



The **mission** of Three Rivers Park District is promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system.

Silverwood Park's Mission Is:

Through quality experiences in nature and the arts, we foster lasting connections to the environment, each other and ourselves.

Big Year of Bugs

As spring breathes new life into Silverwood Park so too does it awaken a myriad of tiny inhabitants that herald the arrival of warmer days: bugs. From the gentle hum of bees pollinating vibrant blooms to the playful dance of butterflies on a gentle breeze, springtime in Minnesota showcases a fascinating array of insect activity. As temperatures rise and daylight hours extend, the insect world bursts into action, playing vital roles in the ecosystem's delicate balance.

One of the most intriguing spring bugs in the region is the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, an endangered species native to the Midwest. As temperatures warm, these vital pollinators emerge from their winter slumber, seeking out early blooming flowers for sustenance. Recognizable by their distinctive rusty-colored patch on the back, these bees play a crucial role in pollinating native plants. Their presence serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of preserving and protecting habitat to ensure the survival of not only this iconic species but also the broader ecosystem they support.

Three Rivers Wildlife Biologists have seen the rusty patched bumblebee at Silverwood Park. These sightings underscore the park's role as a vital habitat for native pollinators and highlight the importance of preserving green spaces within urban environments. Additionally, Three Rivers Park District has embarked on a significant initiative to reintroduce the Karner Blue Butterfly, a federally endangered species, to suitable habitats at Crow Hassan Park Reserve. Karner Blue butterflies feed only on wild lupine and there has been a large effort by our natural resources department to ensure plenty of it is in the area where they will be reintroduced.

In the midst of the vibrant resurgence of spring bugs, 2024 holds special significance for the Three Rivers Park District as it embarks on its "Big Year of Bugs." These remarkable insects, alongside countless others, are set to take center stage in this year-long celebration of the vital roles bugs play in our ecosystems. Look out for programs and events at Silverwood and across Three Rivers all celebrating bugs.

As Minnesotans venture forth to explore the natural wonders of their surroundings, they're invited to join in this celebration, discovering, appreciating, and advocating for the fascinating bugs that share our world.



Rusty Patched Bumblebee



Karner Blue Butterfly

Volunteer Opportunities

Program Assistant Opportunities

If you would like to volunteer for any program assistant opportunities please contact Seth Eberle. Email is seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org or call 612-508-6217.

Free Family Fun Day: Puppet Art Adventures and Let's Get StARted

Sundays, June 9, July 14, August 11
12:30PM-3PM

Art Assistants (2-4 Volunteers). Assist families and children with making art and learning about nature after a puppet show. Program runs from 1PM-3PM with a puppet show promptly at 1PM. This program will take place outdoors as the weather permits and is best for folks who enjoy enthusiastically explaining instructions and are comfortable standing for most of the program.

Make and Mingle: Glimpse

Thursday, June 20
6PM-9PM

Event Assistants (5-6 Volunteers). Assist with art-making, naturalist activities, and a hike during our seasonal Make and Mingle Event. Best for those who enjoy working with adults and a laid back atmosphere. Must be 21+.

E-cology

Friday, June 28
4:30PM-8:30PM OR
8PM-11PM

Event Assistants (5-7 Volunteers). Assist in creating an evening where Silverwood Park turns into a giant board game, plays with robots, and enjoys nature-based games. Best for those who are flexible, enjoy playing games, and are nerds themselves. Must be 21+.



Dragonfly Festival—HELD AT EASTMAN NATURE CENTER

Saturday, July 13
10AM-2PM

Event Assistants (2-4 Volunteers). Silverwood Park will be staffing this event at Eastman Nature Center. Event assistants will help make dragonfly art projects and move around with giant dragonfly puppets on bikes. Great for those who love active playing and are comfortable enthusiastically explaining instructions.

Float in Movie

Saturday, July 20
8PM-10PM

Traffic Controllers (2-3 Volunteers). Direct those who are attending the Float in Movie about where things are in the park, where to go for the film, and how to get back to the parking lot after the film. Best for those who are friendly and helpful with large crowds.

