

Mother Nature Is Still (mostly) Open for Business



from the desk of

Robin Ginner,
Executive Director



Dear 2021: Can we try this again?

Just as the days started to get a little longer, the temperatures a little warmer and songbirds began adding their sweet melodies to our lives after another long dark winter, life as we know it came to a screeching halt. While we looked out our windows all summer, tread with caution to our local lakes and forests, summer soon gave way to fall and back into winter. I think we can all admit that we're happy to have bid adieu to 2020.

So many personal friends and acquaintances declared that 2020 was going to be the best year they'd ever had. Somehow the spirit of the Roaring 20s would take hold, and everything would suddenly be boisterous, joyous, carefree and prosperous. Little did we know that our months of winter confinement would languish on as COVID-19 took the place of a cold, northern Wisconsin winter. The Roaring 20s had been muted to a mere squeak.

I live in an old foresters' cabin on the Trees For Tomorrow campus. In front of my house is a side street that runs along the border of the USFS land that holds a majority of our campus, behind me lay the trails of our demonstration forest. I've lived in this old cabin for five years now, and never in that time have I seen as many people out walking, taking the opportunity to slow down and enjoy walks along our city streets and in our forests. Occasionally I'll see a single individual, maybe walking a dog. But more often I see whole families out together. More than one time this past year, while driving through town on my way to or from checking on my father, I saw kids out riding bikes with their friends. Nary a cell phone or other digital device in sight.

It's clear that, while the shops, movie theaters, schools, sporting events and restaurants remain closed or severely restricted, **Mother Nature remains open for business here in northern Wisconsin.** While it's easy to lament the confinement of the different variations of shutdowns around the country, the silver lining is the amount of time people are spending re-discovering the outdoors and the amount of time we're spending re-kindling the relationships with our families that got put on hold in favor of the nonstop activities and over-scheduled calendars of normal, everyday life.

That slow-down is one characteristic of time at Trees For Tomorrow that is often noted by students and teachers alike. I recall reading a thank you note from a student,

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Notes from the

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

by Kim Feller, TFT Education Mgr.

KinderWild: Playing is Learning



KinderWild Camp encourages nature-based activities for ages 3-5

I recently had the opportunity to observe a session of our nature-based early childhood education program, KinderWild. It was Friday the 13th, and I guess that was an omen, because all the children wanted to do was play instead of paying attention to planned "lessons." I could sense the frustration from our instructors, Jenny and Mandy: "They're usually so interested in our activities!" they lamented. True, the planned educational activities took a backseat to simple play for the day, but that doesn't mean that important learning didn't happen.

Learning occurs in all sorts of ways, and the beauty of what I observed at KinderWild was that it was happening as the students were having fun and unaware that they were learning! When it was time to go outside, students had an opportunity to practice their gross and fine motor skills while pulling on snow pants and buttoning up coats. While we played a "tag" game in the Playscape, we

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On Campus

from the desk of

Cheryl Todea,
Operations Manager



Usually at this time of the year, we would have provided programming, facility use, or shared our story with more than 175 groups since April 1st. Since 2020 has been anything but usual, I am still proud to say we safely reached 17 groups since April 1, 2020. Far from the usual impact, but we have to remind ourselves it is about quality not quantity, right?

Our educators worked hard this summer preparing videos to replace our summer youth and family programs (available on Facebook and YouTube). Nature at Night, our summer evening series was offered as a limited series but in its usual in-person format in July with topics such as State Natural Areas and Mushrooms of the Northwoods. We were excited to host our annual Natural Resource Careers Exploration Week for high school students in August. Eleven students spent the week exploring various careers in natural resources as they learned from various professionals. We also hosted the Ruffed Grouse Society and their 2nd annual Grouse Camp targeted at training new and returning hunters and providing them with an opportunity to test their skills in the beautiful Northwoods. We were very excited to welcome a new school to TFT in November, Oaklawn Academy, a boarding school in Edgerton, Wisconsin. And we finally piloted the first of many KinderWild Camp sessions with seven programs offered to local 3-5 year-old children.

While we did host a few additional live virtual programs this summer and fall, we continue to prepare for additional virtual programs and hope to expand our outreach programs for schools, families, adult groups, and other youth groups. If you can't come to us, we can do virtual programs or come to you! Contact us today for more information at tft.info@treesfortomorrow.com.



As we prepare for 2021 programming and beyond, we are continuing to accept scholarship support to ensure all students and families can participate in our programs. To contribute, please visit treesfortomorrow.com or call us today at 715-479-6456.

Incentives For Schools In Your Area...

RETURNING to Trees For Tomorrow?

DISCOUNT PROGRAM	DISCOUNT
FILL THE BUS 55 or more participants	10% off
OFF-SEASON November and December Workshops	10% off
EARLY CONTRACT PROGRAM Sign your contract within 60 days of departure	<i>Guarantee current year's rates</i>
REFERRAL DISCOUNT Refer a grade or new school that attends TFT	3-5% off your next visit
HIGH-NEED SCHOLARSHIP Scholarship applied per person based on school and community financial needs	Varies

Discounts subject to change without notice. Discounts and scholarship can be combined and are applied to final invoice.

NEW to Trees For Tomorrow?

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL				
	Year 1 85% off actual cost	Year 2 75% off actual cost	Year 3 65% off actual cost	Year 4 50% off actual cost
2 Days	\$30	\$45	\$81	\$90
3 Days	\$40	\$67	\$120	\$135
4 Days	\$55	\$90	\$165	\$180

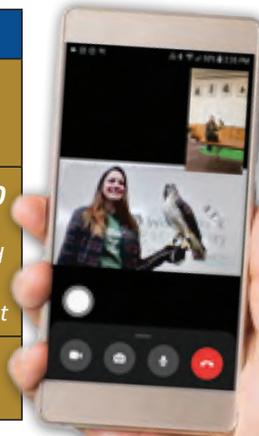
Note: all fees are approximate, per person, and are subject to change based on specific arrival and departure times, and final programs selected.

HIGH SCHOOL

Contact Cheryl directly for pricing.

UNABLE TO ATTEND in person?

VIRTUAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS	COST
OPTION 1: Full Facilitation Interactive virtual programs completely taught by TFT educators.	\$150 30-60 minutes
OPTION 2: Co-Facilitation TFT Educators share lesson plans with the teacher and lead portions of each class.	\$150-400 based on format and level of involvement
HIGH-NEED SCHOLARSHIP Scholarships available.	



Contact Cheryl for more information:
ctodea@treesfortomorrow.com
or 715.479.6456 x228

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practiced taking turns, an important social skill. During a quick indoor break from the cold, a couple of students played “dress-up”- one was a gardener, and one was a doctor. I saw our KinderWild kids using their imaginations and gaining confidence as they imagined the possibilities of their futures. During our afternoon on the Playscape, students also had the opportunity to learn their own boundaries, and practice what was safe for them- some students were comfortable balancing on our log element, while others opted to explore different things. Other students practiced asking for an adult’s help to get down when they realized they climbed maybe a little too high for their own comfort on our stump pyramid, extremely important skills that even some adults are still developing!

The chance to be outside was also a valuable experience for the day. It had just snowed, and students had a great time inspecting and playing with the snow! The chance to run outside and play gave students not just the benefits of being in nature, but also the benefits of physical activity. At the end of the day, I reminded Jenny and Mandy that their hard work had not been in vain — even though the day had not gone according to plan our students were outside, and learning through play (just a different type of learning than what was planned!), and some days, that’s enough! ❄️

Our response to COVID-19

TFT works with the CDC and State and County Health Department to implement and update guidelines to ensure the safety of our staff, students and guests:

