



*Nature*  *Discovery*

*Michigan Wildlife Conservancy  
&  
Nature Discovery present*



*Saturday, March 6; 10am to 5pm  
& Sunday, March 7; 12 to 5pm*

***BENGEL WILDLIFE CENTER***

*6380 Drumheller Road, Bath MI*

***LIVE Wildlife \* Wildlife Presentations  
Wildlife Exhibits \* Guided Walks \* More!***

***Admission: \$5.00***

*Michigan Wildlife Conservancy \* 517.641.7677 \* [www.miwildlife.org](http://www.miwildlife.org)  
Nature Discovery \* 517.655.5349 \* [www.naturediscovery.net](http://www.naturediscovery.net)*

# *Get Out – Go **WILD** Weekend*

## *Saturday & Sunday, March 6 & 7, 2010*



*Get out... Go climb a tree!*

*This March, the theme of National Wildlife Federation's National Wildlife Week is "Be Out There." As our society, and especially our youth, choose to spend increasing amounts of free time indoors, the corresponding alienation from the outdoors, and specifically the natural world, is quite unsettling. We are becoming increasingly disconnected from the very environment on which we, as biological beings, depend. Research has shown that families which spend regular time outdoors produce healthier children who mature into more environmentally-aware adults.*

*In keeping with NWF's "Be Out There" theme, Michigan Wildlife Conservancy and Nature Discovery are teaming to bring Mid-Michigan a weekend full of eye-opening experiences. Our goal is to spark, in young and old alike, a hunger to get outdoors, and a personal desire to better understand the natural world. Visitors are intended to not only become motivated to "get out," but to do so with focus, enthusiasm, and a renewed sense of stewardship toward all things wild. Both days feature a smorgasbord of LIVE Michigan wildlife encounters, wildlife presentations, wildlife exhibits, and informative guided trail walks.*

*The weekend's schedule of presentations and guided walks is found below. Each day's topics are completely different. Consider attending both days! Descriptions of all exhibits, presentations, and walks continue below the schedule.*

### **SATURDAY, March 6; 10am to 5pm**

- 10:30 Birding by Ear Guided Walk*
- 11:30 Animal Tracking Guided Walk*
- 12:30 Beaver Presentation*
- 1:30 Bluebirds Presentation*
- 2:30 Pileated Woodpecker Presentation*
- 3:30 Cougars in Michigan Presentation*

### **SUNDAY, March 7; 12pm-5pm**

- 12:00 Birding by Ear Guided Walk*
- 12:45 Invasive Species Guided Walk*
- 1:30 Michigan Turtles Presentation*
- 2:30 Polar Bears Presentation*
- 3:30 Birds of Prey Presentation*



## **EXHIBITS**

*...and booths are open for visitation all day each day of the weekend, including those of local nature centers and environmental organizations.*

### **Live Michigan Reptiles & Amphibians (Sat & Sun)**

*Nature Discovery exhibits the largest combined collection of Michigan turtles, snakes, lizards, frogs and salamanders in the state. This popular and highly interactive exhibit allows close contact and ample interaction with virtually all of over 40 species displayed in aquariums and pools. Learn*

*to identify all of them, hold a Blue Racer, drop food sticks to the hungry turtles, feed crickets to the frogs, watch a garter snake greedily eat up worms. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff can help you make the most of your visit!*

### **“Natural Michigan” Photo Montage (Sat & Sun)**

*Award-winning Lansing outdoor photographer, Stephen Sage, hand-picked a couple hundred of his favorite photos of natural Michigan scenery, plant life, and wildlife for this continuous-running Powerpoint montage which can be viewed any time through the weekend. Steve’s beautiful, often jaw-dropping images are sure to give you the itch to get outdoors.*



## **GUIDED WALKS**

### **“Birding by Ear” Guided Walk (Sat & Sun)**

*Attaining the ability to “bird by ear” takes you to a level of avian awareness that can’t hold a candle to sight alone. Early March is the perfect time to get started. Before migrants return, nearly all non-migratory songbirds, like chickadees, titmice, house finches, cardinals, and more, are singing regularly to secure their breeding territories. Bring binoculars, if you have a pair. All participants will also receive a Michigan Birds checklist.*

### **“Reading Animal Tracks” Guided Walk (Sat)**

*Look for animal and bird tracks on and off the trails of the Bengel Wildlife Center with Michigan Wildlife Conservancy’s executive director, Dennis Fijalkowski. Follow the tracks of local wildlife and find where they are going, what they are doing, and who is chasing whom. Learn tracking skills in the snow. If there is no snow cover, an indoor animal tracking presentation will be given. All participants will receive a handout showing common local animal tracks.*





