

Night Sky, Wildflowers and Frogs: The Nature Institute invites public to celebrate spring

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Godfrey, Ill – You know the season has changed when you start to hear the Spring peepers and Leopard frogs start to chirp. At The Nature Institute (TNI), located on 2213 South Levis Lane in Godfrey, you will hear not only those sounds, but soon the laughter during their upcoming spring events too.

The March installment of TNI's Astronomy Association Meeting will take place on Thursday, March 20th at 7 p.m. Guests of this free and open event will join Eddie Agha with a discussion about the night sky. The group will meet at Talahi Lodge and will participate in a short, instructional lesson on the proper way to observe and record constellations. Attendees do not need telescopes, although binoculars are recommended. This is a monthly event and occurs every third Thursday of the month.

Spring also brings wildflowers, and TNI's Education Director Patti Brown has created a few Wildflower Walks to showcase them. There will be three events in this series and each will highlight a different TNI preserve. The first will be through TNI's Mississippi Sanctuary on Friday, March 28th from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., the second at Heartland Prairie in the north side of Gordon Moore Park in Alton on Saturday, April 5th from 11 a.m. to

1 p.m. and the last Wildflower Walk will be on Saturday, May 10th at TNI's Olin Nature Preserve from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. These guided hikes are free and open to the



public.

To get everyone in the mood for exploring in the warmer weather, author Thomas V. Lerczak will be hosting a showcase of his latest book, "Side Channels: A Collection of Nature Writing and Memoir". On Saturday, March 29th from 10 a.m. to Noon, Lerczak will add a twist to the routine of book signings. Music has been a large part of his life and now he adds that into his presentation. Lerczak has experience working for the Illinois Audubon Magazine, Outdoor Illinois, Big River and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission as a Natural Areas Preservation Specialist. Join him in a walkthrough of his book in story and song. This event will be held at Talahi Lodge and is \$5 per person and \$3 for current TNI members.

The popular "Song of the Frogs and Toads" event will be on Wednesday, April 2nd at 6:30 p.m. TNI friend and naturalist, Mr. Paul Shetley will give a presentation about his experience with amphibians and participants will learn how to identify them by their sounds and key features. Afterwards, guests will take a short walk to one of our ponds or sinkholes to catch and release frogs and toads. This program is open to participants 5 years and above and is \$3 per person.

For more information on upcoming TNI events or to register for those above, please call (618) 467-2521. Visit TheNatureInstitute.org for a complete list of programs.

The Nature institute is a land conservation and environmental education organization that works to foster an awareness and appreciation of the natural world through preservation, restoration and education. The Nature Institute has several hiking trails that are open to the public every day, dawn to dusk.

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