Living in the Avon Hills
A conference for the whole family

Saturday, February 10, 2018
Saint John’s University
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Natural History • Arts • Gardening • Land Use • Outdoor Rec • Kids

Schedule

8:00 - 9:00  Registration & Check In
Exhibit Hall Open
9:00 - 10:30  Welcome and Keynote
Address: Larry Weber
10:30 - 11:00  Break/Exhibits
11:00 - 12:00  Session I
12:00 - 1:00  Lunch/Exhibits
1:00 - 2:00  Session II
2:00 - 2:30  Break/Exhibits
2:30 - 3:30  Session III
3:30 - 4:00  Submit Surveys/Exhibits

Exhibit Hall Open from 8:00 - 4:00

Registration

$20 Outdoor U Members
$25 Adult Nonmembers
$10 Children ages 5-15
$35 Walk-in Adults
No Walk-in Children

Registration fee includes:
Keynote presentation, three presentations, class materials, exhibit hall access, lunch and refreshments.

Registration Deadlines
- Postmark by February 2
- Online by February 7
- Walk-in prices after February 7

Enliven your Spirit • Feed your Mind • Awaken your Senses

A special thank you to our sponsors:

Saint John's Outdoor University
Environment Stewardship Trust Fund
AvonHills Initiative
Blattner Energy
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**Presentation Descriptions**

attend presentations on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the day

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**SESSION I  11:00 - 12:00 •**

**A. KIDS: SCATOLOGY**

Doug “the Science Dude” Peterson, (Indoor Session)

Come get the scoop on animal poop in this interactive session! Learn how scat is produced and how to identify which animal left it behind based on its size, shape and location.

**B. 10 PLANTS THAT CHANGED MINNESOTA** (also in session III)

Diane Narem, University of MN Department of Horticultural Science

Come learn about the top ten plants that most shaped Minnesota and transformed how we live today.

**C. GOING "NO-TILL" WITH YOUR GARDEN**

Dr. Joe Storlien, CSB/SJU Environmental Studies Department

Why do we dig? The benefits of tilling a garden are often short-lived. Come learn how to apply the benefits of no-till management to your garden instead! These principles will lead to healthy soil, productive plants, and happy gardeners.

**D. THE WORLD AT OUR FEET: EXPLORING MUSHROOMS**

Dr. Kyle McClure, CSB/SJU First-Year Seminar

Discover the fascinating world of mushrooms in Central MN! Learn identification techniques for common edibles, foraging strategies, and the rich life at your feet in our fields and forests.

**E. BUILDING A STRATEGY FOR INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL**

Angela Gupta, University of MN Extension

Ever feel overwhelmed by invasive species? Think you might have a problem but don’t know where to start? Attend this session to learn how to assess and prioritize invasive species work.

**F. MNI SOTA MAKOCE: THE DAKOTA HOMELANDS**

Jim Knutson-Kolodzne, SCSU American Indian Center

Learn about and integrate Dakota values for caring for the land and consider your individual, family, and community connections by examining Minnesota as a Dakota place.

**G. THE STATE OF SOLAR ENERGY**

Fritz Ebinger, University of MN Extension - Clean Energy Resources Team

Solar development started going gangbuster long before Minnesota passed sweeping pro-solar legislation in 2013. Come learn about the economics of solar and the ways communities have managed solar since then, as well as what is on the horizon.

**H. DESIGNING LANDSCAPES WITH NATIVE PLANTS**

Steve Heymans, Prairiescapes

There are several elements of landscape design to consider when it comes to the use of native prairie plants: usable spaces, parameters, paths, maintenance, and plant arrangement. Learn how these elements can be applied in the designing of residential, commercial, and public landscapes.

**I. VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES OF MN: MOSQUITOS & TICKS**

Molly Peterson, MN Department of Health

Curious about what diseases can be transmitted by ticks and mosquitoes in MN? This session will highlight vectors of public health concern in MN and the diseases they can transmit, as well as prevention methods and information about seeking treatment.

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**SESSION II  1:00-2:00 •**

**A. KIDS: WWHO00’S EATING WHO?: OWL EDITION**

Outdoor U Staff, (Indoor Session)

Ever wondered what an owl might have had for dinner? Join us to learn about owls and one of their strange eating habits - pellets! We will dissect owl pellets to find bones, fur, and other leftovers from an owl’s late night snack.