### **Invasive Plants – the Quiet Destroyers (Sun)**

*Dr. Patrick Ruzs, Director of Wildlife Programs for Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, will take you on a walk to discover the silent scourge of invasive exotic species that are eroding habitat quality in our state. You will see, first-hand, the work that the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy has done at the Bengel Wildlife Center to eradicate a host of invasive shrubs, vines and herbaceous plants which have become widespread through much of Mid-Michigan's public and private lands over recent years. Participants will learn to identify these invaders, learn the best methods to combat them, and also learn to identify a number of native plants, which must be nurtured and safeguarded against the onslaught of invasives if our habitats are to remain sustainable to our native wildlife.*

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Beaver: The Ultimate Rodent (Sat)**

*Meet North America's largest rodent, in the flesh, up close and personal. Louise Sagaert, founder of WILDSIDE Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Center, in Eaton Rapids, will enlighten audience members to the beaver's unique architectural habits, its habitat preferences, food, and expanding distribution in our area. Meet Paddle, a resident at WILDSIDE, and hear the story of his life before, and during his time entertaining and educating audiences.*



### **Of Bluebirds, Yard & Country Birds (Sat)**

*Gene Wasserman, Vice President of the Michigan Bluebird Society and owner of Woodcraft Kits, will present information about attracting Eastern Bluebirds and other local songbirds to your backyards. Learn how you can help your backyard songbirds make the most of their nesting efforts. This program is suitable for any level of birder, including beginners and children. Questions and anecdotes from audience members are always welcome. Early March is prime time for putting up a nest box. Gene will be at the event throughout the weekend to "talk birds," and his nest box kits are available for immediate installation!*

### **Return of the Pileated Woodpecker (Sat)**

*John Baumgartner, a retired clergyperson and Grand Ledge resident, actively serves on the Michigan Audubon Society's Board of Directors. The huge and impressive Pileated Woodpecker, considered extinct for decades in the Greater Lansing area, has undergone a remarkable resurgence here, especially in the last decade. John has documented a breeding pair in Lincoln Brick Park along the Grand River over the past several years and has amassed other recent records from around the area. His presentation also lends insight to this impressive bird's habits and ecology.*





### **Michigan is Cougar Country! (Sat)**

*Dr. Patrick Rusz, MWC Director of Wildlife Programs, will review the status of the cougar in Michigan. Many experts thought cougars (mountain lions) vanished from Michigan a hundred years ago. However, reports from citizens have continued to this day. In 2001-2003, the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy found evidence of cougars in several areas in both peninsulas. Initially, the Conservancy's research created controversy. However, in recent years, evidence of cougars is popping up in many locations, including here! Dr. Rusz will present the findings described above, why the cougar needs to be preserved in Michigan, and what you can do to help this effort. Also learn more about cougar ecology, including habits, tracks, and other signs of its presence.*

### **The "Grand Slam" of Michigan Turtles (Sun)**

*With the use of live specimens of all 10 turtle species found in the state, Jim McGrath, founder of Nature Discovery, offers a well-rounded education "in a turtle shell." Information is shared regarding their identification, physiology, habits and ecology. Jim also discusses environmental factors contributing to their decline and what you can do to help them survive. Check out Nature Discovery's entire Michigan Reptiles & Amphibians exhibit any time through the weekend.*



### **Climate Change & Polar Bears (Sun)**

*Kathy Donahue, Environmental Educator, Clinton County Department of Waste Management, will take you on a virtual field trip to Churchill, Canada to explore the issues of climate change. Hear and see first hand descriptions of melting glaciers from leading scientists, track the melting ice through the ages and explore the correlation with rising greenhouse gases. Discover the devastating effect climate change has had on the survival of arctic animals such as polar bears and seals. Learn what you can do to develop a sustainable lifestyle to not only save the arctic glaciers and the animals that depend on them but to make the earth's environment more sustainable for future generations.*

### **The Lives of LIVE Birds of Prey (Sun)**

*Meet some of Michigan diurnal and nocturnal raptors, hawks and owls, with a visit from residents of WILDSIDE Wildlife Rehabilitation & Education Center, in Eaton Rapids. Founder, Louise Sagaert will give the audience up-close opportunities while sharing knowledge about their habits and ecology along the way.*



---

[www.miwildlife.org](http://www.miwildlife.org) \*\*\* 517.641.7677  
[www.naturediscovery.net](http://www.naturediscovery.net) \*\*\* 517.655.5349