- Notice with link on each web page to COVID-19 information and resources
- Self-Assessments completed by all TFT staff and participants on a daily basis
- Frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer (available in every building)
- Significant increase in amount of cleaning in each building and in all vehicles
- Social Distancing set-up in classroom and during outdoor activities
- Face Coverings – whether indoors or outdoors
- Reduction of the amount of people in dorm rooms, restrooms and lounge area
- Only essential staff will interact with program participants ❄️

a year or two ago, who lauded the fact that they didn't even think about their phone the entire time they were on campus! Perish the thought! Three whole days without a device in hand. When the weather warms, and my windows are open at home, I often hear students yelling, screeching and laughing as they run through the trails of our Demonstration Forest. Once again, devoid of digital connection. Simply enjoying exploration for the sake of exploration, and the fun of being someplace new.

Right now, like most of society, our campus remains painfully quiet. With the suspension of field trips as schools function on reduced, altered or virtual schedules, our groups have also cancelled their traditional trips to Trees For Tomorrow. Our staff has rotated in and out over the past several months, some on furlough, others working reduced hours. We'd love nothing more than to see the kids here on campus, learning, exploring and growing, but we'll have to be patient for next school year when they, hopefully, return with the fear of a virus long since forgotten.

While traditional schools are functioning in varied and alternative forms, many parents are also taking on the responsibility of homeschooling their children. Take this opportunity to bring your kids or grandkids outside for a field trip to explore the changing environment as our forests, fields and parks slumber through their long winter's nap. Call it their Earth Science class and enjoy time connecting with both the children and the environment.

As we slowly start getting back to some semblance of normalcy, keep going outside. Don't lose that slowed-down, relationship-nurturing, nature-embracing lifestyle we've all welcomed over the past several months. Mother Nature remains open to the public, and she's there to remind us how to enjoy the little things in life without an over-scheduled agenda or a digital device in our hands. ❄️

PLAN YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE COMMUNITY EVENTS

KinderWild Camp

Early Childhood Development for 3-5 year olds
Several 9-week sessions throughout the year, Fridays, half or full-day

Family Adventures

Half-Day-ish Guided Recreation-based Family-Friendly Activities, 2 Saturdays each month, year round

Stay and Play Multi-Day Retreat

Guided outdoor activities, lodging, meals, select dates, year round

- Nature ReTREEts for Families
- Nature ReTREEts for Adults

SPECIAL EVENTS

19th Annual Golf Outing Fundraiser

June 4, 2021, 7:30 a.m. check-in, Eagle River Golf Course

Forest Fest - The Best Fest in the Midwest

July 31, 2021, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., TFT Campus

SPONSOR. DONATE. PARTICIPATE!



Susan Jersild Velikoff

When I was in 9th grade, my school counselor chose me for a scholarship to attend a camp called Trees For Tomorrow. I got a camera that year and took a few pictures that I still have. How did they know I love trees? They were right, but it still mystifies me.

(Trees For Tomorrow) must have influenced me, because during my life, I became a master gardener, volunteered at nature preserves, established several certified backyard habitats, including one at a school. At that school, I proposed the idea of an outdoor classroom, and worked with various agencies over several years to get donations and slowly construct an environment showcasing the local biomes, plants from prominent literature, and plants with social and historical significance. The birds and animals came. The trees grew. We brought in a massive stump to watch it decay. We planted the offspring of one of the heritage trees that were meeting sites for planning the American Revolution. I became a fan of native plants and created my own databases. I led guided tours along part of the Oregon Trail and created a publication with the photos and histories of native plants. Now in Montana, I'm still studying local plants. I love growing trees from seeds and supporting sustainable plantings.

Betty Smith wrote a book in 1943 called A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. Ravaged by concrete, pollution and crowding, nothing seemed to grow in Brooklyn except one miraculous tree. I have seedlings of that tree growing in my yard today. I admire their tenacity.

