature Reserve and Mountain View Rotary as we clean up Beatty County Road. Coffee and Donuts at 8:30 AM. Please register at 724-537-5285. Meet at the Saint Vincent Gristmill.

12 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Go Fish" - Session 2 - Week 2

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

17 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Mud Bath"

Registration Required

19 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Do You Hear What I Hear?" - Session 2 - Week 3

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

21 Westmoreland Earth Day
Saint Vincent College Carey Center Gymnasium
11 AM - 4 PM

Join local organizations as they share their time and expertise. Environmental groups will connect you to your community and help you find the pieces of the environmental puzzle.

26 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Snake Escape" - Session 2 - Week 4

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

MAY

3 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
"Nature Scents" - Session 2 - Week 5

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

4 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Growing Up WILD Teacher Workshop

A 6-hour workshop focusing on "Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children" activity guide. The training and the guide focus on wildlife and nature exploration. Curriculum provided by PA Game Commission.

Registration Deadline: April 8, 2013
Act 48: 6 hours FEE: \$25.00

15 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "A Little Ray of Sunshine"

Registration Required

JUNE

1 10 AM - 1 PM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Nature Photography for Beginners with Richard Stoner, Saint Vincent College Instructor

A short class on landscape photography which will go over basics of setup, focus, file format, exposure, etc. and emphasize composition and using the available natural light. The class will involve both indoor and outdoor instruction. Demonstrations of how to make a more interesting photograph of both the macro world, such as flowers, as well as the general landscape.

Registration Deadline: May 24, 2013

Maximum: 20 participants

FEE: \$20.00 Camera Required - Digital or Film

16-17 Wilderness First Aid

A two-day class in Wilderness First Aid that includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and a two-year certification.

Registration Required: \$240.00

Additional information and Registration: (703) 836-8905 or visit <http://wfa.net>

19 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Veggie Bugs"

Registration Required

JULY

7 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Mystery Live Animal Show

Maybe a bird, mammal, reptile or amphibian, you will have to come to see. Learn about a creature up close with the Reserve staff.

17 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "One Tiny Turtle"

Registration Required

NATURE EXPLORER CAMPS

Bug Camp for 5 Year olds

June 25 - 27 10 AM - Noon

\$50.00/child

5 year olds (with an adult) will "Go Buggy" along the tall grasses, the trails, and around the pond edges as they search for butterflies, spiders, ants, dragonflies, bees, beetles, and more! Hands-on investigations, games, and mini labs will take children on a nature adventure they will never forget!

Fur and Feathers Camp (6-7 Year Olds)

July 8-12 9 AM - Noon

\$100.00/child

Curiosity will take flight as students learn about song-birds, birds of prey, and other birds native to our state. They will also learn about mammals that inhabit our region. They will take part in explorations, experiments, games, hikes, and more as they explore the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve.

Slime and Scales Camp (7-8 Year Olds)

July 22-26 9 AM - Noon

\$100.00/child

Children will enjoy a week of learning and adventure as they explore the slimy and scaly world of amphibians and reptiles. Native toads, salamanders, frogs, turtles, and snakes will visit throughout the week as children learn about these cold-blooded creatures. Campers will create themed crafts and explore the natural areas of Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve in search of these fascinating creatures.

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE
AT THE NATURE RESERVE APRIL 1, 2013**

Allison Petris Joins the Nature Reserve Staff

Allison graduated from Saint Vincent College in May of 2012 with a degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. She is currently the Reserve's new AmeriCorps member working as the environmental education assistant for the Nature Reserve and a clerical assistant for the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators. While at WPNR, she is continuing her graduate studies at Saint Vincent College in Curriculum and Instruction.

Allie is not new to WPNR – she was the education intern and work study student for the last three years. Now in her fourth year working at the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve, she continues to provide a creative delivery of nature content to young children through games, crafts, technology, hikes, and story during Nature Story Time. She is responsible for Nature Story Time, special children's nature events, and many more activities. Allie also serves as the docent for the Reserve. When you enter the barn front, you can't miss her sweet "Hi" from the front desk. Welcome back Ms. Allie!!!

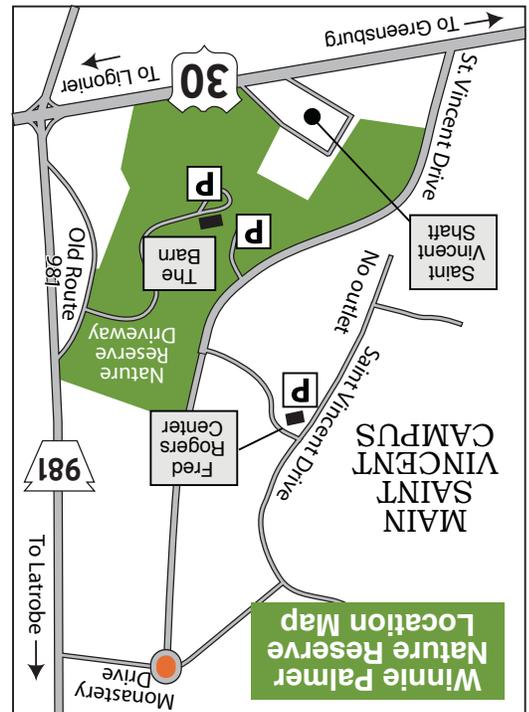


Winter Activity Ideas at the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve

- Hike our 1.5 miles of trails (maps at the entrance and the front of the Barn)
- Birdwatch (rent binoculars for free at the Barn)
- Snowshoe (rent for free at the Barn)
- Search for insects under logs
- Winter photography
- Wildlife photography
- Search for animal tracks
- Geocache (www.geocaching.com)
- Make snow angels, forts, or build a snowman in the Reserve yard (ask for seeds to decorate for the native wildlife)
- Play at the Children's Garden and Nature Playground located at the Reserve entrance



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve
at Saint Vincent College



Address Service Requested

Saint Vincent College
 744 Walzer Way
 Latrobe, Pennsylvania 15650

The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve

