



February

News & Notes

from Mosquito Hill Nature Center

February 2, 2021

February 2 is Groundhog Day

Enjoy the annual festivities in Punxsutawney, PA with Phil if you want. In Wisconsin, any woodchuck in its right mind is still below the frostline, hibernating until March.

Their body temperature may drop as low as 35 degrees F, heart rate falls to four to ten beats per minute and they might only take one breath every six minutes.



However, the process of hibernation is not as cut and dried as we think. Retired Penn State professor of biology Stam Zervanos, who has studied wood chucks, explained in a January 2020 article in National Geographic.

"Hibernation is not a deep sleep that continues for the entire winter," explains Zervanos. Instead, groundhogs go through bouts of "torpor," when their body temperature drops to about five degrees Celsius, he says. They'll do this for about a week, then wake up for three or four days, then go back into torpor.

"They do this about 12 to 20 times in the hibernation season," says Zervanos.

Regardless of Phil's forecast, spring will be here soon (in just 6 weeks and 4 days, to be exact). Enjoy that time however you choose: skiing, sledding, reading a good book or, like any good woodchuck, hunkering down for a few more weeks.

What's happening at MHNC? Check out these coming events

Winter Animal Tracks
Saturday, February 20, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
\$6/person, \$10/household
Registration and payment due Feb. 16.

Birch Forest Wall Art Workshop
Sunday, February 28, 1:00 - 4:00 PM
\$35/person
Registration and payment due Feb. 24.



Build A Native Bee House
Saturday, March 6, 10:00 AM - 12 noon
(NEW TIME. Afternoon class filled.)

\$10/person
Registration and payment due Feb. 21

Willow Basketry Workshop
Saturday, March 13, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
\$40/person
Registration required by March 7.



Find more details in our [calendar of events](#).



Show Your Love for Winter

Let's be honest, the past year has been challenging with the constraints and losses due to the COVID pandemic, increased racial tensions, political divisiveness and more. Navigating these difficult times has taken a huge toll on the physical and mental well being of many. As we roll into the midway point of winter, our staff at MHNC would like to take this opportunity to promote some LOVE....with you!

We'd like to see what you LOVE about winter. Maybe it's snow or ice, wildlife (plant or animal) or snow sports. Maybe you travel to warmer destinations during the winter months and LOVE things there that we in the cold and snowy Midwest can only dream about right now. Not an outdoor enthusiast (gasp!)? There's plenty to love indoors in the winter: a good book, cup of hot cocoa, fireplaces, snuggly blankets, your furry (or slimy/scaly) pet, a great movie, a scrumptious meal, and more. Before Saturday, February 13, post a photo of what YOU LOVE about winter and why on our Facebook page (or yours) using the hashtag #MHNCLOVEWINTER. We'll post all of your LOVES and ours, collectively, on



Sunday, February 14, the international day of LOVE. Let's put some LOVE back into the world by sharing what we all LOVE this time of the year.

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