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For Immediate Release:

“Pollinator Day” Comes to Wehr Nature Center

Franklin, WI (June 12, 2015) – It’s all about the birds and bees—and the wide variety of other animal pollinators that make life on Earth possible—at “Pollinator Day,” June 27, from 1-4 p.m., at Wehr Nature Center. The Nature Center is located at 9701 W. College Ave. in Whitnall Park.

Featured at the event will be bee-keeping demonstrations, a local-honey tasting, and a visit with the Wisconsin Honey Queen, Kim Kester of Nekoosa.

But at “Pollinator Day,” more than honey bees are recognized for their plant pollination. Led by a Parks Naturalist, visitors will see a diversity of insect pollinators, including butterflies, at work on the plants around the Visitor Center. Lucky visitors may also get a glimpse of a humming bird at work here. To see a greater variety of pollinators, visitors can take a guided walk into the prairie.

“Pollinators are the unsung heroes of planet Earth. Without their work, our gardens, farms, and natural ecosystems could not exist,” said Emily Brown, Parks Naturalist. “Visitors to ‘Pollinator Day’ will find that Wehr is a pollinator paradise!”

Displays of live butterflies—from caterpillar to chrysalis to adult—will give the opportunity for up-close viewing. Booths of the Friends of the Monarch Trail, Wild Ones, and Zoo Butterfly Habitat will be staffed by butterfly experts to provide information and answer questions.

Other pollination partners at the event are Honey Producers of Wisconsin, UW–Extension Urban Apiculture Institute, University of Wisconsin (bumble bee research), and Whole Foods (samples of pollinated products—everything from fruit to nuts).

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For kids from 3 to 93, several make-and-take activities will be offered for free. Visitors can make pollinator seed bombs, little balls that combine a pollinator seed mix with clay, compost, and water. Seed bombs offer a way to get lightweight seeds into hard-to-reach areas, without being blown away by the wind. Making houses for native bees and potting bee balm will also be offered for free. For a donation of \$1, visitors can pot a milkweed plant, a favorite of Monarch butterflies.

Pollinator games and crafts for young children will be offered throughout the afternoon. Big kids will also have the opportunity to don a beekeepers suit.

Garden plants that attract pollinators, locally gathered honey, and food concession will be available for purchase.

General admission is \$3 per person, \$2 per Friends of Wehr member. Parking is \$3 per car.

A related citizen-science program, the 28th Annual Butterfly Count, will be offered Sunday, June 28. The recommended age for the program is 10 and up. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Limited carpooling is available to satellite butterfly-count sites. For more information, contact patricia.fojut@ces.uwex.edu

For more information on “Pollinator Day,” call Wehr Nature Center at (414) 425-8550 or go to countyparks.com.

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