Book Swap

Wednesday, July 24
5PM-7:30PM

Event Assistants (2-4 Volunteers). Help receive and sort books that are dropped off for the Silverwood Book Swap. After the event, help pack them away to be donated. Best for those who enjoy books and can quickly categorize on their feet.

Skate the Park

Sunday, July 28
2PM-6PM

Event Assistants (2-4 Volunteers). Assist with having fun on roller skates! There will be roles for those who are not comfortable skating and potential need for volunteers on wheels. Best for those who are comfortable having fun on wheels outside and celebrating all things roller skate!

Silverwood Teen Arts Council

Teens ages 13-19 can apply to join the Silverwood Teen Arts Council (STAC). This group meets from June-March, plans Teen Nights, and works with a STAC Artist in Residence to create their own art. **Start the application process by emailing seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org.**

Volunteer Opportunities



Community Science Projects

If you have questions about these projects, please contact:

Bailey.Kaul@threeriversparks.org

Monarch Larva Monitoring

April-October

Online Training Available at:

<https://mlmp.org/get-started/online-training>

The Monarch Larva Monitoring Project is a joint MJV and University of Wisconsin–Madison Arboretum citizen science project to track monarch eggs, larvae, and milkweed throughout North America.

NestWatch

March-September

Training in May

6PM-7PM

NestWatch is a nationwide nest-monitoring program designed to track status and trends in the reproductive biology of birds. Community Scientists submit their nest records to the online database where their observations are compiled with those of other participants in a nationwide effort to better understand and manage the impacts of environmental change on bird populations.

Water Quality

April-September

Training in May

6PM-7PM

You will be collecting data on water clarity using a secchi disc and other tools to help us determine how the water quality of Silver Lake changes over the course of a summer and what general trends occur over multiple years. This data is submitted to the Lake Observer Application.



Volunteer Docents

Become an art and nature docent at Silverwood Park's gallery. We are searching for volunteers to be present in the gallery during busy weekend times, primarily Saturdays and Sundays from 1PM-3PM. We also will invite docents to be present before summer concerts. Docents are meant to invite park guests to talk about and engage with the art in the gallery, relating it to the outdoors and environmental themes. Becoming a docent requires a group training with Silverwood staff. Then, docents work independently, signing up for shifts in small groups or on their own. For more information contact Seth Eberle at seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org.

Silverwood Volunteer Appreciation Concert on July 24

Silverwood's volunteers truly help make the park an amazing place to be. We want to thank you for all you have done, no matter how much time you have given to volunteering, come to the July 24 concert at Silverwood Park so that we can thank you publicly. Register in advance by emailing Seth Eberle at seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org to receive a free volunteer appreciation kit if you attend.

Volunteer Opportunities

Summer Camp Assistants

Help our campers have the best experience they can have! Summer Camp Assistants are great for teen volunteers or adults who are interested in helping young children have a fun and joyful art making and outdoor education experience. This role is best for those who enjoy being around children, getting messy with art supplies, and being outdoors running around in the mud and dirt. It is excellent for those who are patient and helpful with re-explaining instructions.

Each camp can have 1-2 volunteers. If you can only assist on certain days, it may still be possible to volunteer. Let Seth know.

Camp Doodlebugs: Squish, Splash, Squash

June 10-13
10AM-12PM

Camp Doodlebugs: Bugs Abound

July 8-11
10AM-12PM

Digging in Nature and Clay Camp: Handbuilding

June 24-27
9AM-12PM

Nature's Protectors Camp

June 24-27
1PM-4PM

Digging in Nature and Clay Camp: Wheel Throwing

July 8-11
9AM-12PM

Micro Camp

July 22-25
9AM-12PM

Gather and Make Camp

July 22-25
1PM-4PM



To volunteer for any of these opportunities, please call or email Seth Eberle at seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org or 612-508-6217. He will connect you with the staff person leading the program or project.

