



Eco-Events May 2024

The Natural Resources Department's Calendar of Events

Wednesday, May 1st, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – SOAR IN 4 FAMILY NIGHT – Soar in 4 occurs the first Wednesday of each month in downtown Bradenton. Families visit demonstration tables facilitated by Manatee County teachers, non-profit organizations, and volunteers to learn how to use various materials to support the 'spotlight book,' as well as incorporate take-home items to continue to play, create, learn, and explore at home together. These monthly events provide families with the resources and information to become their child's best 'first teacher' at home. All activities are aligned to classroom learning. Program suitable for children and their families. *Program sponsored by Soar in 4 in partnership with Manatee County.* No reservations required. For more information please visit www.soarin4.org. **The Bishop Museum**

Thursday, May 2nd, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – EMERSON ENHANCERS: TRAIL TRIMMING – Join us for a morning on the trails at Emerson Point Preserve! We will be hiking the amazing network of trails, trimming back encroaching vines and branches, picking up any litter along the way, and learning about this incredible preserve! Program suitable for ages 16 and older. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/emerson-enhancers-trail-trimming>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Pavilion**

Saturday, May 4th, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM OR 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – YOUTH ARCHERY – Set your sights on the exciting outdoor activity of archery! This program will provide participants with basic archery instruction, familiarization with archery equipment, and instruction in shooting techniques that create successful archers. All equipment will be provided for use. Program is suitable for children ages 6 to 16. *Program sponsored by the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in partnership with Manatee County.* *Two identical sessions are offered. Please register for only one session each month.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/may-youth-archery/>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Rye Preserve – Pavilion**

Saturday, May 4th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. This week we will have special guests from DeSoto National Memorial with activities for kids. Program suitable for all ages. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Tuesday, May 7th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – EMERSON ENHANCERS: GARDEN REFRESH – Join us at Emerson Point Preserve to refresh and renew the garden near the Emerson Point visitor's center. We will be pulling weeds, trimming overgrowth, realigning border rocks, and spreading pine straw on the paths. Program suitable for all ages. Volunteers 16 and younger must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/emerson-enhancers-garden-refresh>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Garden**



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*Friday, May 10th, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM – OYSTER SHELL DRILLING FOR VERTICAL OYSTER GARDENS WITH TRAM RIDE TO DOCK – Volunteers wanted! Come help us drill holes into oyster shells that will be used to make Vertical Oyster Gardens, also known as VOGs. These VOGs will be installed under docks and other structures to provide a surface for live oysters to attach themselves. Oysters feed by filtering and cleaning water, a key to a healthy estuary and our marine ecosystems. Two shifts offered: 8am-10am and 10am-12pm. After an hour drilling session you will have the option for a tram ride out to our dock to see a living VOG! Program suitable for adults. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/oyster-shell-drilling-with-tram-ride>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – NEST Pavilion***

*Saturday, May 11th, 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM OR 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/may-robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead***

*Saturday, May 11th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. This week we will have special guests from DeSoto National Memorial with activities for kids. Program suitable for all ages. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***

*Monday, May 13th, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM – SUNSET TAI CHI AT THE NEST – Join us for this monthly class at the NEST! At sunset on the second Monday of the month, Dr. Brian Nell, a certified Tai Chi instructor, will lead the group through the gentle movements of Tai Chi. This is a great way to shake off the stressful work week. Improve your balance, loosen your joints, and improve flexibility as you relax and breathe. This class is perfect for beginners and will include an exploration of several different styles of Tai Chi and Qigong. This class is held rain or shine. Program suitable for adults. *Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-tai-chi>. For more information please contact aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***



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Tuesday, May 14th, 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – WILD FL 101: BIRD SONGS – Have you heard the chaotic song of a mockingbird? Or the shrill call of an eagle? Join us for a sunset edition of our bird song series to listen for birds and learn the basics of bird song identification. This month, we will walk around Leffis Key Preserve to discover a new appreciation for the sounds of our crepuscular feathered friends! Program suitable for adults. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/wild-fl-101-bird-songs-at-leffis-key>. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Leffis Key – Pavilion**

Thursday, May 16th, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM – SEASHELL SHORE WALK – Calling all beachcombers and seashell enthusiasts! Join us for a relaxing walk on the beach to search for seashells and learn to identify them. This program will explore what makes mollusks unique and bring you up to speed on the latest research in malacology. Learn about ethical seashell collecting methods while discovering a new appreciation for our beautiful shorelines. Program suitable for all ages. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/seashell-shore-walk-may>. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Coquina Beach South – Longboat Key Bridge**

Friday, May 17th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TALL TAIL TRIBE: OCEAN DETECTIVES – Ever wonder what lives beneath the waves? Saltwater is home to many different animals with many different shapes and colors. Come to the point at Emerson Point Preserve to discover the vivid world of wildlife and walk into the shallows to spot some yourself. Program suitable for preschool age children. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/tall-tail-tribe-ocean-detectives>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – “Point” Pavilion**

Saturday, May 18th, 7:00 AM – 11:30 AM – 37TH ANNUAL JERRY HILL MEMORIAL KIDS FISHING TOURNAMENT – Cast your fishing line and compete with other anglers to see who can catch the biggest or the most fish in this free kids' fishing tournament! The Jerry Hill Memorial Kids Fishing Tournament is a local Bradenton tradition encouraging children and their families to spend time together outdoors since 1987. The tournament is catch and release. Young anglers of ages 5-14 years old and, all skill levels and experiences are welcomed. Join us for a fun outdoor experience at this brand new location. Program appropriate for children between 5-14 years of age and their families. *Program sponsored by Manatee Fish and Game Association in partnership with Manatee County. Prizes awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each age category. Fish will be measured from tip of nose to tip of tail and released back into the water.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://kidsfishingtournament.eventbrite.com>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Tom Bennett Park – North Lake by Playground**



