

The Lily Pad



Summer 2020 Newsletter

Check out what's happening at Reinstein Woods this summer!

A Message from the Director

Greetings from my home office! While I'm sad we can't announce our normal lineup of summer events, there is some positive news to report about Reinstein Woods.

1) **We're still hard at work.** Working remotely, Reinstein educators continue to inform and inspire citizens to care for nature. From Zoom sessions with local schools to an innovative "after-school" partnership, we continue to educate school children about the environment ([see page 2](#)).

This is also a challenging time for parents, so we've added "**Tips for Teaching Your Child Outside**" to our website, along with resources to help everyone **Connect with Nature in the Time of Covid**. And although we aren't yet able to offer public hikes or programs, we've added short nature videos for you to enjoy.

Teachers remain a priority, and staff continue to provide virtual trainings and curated resources to help them navigate teaching remotely. Even our "Day in the Life" program is connecting students to the environment in new ways ([see page 6](#)).

2) **Our trails are still open**, although we've made changes for social distancing. Thanks to Friends of Reinstein Woods, we continue to care for the woods, in one case with the help of some furry friends ([see page 7](#)).

3) **There's more to come.** We're working on projects to enhance the visitor experience, like a new "Mindfulness Trail" and a "Bucket List" of things to do at Reinstein Woods. Additionally, just as things were shutting down, we installed an automatic door opener on the education center's main door, improving accessibility for visitors.

None of this would be possible without Friends of Reinstein Woods, and I am forever grateful to all of you for your support. I'm confident that once Reinstein Woods is fully open again, you'll find new things to discover and explore. In the meantime, I hope this newsletter helps you to feel connected to our community of nature-lovers.

- Meaghan Boice-Green

Letter from the President

Hello and happy spring to all my friends at Reinstein Woods!

I hope this greeting finds you well, with all the lifestyle changes required during these trying times. First and foremost, I want to express my deep gratitude to our friends who continue to support the Woods and its programs. Your commitment to Reinstein Woods during this time does not go unnoticed.

As you'll read in this newsletter, while the Education Center's programming is currently limited, Reinstein Woods is adapting to the changing circumstances. We are still planning summer "events," just in new formats. The board of directors and staff are committed to the safety of our community and hope we will be together again soon!

Many of you have reached out to share your concern for the well-being of Reinstein Woods' staff and the financial standing of the organization. Fortunately, the support of our members, volunteers, and general public has allowed us to navigate this crisis and maintain financial stability, so far. However, the effects of COVID-19 continue to be felt throughout the community, as well as at Reinstein Woods. Please consider investing in the future of Friends of Reinstein Woods, so everyone can share in nature's harmony for years to come.

I have faith that we will get through this together and see a more compassionate world once we do. I'm sure many of you have walked Reinstein Woods' trails recently, and we will work with DEC to maintain the trails under these difficult circumstances. I hope you take this time to get outdoors and enjoy nature – at a safe social distance!

Best Regards to all, stay safe, stay healthy, and I hope to see you soon!

- Terry Boyle

Educators in Action!



While we can't connect with students the way we normally would this spring, Reinstein Educators are continuing to provide remote environmental education programs.

Educator Kristen Rosenburg learned to use Zoom to teach about the environment, such as this "Fantastic Frogs" lesson. Her first session was for her son. Her first lesson was for her son (and teacher's aide!) Colin's first-grade class, which was scheduled for an in-person program this spring. To accommodate the new format, Kristen broke the lesson into two sessions. The lessons went so well that she has now done the program for several additional classes.



Educator Daniel Mlodozienec stars in the Nature Explorer video series for Gloria J. Parks Community Center. Through our partnership with University District Community Development Association, third and fourth graders who normally would be in after-school care at the community center received nature kits to help them discover nature in their own yard or neighborhood. The videos introduce the kids to simple activities to help them become outdoor explorers!

