

1000 Islands Environmental Center

July 2026 Naturalist Report

Brad Garrity – Naturalist, 1000 Islands

Admin/Finance

- Naturalist Garrity was out for 2 weeks at the beginning of July studying abroad.
- A \$1000 donation was received from the Firecracker 5k (Fox Family Endurance Events, Inc.) for use towards the Eagle Nest Camera project.
- A Community Foundation Grant for \$10,000 was received. These unrestricted funds may be requested annually and awarded if there is a donor with an interest. The funds will be used for Upper Woods trail accessibility improvements including a railing on the steps to the Upper Woods and a switchback addition from the Valley Trail up the hill to the Upper Woods.
- The July Friends of 1000 Islands Meeting was canceled.

Education / Programming

- There was a slight break in our programming schedule during the first two weeks of July. Asst Naturalist Benson and Naturalist Intern Chevalier facilitated a couple of crayfishing groups, but otherwise it was much needed and welcomed respite for staff.
- We held two community crayfishing program events. The first what attended by approx. 30 people but was held on a very hot day with a heat advisory. The second date was attended by over 80 people.
- The heat affected a few of our field trips, causing staff to make quick adjustments to offer indoor activities such as papermaking.
- Don Murray helped lead our Fishing Basics for Kids program again this year, with the assistance of staff. We had 8 attendees to learn about fish, fishing and how to cast using a closed reel pole.
- Hike with a Naturalist Dog Walk on the Konkapot Trail had only one participant but was an enjoyable hike to the CE trail and back. She also signed up to be a volunteer afterwards.
- The World Snake Day celebration with Carl's Traveling Snake Show was once again a tremendous success. Marking the first year of the event since Steve Keller's passing, Carl generously followed in those footsteps to offer the program at no cost to the center (we did provide a donation of a \$100 Visa Gift Card, and Naturalist Garrity also made a personal donation of a Kwik Trip gas card.) We had over 300 attendees for the event to learn about snakes and be able to handle many different species. Carl has already confirmed next year's date.

- The Basic Survival Camp for ages 7-9 was very successful. We hit our maximum registration number of 18, with 16 actually attending. Activities included discussion on planning for adventures outside and possible survival situations, making water filters, shelter building, and fire building with s'mores as an end of camp treat!
- Our summer community campfire and evening hike, "The Great Kaukauna Campout," was canceled due to rain. Our next community campfire program will be in September as part of Focus on the Fox.
- Staff worked together to plan and complete the 1000 Islands Fall 2026 public program guide supplement to be included in the city Recreation Guide for distribution to residents on August 7.

Building and Grounds

- Nature Center Building was closed July 3rd and 4th for the Independence Day Holiday.
- Five volunteers from Ditchwitch in Kaukauna worked on a Saturday in conjunction with our Service Saturday, making quick work of thistle in the gardens and helping spread fresh wood mulch in the play area.
- Volunteers John Vanstiphout and Maureen McGrath started working and will be coming regularly to help maintain the gardens.
- No damage was incurred on site from the storms that produced the tornado in Appleton/Menasha/Neenah on July 26th. Staff were on site and followed storm sheltering protocol as the storm passed through the area.