**B. MORE COLLEGEVILLE & ARBORETUM HISTORICAL TIDBITS**

Peggy Landwehr Roske, CSB/SJU Archives

The archivist is back with new images and historical details on Native Americans, growth of the Abbey Arboretum, natural history, phenology, and more!

**C. RAIN BARRELS 101**

Adam Hjelm, Sauk River Watershed District

Installing a rain barrel is an excellent way to reduce run-off and pollution, as well as save money! Participants will learn the ins and outs of rain barrels, site selection, and other tips to use rain barrels most efficiently.

**D. WILD RICE HARVESTING & MANAGEMENT**

Nicholas Snavely, MN Department of Natural Resources

Come learn about wild rice, MN’s official state grain, as well as wild rice ecology, management, harvest, and processing.

**E. HERBICIDES & EQUIPMENT FOR INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL**

Mike Reichenbach, University of MN Extension

Having issues with invasive plants that keep coming back? Come learn when and what herbicides are effective, how they should be used, and what equipment you might need for application to be effective.

**F. THE PRAIRIE & OAK SAVANNAH RELATIONSHIP IN MN**

Rob Bowen, Prairie Restorations, Inc.

The prairies and oak savannahs of MN have a complex and fascinating relationship, ever-evolving due to plant and human interactions. Learn about these tree and plant communities and how they’ve changed over time.

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**SESSION III  1:00-3:00 •**

**A. LANDSCAPES UNDER STRESS: INVASIVE PLANTS & PATHOGENS**

Dr. Ken Kies, University of MN Extension

Invasive species can have devastating effects on our natural landscapes. This session will focus on the threats posed by invasive plants and pathogens, and strategies for managing them.

**B. NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPES IN MN**

Steve Heymans, Prairiescapes

Learn about the benefits of incorporating native plants into your landscape design, including wildlife habitat, aesthetics, and ecological benefits.

**C.-field-TO-FIELD: THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT**

Dr. John Gimenez, University of MN Extension

Explore the role of sustainable agriculture in managing invasive species on farms and in fields, including best management practices and innovative solutions.

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**SESSION IV  3:00-5:00 •**

**A. HUMMINGBIRDS IN THE CITY**

Jared Keeso, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Learn about the fascinating world of hummingbirds and how to attract them to your backyard with native plants and simple feeding stations.

**B. TRAPPING & RELEASE OF FERNS IN MINNESOTA**

Kimberly Klaiber, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Explore the process of trapping and releasing ferns in Minnesota, including techniques, legal requirements, and ethical considerations.

**C. TALL GRASS PRAIRIE REHABILITATION & RESTORATION**

Dana Plante, Prairie Restoration Services

Understand the importance of tall grass prairie rehabilitation and restoration efforts, and discover best practices for implementing these projects in your own landscape.

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**SESSION V  5:00-7:00 •**

**A. THE IMPORTANCE OF BIODIVERSITY IN LANDSCAPES**

Dr. Jane Goodall, Goodall Institute

Discover the value of biodiversity in landscapes and how to incorporate strategies to enhance it, including native plant selection, habitat creation, and water conservation practices.

**B. INNOVATIVE LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

Scott Storlie, Native Landscapes Designs

Explore the latest trends and innovative design techniques in landscaping, focusing on sustainability, water conservation, and creating functional outdoor spaces.

**C. SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**

Lisa Boyer, Landscapes of the South

Learn about sustainable landscape management practices, including best practices for irrigation, maintenance, and material selection to create healthy ecosystems.
presentations on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the day

G. AVON HILLS INITIATIVE EASEMENTS: HISTORY & FUTURE
Nathan Hylla, Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District
Curious about the Avon Hills Initiative Easement Program? Join us to learn about the history of easements in the Avon Hills, lessons learned over time, and how you can implement an easement to protect your land forever.

H. ENJOYING THE NATIVE PLANTS OF CENTRAL MN
Dr. Brian Johnson, Wild Ones Native Plants Organization
In Central MN, we are near prairies, deciduous woods, and pine forests, providing convenient opportunities to enjoy the native plants of these varied communities. This presentation will introduce more ways to enjoy native plants, including where to visit them and how to raise them from seed.

I. WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME & BATS IN MN
Melissa Boman, MN Department of Natural Resources
In 2016, white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease impacting bat populations across North America, was confirmed in one of the largest bat hibernacula in the state. This presentation will discuss the important role bats play in our ecosystem and ongoing monitoring efforts by the MN DNR.

J. POETRY IN THE AVON HILLS
Larry Schug & Dr. Kyhl Lyndgaard, CSB & SJU Writing Centers
We will explore the ecological beauty, natural setting, sense of place, and the impact of various forms of human interaction in the Avon Hills through poetry. Bring a poem by a poet that you would like to share with the group, and be prepared to write!

K. MINNESOTA’S UNDERWATER FORESTS
Courtney Millaway, MN Department of Natural Resources
Discover the diverse flora hidden beneath the waves. Learn about common aquatic plants found in Central MN along with rare aquatic plants found throughout the state.

A. KIDS: NATURE EXPLORATION
Outdoor U Staff, (Outdoor Session)
In this outdoor session, we will explore the surrounding woods to learn more about native animals. We’ll look for animal signs and tracks, play games, and enjoy some fresh air! Please dress for the weather.

B. MEDITATIONS ON THE ETHICAL VALUE OF THE ABBEY ARBORETUM
Dr. Charles Wright, CSB/SJU Philosophy Department
Why preserve the Abbey Arboretum? Why not completely log or mine it? What about lease it to a developer? This presentation will review the evolving efforts by environmental philosophers to identify and articulate the ethical value of nature systems like the Saint John’s Abbey Arboretum.

C. LET’S GO NUTS!: NUT CROPS FOR CENTRAL MN
Dr. Stephen Saupe, CSB/SJU Biology Department
Hazelnuts, black walnuts, and butternuts are among the nut-producing trees and shrubs that grow in central MN. This presentation will provide an overview of the biology of these plants with a special emphasis on growing hazelnuts.

D. HONEY BEES IN YOUR BACKYARD
Vern Heise, Tri-County Beekeepers Association
Get acquainted with the fascinating honey bees visiting your yard and learn about their amazing behavior. You might decide to keep bees yourself or simply become a good host to native bees as well as honey bees.

E. EMERALD ASH BORER & GYPSY MOTH IN MN
Angela Gupta, University of MN Extension
Worried about EAB and gypsy moths? Attend this session to learn more about early detection and management for landowners. You may not be able to stop these pests, but you can prepare your woods!

F. 10 PLANTS THAT CHANGED MINNESOTA (also in session I)
Diane Narem, University of MN Horticultural Science Department
Come learn about the top ten plants that most shaped Minnesota and transformed how we live today.

G. REFLECTIONS ON COP23 IN BONN, GERMANY
CSB/SJU Panel
Since 2015, CSB/SJU has sent a delegation of students and faculty to the annual United Nations Conference of Parties (COP). In this session, hear from CSB/SJU participants from the November 2017 Climate Change Conference in Bonn, Germany.

H. IN A PATCH OF GOLDENRODS
Larry Weber, Author, Naturalist and Keynote Speaker
Goldenrods are thriving native wildflowers in MN, but have you really taken the time to stop and take a good look at the activity happening among these plants? In this session, we’ll explore what can really be seen up close in a patch of goldenrods.

I. GLACIAL HISTORY OF MN & THE AVON HILLS
Alan Knaeble, Minnesota Geological Survey
Learn about the glacial history of the Avon Hills and the relationship that glacial materials and landforms have to the physical landscape, lakes, and vegetation of the area.

J. TAXIDERMY AT HOME: EASY, LOW BUDGET PROJECTS
Mike Leedahl, Watab Taxidermy LLC
Come find out about different taxidermy projects you can do at home without spending a lot of money, from European mounts for skulls to tanning small game hides for wall hanging. A list of tools and supplies will be available to take home.

K. “POND SCUM”?: WHY ALGAE DESERVE SOME RESPECT
Dr. William Lamberts, CSB/SJU Biology Department
Algae are generally thought of as a nuisance or mere pond scum. However, the argument can be made that algae make life as we know it possible. Come learn why algae deserve some respect.
Larry Weber, author, educator and long-time phenologist, will speak about his well-documented observations of the rhythmic changes in nature over 40 years. In this presentation, we’ll take a trip through the seasons, noting what happens “here and now” in nature.

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