

June 2021

## Grand Opening of Upper Dells Education & Research Center

On Saturday, May 15, staff, neighbors, friends, university leadership, and special guests gathered at Upham Woods to celebrate the grand opening of the newly constructed building, the Upper Dells Education & Research Center. The ceremony was opened with welcoming remarks from Dean Karl Martin from UW-Madison Division of Extension. Special guest speakers included Molly Damm, youth member of Columbia County 4-H, and Joshua Goede, Extension educator from Monroe County and long-time visitor of Upham Woods. The many project team members were acknowledged by the project lead, Kate Sullivan, as well as the Director of the Natural Resources Institute, Tricia Gorby.



The staff at Upham Woods is delighted to continue its work from their new office space on the second floor. They are excited to host your group or small meeting soon!

## Lots of Day Visits at Upham Woods in May







The grounds of Upham Woods have been quiet for too long! We were excited to host many youth and adult leaders for day visits in May, included schools, scouts, and other community-based groups. They spent time in the archery range, examined critters from the pond in Wacky Water Critters, hiked and explored, and wrote some great scientific stories. We sincerely thank everyone for helping us return to more in-person educational experiences. We also appreciate the schools that invited us for Outreach visits, another great way to have an Upham Woods Experience if you are not able to be onsite.







- Cambria Friesland Middle School
- St Paul's Lutheran from Muncie, IN
- Cub Scout Pack 377
- Pecatonica School
- Girl Scout Troop 6320 Mariners
- Girl Scout Troop 2136
- Madison Community Montessori School
- Fishing Club
- Glacier Creek Middle School Outreach
- Indian Community School Ecosystem Explorations



**Madison Community Montessori School**  
Scientific Story  
Date: May 27, 2021

### Animal Tracks

We compared different sized animal tracks and learned that cats can retract their claws where as wolves and coyotes can not

For more information, contact Justin Hougham, or check out our website:  
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### Animal Signs

The naturalist described many ways to find animal signs and how we can determine what kind of animal it is by its tracks and scat.

**What we found:**

- spider webs
- beaver chews
- ant hills
- robin nest
- deer trials
- feathers

On our nature walk in the morning, we got to point out each animal sign we noticed and we recorded them on a map in the place we found them!







# STEM for All Video Showcase



The NSF STEM for All Video Showcase features federally funded projects aimed at improving STEM and CS education. The videos highlight strategies to engage students during Covid and address educational inequities. The submission from Upham Woods was a three minute video centered on the NSF Division of Ocean Sciences grant, "Developing Virtual Field Experiences to Mitigate Disruptions to the Educational Landscape by the COVID-19 Pandemic." The showcase lasted a full week; our submission was viewed 458 times!

# Research Accelerators with Ronald Reagan High School

Johanna and Isabelle met virtually over zoom with Ronald Reagan HS juniors and seniors. We started the session by asking students to define conservation, and we discussed conservation projects they have done, the value of biodiversity, and how we can measure it. The students are working on a lot of great conservation projects like pulling invasive species and creating gardens. The group talked through the methodology students can use if they want to create their own biodiversity survey using inaturalist or pen and paper. Then Johanna virtually took the students outside and explored the area around the nature center. We talked about pines, Virginia creeper, garlic mustards and the impacts of invasive species, beaver chews, and a rubbing on the tree. The Ronald Reagan students are great - they are so positive and interested in nature!

**Biodiversity Survey with Ronald Reagan Juniors and Seniors**  
Scientific Story  
Date: May 10 & 11, 2021

### What is Conservation?

“Protect, continue, keep going”

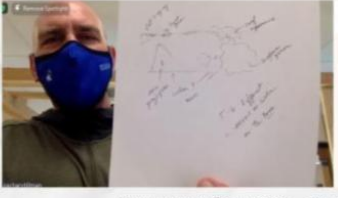
“To protect resources we have especially non-renewable ones”

“The preservation of ecosystems, species, and habitats”

“Conservation is the care and protection of these resources so that they can persist for future generations. It includes, maintaining diversity of species, genes, and ecosystems, as well as functions of the environment, such as nutrient cycling.”



### Biodiversity

“The variety of life in world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem.”



### What do you see?

Can you find the whale in the first picture?

Upham Staff joined Ronald Reagan High School Junior and Senior Environmental Science students virtually to talk about biodiversity and conservation! We explored why biodiversity is important and did mini Bioblitz behind the nature center at Upham Woods!

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# Fishing Club

Each Saturday in May, Upham Woods hosted a Fishing Club for area youth as part of our collaboration with the Dells/Delton Parks & Recreation. The group told fishing stories, learned to tie knots, discussed different types of bait, casting with your fishing pole - and of course, they went FISHING! The group had several bites and did catch a fish! One Saturday, some of the participant brought a new bait for everyone to try and the group talked about using minnows instead of worms on a

cloudy day instead of sunny.



## 2021 JCEP Conference Presentations

Upham Woods presented several times at 2021 JCEP Conference:

- Dr. Justin Hougham and Zoë Goodrow presented results of the 2021 Status & Needs Assessment led by Isabelle Herde. The presentation featured highlights from the 2019 survey, the 2021 survey, and the systemic racism in environmental education conversation led by Upham Woods in the summer of 2020.
- Dr. Justin Hougham and Zoë Goodrow presented on the Upham Woods conservation program, highlight the 10,000 Hours of Conservation Challenges (10k CC). The team reviewed the different components and programs of the conservation program at Upham.
- Dr. Justin Hougham presented a poster developed by Zoë Goodrow that highlights how Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center staff develop the Great Lakes Quests – virtual learning resources that focus on coastal issues in the Great Lakes Region. The poster presented how to use ArcGIS StoryMap to develop these resources.



## Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center

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