

1000 Islands Environmental Center

June 2026 Naturalist Report

Brad Garrity – Naturalist, 1000 Islands

Admin/Finance

- Employee mid-year reviews were completed.
- Staff participated in Emergency Safety Planning training.
- Naturalist Garrity completed CPR/AED certification training.

Education / Programming

- 1000 Islands is participating in the Summer “Passport to Nature” program spearheaded by the staff at Ledgeview Nature Center. The passport book features activities from Nature Centers around northeast Wisconsin, where participants earn an insulated water bottle, and stickers from each center to put on the bottle. 1000 Islands activity is a self-guided Crayfish hunt and invertebrate study. Funding was provided through a grant and secured by Ledgeview.
- We held a Plein Air painting program on Saturday, June 6, providing canvases and paints for participants to be inspired and paint the nature around them. 27 people attended, including a troop of girl scouts.
- Our public Crayfish and Critter Hunts continue to be a very popular program, and we held our first two in June, one in the AM and one another day in the PM. Each program brings in approximately 100+ participants. The PM group was a very hearty bunch as almost everyone stayed through a downpour that seemingly only affected Kaukauna. Our June 1000 Little Wonders program was also about Crayfish, and the littles enjoyed time in the creek. Self-guided Crayfishing continues to be very popular, and we have a lot of people borrowing our nets and buckets for the experience.
- We have transitioned from school field trips to the daycare and summer camp groups, and after a brief lull early in June, we have picked back up in the number of programs both on and off-site.
- Pollinatorpalooza! was held on Friday, June 26. We had self-guided activities for people to match pollinators with their host plants, guides on types of pollinators, make and take “seed bombs” and coloring activities. Our Pollinator Trivia Contest and Pizza Party brought in 27 people for a lot of fun and prizes.

Building and Grounds

- We are fortunate to have a few Master Gardeners volunteering to help with weeding and other needs in our butterfly and pollinator gardens. The thistle has been especially prolific this year, and they are doing what they can to help us get that under control. Additionally, our longtime volunteer, who chooses to remain anonymous, has planted many native plant species in the landscaped area in front of the Nature Center.
- The Appleton Public Library brought a group of approx. 20 amateur photographers to walk the trails and take photos as part of their “Mindfulness in Nature” program.
- The Kaukauna Goats program continued with the return of the goats from Mulberry Lane Farms on June 8th, through June 23rd. They completely cleared the area in the small “storybook walk” loop between the boardwalk trailheads. Once again we filled all available spots for volunteer goat watchers, and our Goat Team handled all of the moving and care for the goats. Our intern, Payton, helped with mucking and also with monitoring and assisting volunteers and with the visits from St. Paul Home and other groups. We had seven groups come from St Paul’s and thank volunteer Nancy Hayes for coordinating their time here where they enjoyed visiting with the baby goats, as well as having lunch and exploring the Nature Center. PBS Wisconsin sent the crew of “Wisconsin Life” for two days of filming to highlight both the goat program and the Nature Center. The day of the program filming was a very busy day and a fun experience for our staff, goat watchers, goat team, and the community, and our committee member and goat team volunteer Diane White, as well as Naturalist Garrity, were interviewed for the program. The program is set to air in January, and details will be shared as they are finalized. Special thanks to Penni Pautz for her role in making this happen.
- There were multiple pavilion and building rentals during the month including the Lions Club banquet, two celebrations of life, and graduation party. We have been actively promoting rentals on social media as we have seen a decline in requests for this summer.