Thank you for instilling a lifelong passion in me for trees and other plants, nature, sustainability, habitat preservation and more in 1975. ❄️



Your...
Our...
Their... **IMPACT.**



Donor Impact:



Klinner Insurance has supported Trees For Tomorrow since 2013. They specialize in providing insurance to the stewards of our forests: Loggers, foresters, tree trimmers and log haulers.

The company continues to support TFT because they believe it is important to support those who support the wood and paper industries. Trees For Tomorrow does that through natural resource education programs.

Klinner Insurance provides business insurance to Trees For Tomorrow, and was instrumental in securing substantial grant funding from West Bend Mutual on behalf of TFT in 2020.

“We share the values of natural resource education, conservation, sustainability and the multi-use concept of our natural resources,” says David Klinner, owner of Klinner Insurance. “We have been very impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the Trees For Tomorrow staff,” he added. ❄️



David Klinner (left) with volunteer Curt Welnetz at the 2020 Golf Outing Fundraiser

#GivingEveryDay = Donate Now

Many of those on our staff, our board, advisory council, and from among our supporters were first students in awe of the outdoors during a visit to Trees For Tomorrow as youngsters. Our experiences as schoolchildren helped forge the adults we’ve become and honed our appreciation for the natural world.

Because of the challenges of COVID-19, Trees For Tomorrow has had to suspend programming and furlough staff until schools resume next school year. Thanks to the Federal government’s Paycheck Protection Program and Small Business Association funding, we’ve been able to maintain a minimum staff to keep TFT growing and developing. Our curriculum continues to be improved by our education staff, campus-wide maintenance projects are being undertaken by our maintenance and hospitality crew, fundraisers and events are being planned by our marketing department, and we are developing new nature programs for both children and adults.

We know times are tough for many of us, with jobs lost, hours reduced, schools closed and the health and safety of our families in question. But if you are in the position to donate to Trees For Tomorrow, your gift will help ensure the longevity of a Wisconsin institution.

If you’ve been considering a gift to Trees For Tomorrow, there’s no time like the present to make a significant impact on the security and future of our organization. We are in need of funds during these challenging times to help keep our organization running until our programs can resume again in the coming months. **Over the course of 76 years, we’ve weathered wars, economic downturns, and challenging times. But nothing could have prepared us for a nation-wide – or a world-wide! – shutdown of our society and economy.**

While funds are needed year-round, now is a critical time for Trees For Tomorrow. We would like to personally ask you to consid-

er a gift in the amount of \$250 or more – but of course any amount you can afford will dramatically aid in our cause during these turbulent times. **You can make a donation by visiting our website TreesForTomorrow.com and clicking on the red Donate Now button in the top right corner. You can also give us a call at 715-479-6456 to talk about additional ways to help Trees For Tomorrow through this challenging time.**

Thank you for your support throughout the years. Without the impact of donors and supporters like you, we never would have had the opportunity to reach the hundreds of thousands of kids who have come through our doors since 1944. Your support, now more than ever, is greatly needed and appreciated!

May you and your family remain safe and healthy, and we look forward to seeing you on campus again at one of our programs in 2021! ❄️

A Place to Lay My Head

By Vern Gentele

TFT Assistant Education Manager

“Face Mask Required.” “Safer at Home.” Social Distancing.” Phrases we have become very familiar with this year that were put in place to help prevent the spread of a coronavirus. For some this meant a frantic attempt to get supplies such as food, hygiene products, and of all things, toilet paper. Citizens don’t know how long these restrictions will last, but it is in our best interest to continue to embrace them. While many people were getting prepared to stay indoors away from others, many animals were preparing to come out of a long nap or hibernation. Let’s go back to the beginning of the story and examine why or how this phenomenon takes place each spring.

Definition of Hibernation

The Oxford dictionary defines hibernation as:

1. The condition or period of an animal or plant spending the winter in a dormant state.
2. An extended period of remaining inactive or indoors.