Some Sunny News

Mike Adriaansen Presented with Partnership Award

Reinstein Woods Environmental Educator Assistant Mike Adriaansen received a partnership award this spring from Houghton Academy, a Buffalo Public School.

Mike has been working with Houghton students since he started with DEC more than 12 years ago. He has helped 128 students from the school attend Camp Rushford. Students have the opportunity to canoe, fish, swim, and learn wilderness skills during their time at camp.

Mike coordinates the campership program and works with the students throughout the year to familiarize them with fellow campers and the outdoors. Mike organizes activities such as planting native seedlings, hiking at Reinstein Woods, and snowshoeing in the months leading up to camp.

It is clear that Mike has had a positive impact on this program. When his name was called for the award, you could hear the excited cheers of many current and past campers! Some of the students Mike has worked with have returned to camp and gone on to become counselors. Mike continues to encourage students to get involved and attend Camp Rushford. He is a champion of connecting kids to nature!

The campership program is supported by Friends of Reinstein Woods. The Friends group pays to transport kids to camp and funds supplies, food, and entrance fees for camper activities throughout the year. We are so honored to have Mike Adriaansen as a part of the team here at Reinstein Woods!

Congratulations to Mike for a well-deserved award!



Outside Chronicles Supports Reinstein Woods through Hiking Challenge

This winter, Outside Chronicles organized a hiking challenge across Western New York to benefit local environmental organizations. Outside Chronicles and the participants of this challenge helped raise \$3,000 to support Friends of Reinstein Woods.

Participants paid \$15 to register for the challenge and received prizes upon completion. Western New Yorkers were challenged to hike five trails across the region during winter and share a picture from each landmark.

The proceeds were donated to Friends of Reinstein Woods to support environmental education programs and stewardship projects.

We would like to extend a big thanks to Outside Chronicles and everyone who participated in this challenge!

If you would like to be a part of the next challenge, please visit www.outsidechronicles.com. Reinstein Woods is one of the featured trails for the upcoming challenge.

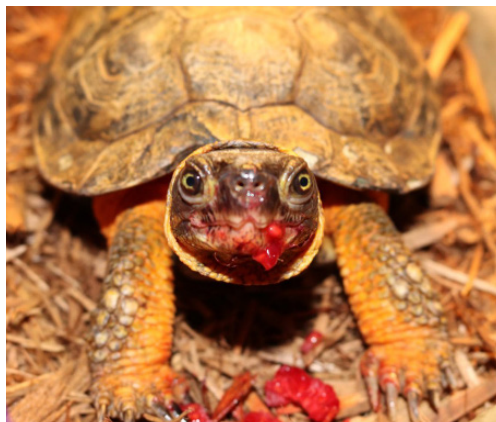
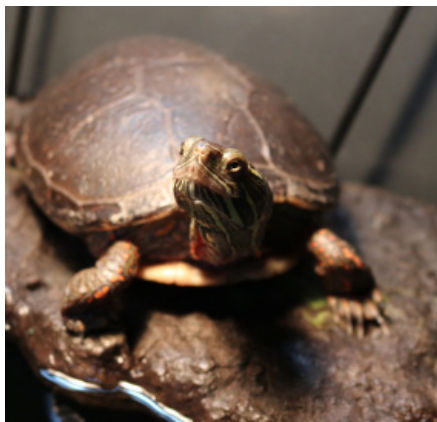


Turtle Talk

Due to the temporary closure of the Education Center at Reinstein Woods, the three resident turtles have relocated to Friends of Reinstein Woods' Educator/Summer Camp Director and unofficial turtle whisperer, Daniel Mlodozieniec's home.

Clover, Clementine, and Terra are enjoying their new home, as Daniel created a comfortable temporary habitat for them to await the reopening of Reinstein Woods. According to Daniel, a steady stream of mail-order supplies is ensuring the turtles enjoy their stay!