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Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

Saturday, May 18th, 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM – STARRY NIGHT ASTRONOMY – Join us for an astronomical extravaganza! Dozens of local astronomers will be set up in the Robinson Preserve Expansion with telescopes at the ready. Be sure to bring a sense of wonder and exploration as we view the skies through high-powered telescopes. Learn how to identify heavenly bodies, and how you can stargaze at home too. Program suitable for all ages. *Program sponsored by Suncoast Stargazers in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-astronomy>. **Robinson Preserve – Expansion Parking Lot**

Tuesday, May 21st, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM – CROOKED RIVER RANCH SNEAK PEEK SHUTTER STROLL – Calling all photographers! Help us document Manatee County's newest preserve. During this special "Sneak Peek" of Crooked River Ranch, we will explore the preserve before it is open to the public, to photograph the landscapes and habitats before any restoration work is done. Program suitable for adults. *This photography program is to help document the early stages of this site. We ask all photographers to send us images after this event. Please note we will be traveling off-trail and there are no facilities at this location.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/crooked-river-shutter-stroll>. For more information please contact

aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Crooked River Ranch**

Thursday, May 23rd, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – WILDLIFE SPOTLIGHT: BUTTERFLIES – Enjoy a relaxing walk through Perico Preserve to look for and identify several of Florida's butterflies. Discover the fascinating behavior of these winged wonders and learn how to make your garden more butterfly-friendly. Binoculars are recommended. Program suitable for adults. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/wildlife-spotlight-butterflies>. For more information

please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Perico Preserve –**

Pavilion

Thursday, May 23rd, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TREETOTS: WATER WONDERS – Bring your little fish for a water sensory exploration program. Engage your little guppies senses through movement, song and water inspiring nature exploration. Experience the different states of water and the animals that live below the surface. TreeTots is an interactive activity for babies and young toddlers to become acquainted to the natural world. Program suitable for newborn to 2-year-old. Reservations are

required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/treetots-water-wonders>. For more

information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – NEST**



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*Thursday, May 23rd, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: FRESHWATER DIP NET – Get your feet wet and explore the shore as we dip our nets in the water. Take a closer look at sea or freshwater creatures in their natural environment! Who eats who and why are they here? We'll answer these questions and more! Program recommended for students ages 7-13 *Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/freshwaterdipnet>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Rye Preserve – Pavilion***

*Friday, May 24th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: SALTWATER DIP NET – Get your feet wet and explore the shore as we dip our nets in the water. Take a closer look at sea or freshwater creatures in their natural environment! Who eats who and why are they here? We'll answer these questions and more! Program recommended for students ages 7-13 *Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/saltwaterdipnet>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Large Pavilion #1***

*Saturday, May 25th, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM – CROOKED RIVER RANCH SNEAK PEEK BIOBLITZ – Explore Manatee County's newest preserve! During this special "Sneak Peek" of Crooked River Ranch, we will explore the preserve before it is open to the public. Using the iNaturalist app, we will document the plants and animals present in the preserve before any restoration work is done. Program suitable for all ages. *Please note we will be traveling off-trail and there are no facilities at this location. Participants must stay with the group at all times. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/crooked-river-bioblitz>. For more information please contact aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Crooked River Ranch****

*Saturday, May 25th, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM OR 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/may-robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead****



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Saturday, May 25th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Walk the grounds of the historic Reasoner Tract and observe botanical giants collected from around the world. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Learn about upcoming programs and exciting new additions to Robinson Preserve. Program suitable for all ages.

Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

Tuesday, May 28th, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM – TAMING NATURE: CUBAN RANCHO HERITAGE LECTURE – Manatee County's coastline was the perfect fish-rich environment Cuban fishermen needed to settle and create villages, or ranchos. These ranchos were a hub of local commerce, trade, and culture where Cuban fishermen and natives intermingled freely leaving a rich inheritance of mixed culture and race. Join us in a presentation to learn about the stories and rich heritage of Manatee County's early anglers! Program suitable for adults. No reservations required. For more information please contact llapszynski@scgov.net or call (941) 404-2862. **Sarasota County History Center**

Thursday, May 30th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – GREEN EXPLORERS: SEARCHING WITH SNORKELS – Snorkel into the shallow sea grass and mangrove roots to discover wild creatures below the water's surface. New snorkelers and kids who have snorkeled before will delight in the experience of Neal Preserves Cove. Nets will be available to scoop up animals for closer examination. Green Explorers is a low-structured, highly social, and experienced-based activity. Program suitable for all ages recommended for ages 6-12-year-olds. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/green-explorers-searching-with-snorkels>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Neal Preserve – Pavilion**

Friday, May 31st, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – NATURE TALES: I SEE EYES – Does your kiddo enjoy stories and nature? Join us at Conservatory Park in Nature Tales. Meet monthly at Conservatory Park for an interactive story and activities. This month, we will discover the marvelous eyes of different animals all around us. Program suitable for 8-year-olds and younger. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/nature-tales-i-see-eyes>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Conservatory Park – Playground pavilion**