Synonyms for hibernation include words such as sleep, slumber, torpor, motionlessness, dormancy, suspended animation and idleness. Each word gives a slightly different flavor to what is actually taking place for each individual during this period.

Hibernation is a period of physiological changes in the body which allow the animal to survive for long periods during colder months. These changes include lowered body temperature, slower heartbeat, metabolism, and the elimination of the need for defecation.

Scientifically there are similarities and differences between sleeping and hibernating.

When humans sleep, their heart rate and temperature is reduced slightly, and breathing is also slowed. The muscle system is allowed to relax and regenerate. During hibernation, the animals’ body temperature is lowered to near freezing, or in some instances below freezing. Hibernating mammals have a temperature set point. Various glands in their body allow the burning of stored fat to maintain a minimum body temperature. This acts much like a thermostat in a house.

When you think of hibernation the first animal that comes to mind is the bear. There are, however many other species that hibernate during the winter. There are some species that hibernate during the summer (also known as estivation) or times of extreme heat and arid temperatures.

Why Hibernate?

The answer to this question is as diverse as the animals themselves. We will look at a few species, such as snakes, frogs, bats, and bears to identify how they prepare for hibernation, how long their hibernation lasts, and what triggers the beginning and end of this phenomenon.

Most hibernation occurs as a result of the amount of energy needed to maintain an animal during adverse conditions. An example of this is the black bear. While a bear will eat meat, it is mainly an herbivore. As the vegetation dies and the amount of available food decreases, hibernation is the best remedy for this species.

When studying hibernation, it is important to know the difference between “True” hibernators and “Light” hibernators. True hibernators prepare for a long sleep and stay asleep for months at a time. Their body functions slow drastically or in some cases stop all together. Light hibernators prepare

Bears give birth in February, during hibernation, and the offspring nurse and grow until the momma bear wakes up.

for sleep, but may wake multiple times during the winter months to eat, urinate, and even give birth.

What Triggers Hibernation and Wake Up?

Not all animals hibernate at the same time or duration. There are three basic signals that trigger when hibernation will start. **Temperature is the most common signal for hibernation.** As the daily temperatures drop animals sense this change and prepare for hibernation. As the temperatures warm, animals may awaken and come out of hibernation. If there is an unusually warm period in the fall or early winter, this may delay hibernation. On the other hand, if the spring temperatures warm for a day or two, this may hasten the awakening of an animal. Some animals will awaken, but will return to hibernation until temperatures become more consistent.

The second signal for hibernation is food supply. As an animal recognizes that there is not as much food as before, it will begin to eat as much as possible or store what it can find for winter. It will then eat periodically during its light hibernation period.

The third signal is the amount of day light or the photoperiod. It is not clear exactly how these signals work, but studies have been carried out which indicates a type of internal clock at work in each species. Many species will begin the hibernation process at nearly the same time

Small rodents burrow deep (be exact) and

each year, even when the amounts of some elements such as temperature or sunlight are altered.

The opposite is also true. When the temperatures warm or the amount of sunlight increases, the hibernating animals will begin to wake and become active once again. There will be a need to replenish fat levels and increase regular body functions.

True Hibernators

Snakes are one example of true hibernators. The hibernation of reptiles is known as brumation. Let's examine one species, the common garter snake. Garter snakes look for dens that will allow many snakes to group together. Because they are cold-blooded, they rely on their surroundings for heat. Having multiple snakes in a small area creates enough heat to sustain them for the winter.

Wood frogs also hibernate in the winter. This hibernation can last 3 or more months depending on the outside temperatures. When the temperatures get below zero, the wood frog will find a place to burrow and stay until the weather warms sufficiently. The wood frog uses its urine and other bodily fluids to create a type of antifreeze so that it does not freeze solid. Its heart will stop beating and it will stop breathing. In the spring or early summer, as the temps rise, it will thaw out, emerge from its burrow, and go in search of a mate.

