

# Habitat Hike Explorers Challenge

## AUGUST HABITAT HIKE CHALLENGE INFORMATION

Welcome to the challenge! This is your Explore Maplewood Challenge information that will provide you with the basics needed to tackle the challenge, along with what we are looking for from each challenge participant/household. Reminder to stay safe and follow social distance guidelines while completing the challenge!

### **CHALLENGE PACKET SECTIONS**

- Challenge Details
- Challenge Progress Log Updates
- Challenge in Action photo requests
- Highlights of Safe Outdoor Guidelines
- Helpful Challenge Tools/Documents
- Maplewood Parks PDF Map

### **CHALLENGE DETAILS**

The details of the August Habitat Hike Challenge are simple, from August 10 – August 30, visit 3 of the 5 challenge locations and at each location find 6 out of 9 of the “natural treasures” from that sites Habitat Hike sheet. You should log the sites visited and number of natural treasures found on the log sheet provided and send weekly updates to the parks and rec team so we can update the “Challenge Progress Log” on the webpage. We also encourage, but don’t require, “Challenge in Action” photos of you in action working towards your challenge completion!

Pick up of your Swag Bag and/or Medals will be communicated to the group near the end of the challenge. We will schedule an appointment pick up type situation but updates will be communicated toward the end of the challenge.

### **CHALLENGE PROGRESS LOG UPDATES – Email Sunday August 16, 23 & 30**

We will provide a weekly update via our challenge progress log that will be posted on the challenge webpage. On Sunday August 16, 23 & 30, we would like participants to email [recreationonline@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:recreationonline@maplewoodmn.gov) your weekly progress log. These updates will be compiled and uploaded to the main challenge log. See where you stack up each week! Included in this email is the excel document you can fill out weekly. Enter date, location, number of natural treasures found and any fun notes from your adventure you would like to share. An updated master sheet will be posted Monday afternoons to the website front page.

### **CHALLENGE IN ACTION PHOTOS**

We would love action photos of participants to put on the challenge webpage slideshow. Take a picture of yourself or household in action, email the photo, with your team name, location and activity, to [info@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:info@maplewoodmn.gov). We will put these “Challenge in Action” photos on a slideshow on the challenge page. Community through photos!

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## **HIGHLIGHTS OF SAFE OUTDOOR GUIDELINES**

Below are a few highlights from the DNR guidelines on outdoor recreation. Information in full can be found here: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/covid-19-outdoor-recreation-guidelines.html>

- Practice social distancing (stay at least 6 feet from people from other households).
- If you arrive at a park, water access site, or other public recreation land and see that it is busy, choose a different option.
- Avoid congregating in common areas like trailheads, parking areas, overlooks, fishing piers, boat launches or fueling stations.
- Consider visiting at off-peak times, such as mid-week, or early or late in the day on a weekend.
- Avoid contact with shared amenities like playground equipment, picnic tables, and benches. Assume such equipment has not been sanitized.
- Anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (including fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) should stay home and not engage in outdoor activities.

## **HELPFUL CHALLENGE TOOLS AND DOCUMENTS**

At the end of this document you will find the following documents to help you on your challenge!

- Location specific Habitat Hike sheets to find your “natural treasures”.
- Pollinator Hunt pdf for additional fun!
- Leave no trace document.

## **USEFUL LINKS:**

[Maplewood Parks Webpages](#) – *Information for each location.*

[Google Maps Parks Locations](#) – *List of all Maplewood parks in a simple Google Map.*

Have fun with the challenge and we look forward to seeing and hearing about your challenge progress! If you have any questions please contact me via email.

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Recreation Supervisor

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# THE FISH CREEK PRESERVE HABITAT HIKE



## RIVER VALLEY VIEW

Fish Creek Drains to this River



1) What River?

\_\_\_\_\_

## HOLES

Used by cavity nesters



Bare Soil

Hollow Stem

Found it!

## PRAIRIE RESTORATION



Only 1% of MN's native prairies are left.

Found it!

## NON-NATIVE PLANTS

Crown Vetch



Found it!

## FLOWERS BLOOMING

Nectar/pollen for flies and bees



Found it!

## GRASSHOPPER



Found it!

## MISSISSIPPI FLYWAY

Eagle—flat wings  
Turkey Vulture—Wings held at an angle like a V



Saw one!

## SONGBIRDS



Found one!

## PLAINS POCKET GOPHER MOUNDS



Saw one!

# MAPLEWOOD NATURE CENTER

## GREEN HERON POND

### HABITAT HIKE



#### AMERICAN TOADS OR TOADLETS OR LEOPARD FROGS

Hopping on the trail.



Found!

#### PAINTED TURTLE SUNNING. NEED A COOL DAY!



Found it!

#### GREY TREEFROG CAN ALSO TURN GREEN!



Found it!  
(check a windowsill if all else fails!)

#### MONARCH NECTARING ON BLAZING STAR



Found it!

#### RUSTY PATCH BUMBLEBEE

Endangered species often sighted at MNC!



Found a bee! (Any bee)

#### SQUIRRELS EATING BERRIES OR NUTS



Found it!

#### GREAT EGRET AND LILYPADS!



Found it!

#### SCOOP UP POND WATER—FIND A SWIMMING BUG!



Water boatman



Mosquito larvae



Damselfly nymph

Found one!

#### MUSKRAT SKINNY TAIL, EATS CATTAILS AND OTHER PLANTS



Found it!

# THE JOY PARK AND PRESERVE LAKESHORE HABITAT HIKE



## JOY PARK NATURE PLAY!



Find the old turtle!

Slide down the tail!

## SNAPPING TURTLES AND MORE

Females lay eggs on land.  
Maybe you will find some new babies  
emerging in late August or September.



Spotted a turtle!

## WETLANDS HELP PROTECT THE LAKE

Found one!



## FISHING PIER

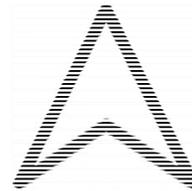


Walk out on the pier—what are  
people catching today?

Did it!

## PLANT LEAF POINTS THE WAY!

Arrowhead is great food for  
wildlife!



Found some!



## SUNFISH AND MORE!

Find the fishing dock and look into the  
lake. Look for panfish—sunfish, crap-  
pies and even their nests!



Spotted a fish or nest!

## WALK THE PRESERVE TRAIL ACROSS JOY RD.

Foxes are often spotted on this  
former farmland.

Walked it!

## LEAVE NO TRACE!

Clean up any trash.  
Especially old fishing line  
found along the shore— this is  
very hazardous to birds and  
wildlife.

DID IT

## SPOT A FISH EATING BIRD!

Eagle



Great Blue Heron



# GLADSTONE SAVANNAH PRAIRIE & HUMAN HISTORY HABITAT HIKE



## OLD COTTONWOOD IN ROUNDHOUSE GARDEN



What was this area used for?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## RAILROAD TRACK



Found it!

## PRAIRIE GRASS



Side oats Grama  
Little Bluestem

## COTTONWOOD STAR

Cut through a cottonwood twig with a penknife or hand pruners.



Found it!

## WATER TOWER



Water was for S\_\_\_\_\_ to make the train engine go.

## CATCH A BUG



Caught and released an insect!

## OAK SAVANNA



Scattered oak trees and prairie.

Make a leaf rubbing!

## WHITE PRAIRIE CLOVER



Found it!

## BLUEBIRDS



Found them!

# THE APPLEWOOD PRESERVE OLD ORCHARD HABITAT HIKE



## APPLEWOOD PARK SHELTER



Can you spy an owl, woodpecker or animal track?

Found some!

## WHITE TAIL DEER DOMINATE THE AREA

Look for signs of scat, browse, antler rubs and hair.



Found a sign!

## BUCKTHORN



Brought in by people as hedges, it escaped with the help of birds! Birds eat the berries, and poop out the seeds. It is now taking over the understory. Periodic removals are done by the city.

Found some!

## NON-NATIVE PLANTS SEEDS MOVE ON OUR FEET

Check out the informational sign about invasive plants! Brush off your boots before and after hiking!

Did it!

## GOLDENROD BLOOMING

Is insect pollinated and NOT responsible for allergies!



Found some!

## APPLES!

Sure, Try a bite!  
Wipe or wash it first!



Found some!

## PROTECT THE POND!



Frogs, toads, & special plants live here!

## SONGBIRDS



Found some!

## STAGHORN SUMAC



Feel the branches! They are fuzzy like the new antlers on a deer!

Did it!