Many species of bats hibernate, while some choose to migrate to warmer regions. Here in Northern Wisconsin this includes both the little and big brown bat, northern long-



Wood frogs belong to a small group of animals that can freeze but not die. As the temperature drops below freezing each winter, the wood frog buries itself and goes into a deep hibernation, its breathing and heartbeat stop, and as much as 65% of the water in its body gradually turns into ice.

eared bat and eastern pipistrelle. Those that hibernate will do so in dark caves, dark wall-spaces, barns, mine shafts and even in people's attics. Bats will store up their food for winter. They can hibernate six months or more by falling into a deep sleep. If a bat wakes during this hibernation, it uses too much energy trying to stay warm and often will not survive.

Other true hibernators include the **box turtle, bumble bee queens, chipmunks and ground squirrels.**

Light Hibernators

Light hibernators, will prepare to hibernate, but occasionally wake for short periods of time before returning to the hibernation state.

The most common light hibernator is the bear. However, not all bear species hibernate. The black bear's hibernation is more like a torpor than true hibernation. Torpor is state of decreased physiological activity in an animal, usually by a reduced body temperature and metabolic rate.

In the fall of the year they will eat large amounts of food to store fat for the winter. They will find a place to "den up" for the winter and enter. These dens could be hollow trees, hillsides or caves. During this period, a female bear will wake to give birth to cubs then return to hibernation.

Bears will usually enter hibernation in October and come out of hibernation in late March

to early April.

Skunks and raccoons are also light hibernators. As the temperatures drop, both skunks and raccoons go into a state of torpor. They may come out at night to forage for food, then find another warm spot to rest. Raccoons are slightly different in that they will eat large amounts of food to build up fat and a thick fur before hibernation.

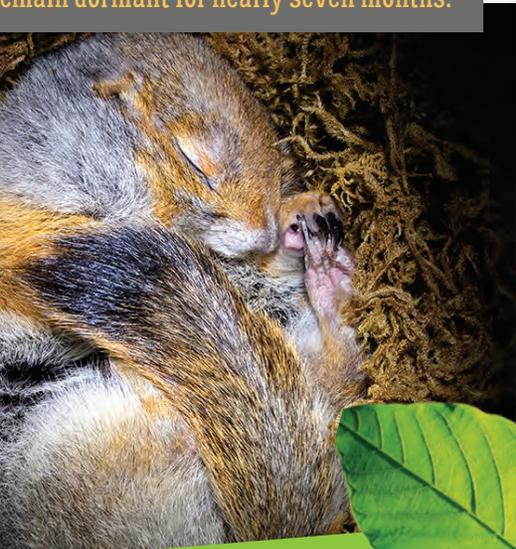
Interesting Facts About Hibernation

- *A den of over 8,000 garter snakes was found in Canada*
- *One bird species, the common poorwill, is known to hibernate the winter instead of migrating to warmer temperatures.*
- *The heart rate of the ground squirrel will drop from 300 beats per minute to 3 or 4 beats per minute during hibernation.*

Conclusion

Hibernation and torpor are interesting phenomena to study. Many preparatory activities go unnoticed by humans. Animals know instinctively what is best for their survival. So, while we may take a rest during the day or sleep at night, it is nothing compared to the weeks or months that are spent preparing for hibernation, hibernating and then awakening in the spring. Animals seem to have it made. Wouldn't it be great to find a "Place to Lay My Head" for a long winter's nap? ❄️

such as the arctic ground squirrel will hibernate beneath the earth (over one meter deep, to remain dormant for nearly seven months.



Trees For Tomorrow[®]

Environmental Education Center

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Please send editorial comments & suggestions to:
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to Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) for printing this newsletter. Thank you!



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YES! I Want to Support Trees For Tomorrow

As a private, nonprofit natural resources specialty school, we rely on donations from people like you to support our educational efforts. Please consider making a financial contribution.

- YES! I want to have an important impact on Trees For Tomorrow’s legacy of preparing today’s youth to be tomorrow’s stewards of our natural world!**
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