The turtles are happy and healthy, but like the rest of us at Reinstein Woods, are looking forward to seeing your smiling faces again soon!



Summer Programming Update

The safety and health of our volunteers, visitors, and staff is Friends of Reinstein Woods' top priority. For that reason, all public programs and scheduled events have been canceled through May 31. We will continue to monitor the situation and act in accordance to the New York State and CDC guidelines.

If we are able to safely reopen for public events, you will receive a program schedule at a later date. We appreciate your understanding, and we hope you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy!

While we do not have any events scheduled currently, you are still able to enjoy the trails at Reinstein Woods. We ask that you please review the rules for the preserve and practice safe social distancing when you visit. To learn more and for future updates, please visit www.reinsteinwoods.org/learn/hours.

In the meantime...

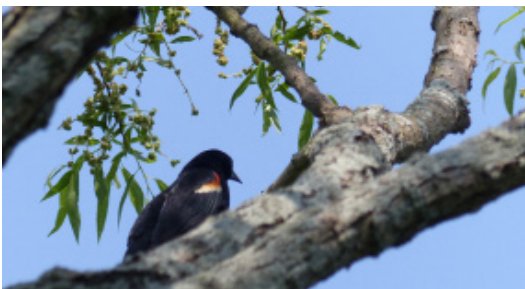
Stay up to date with nature sightings, wildlife activity, and outdoor challenges with Reinstein Woods

Although we are already a few months into spring, the greening has just begun at Reinstein Woods. Throughout the preserve, trees are beginning to show their leaves and the golden flowers of spicebushes are beginning to bud.

Many birds have returned to the woods, such as the yellow-bellied sapsucker. As their name makes obvious, these birds have a pale yellow chest and enjoy pining for sap through the spring and summer. You can find them near conifer trees, such as pine trees.

These birds can be seen at Reinstein Woods and even in your backyard! Look for them in the trees by your house or listen for the drumming sound they use to communicate. Other birds like the Baltimore Oriole and the ruby-throated hummingbirds will be making their return in the coming weeks as well.

You can learn more about these birds and other critters by viewing the educational videos on the Reinstein Woods website. Visit www.reinsteinwoods.org/explore/educational-nature-videos/ for more information.



While you are staying safe at home, you can participate in various “challenges” to stay connected to nature in the time of COVID. Educators at Reinstein Woods launched a mindfulness series, sustainability challenge, and virtual woods walks for you to enjoy nature with us while we cannot be together physically.

Check out these activities online at:

<https://reinsteinwoods.org/explore/connecting-nature/>

Reinstein Woods Helps Western New York Students Make Connections Globally

Last year, Reinstein Woods received a federal grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to expand the Day in the Life of the Buffalo River program to include the larger Niagara River/Lake Erie Watershed. The grant allowed us to provide extensive teacher training, classroom learning, and meaningful watershed education experiences for students.

The expanded program uses Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) protocols, a set of standardized water quality measurement protocols that allow educators and students to connect with others and compare data across the world.

The Holland School 12th graders have done just that! They collected water quality data and prepared a report comparing the water quality in Western New York to water data collected by peers in Kenya. They plan to present their findings at a science symposium.



Seniors from the Holland School collecting water quality data

Other students got creative in educating others about water quality issues. Students from Stella Niagara, led by teachers Margaret Feuerman and former Reinstein intern Julia Kostin, created public service announcements and “wanted” posters to alert their community to the threat of invasive species in the Niagara River. And after collecting water quality data from nearby Gill Creek, Niagara Falls High School students created video and print public service announcements warning of the dangers of water pollution.

Environmental Education Interns Adjust to Changing Environment

Each year, Reinstein Woods excitedly offers individuals a 3 to 8 month opportunity to gain skills in environmental education. Typically, interns participate in training workshops, lead tours, help facilitate summer camp, and expand their knowledge of the natural environment at Reinstein Woods and beyond.

With the unprecedented changes this year, the intern experience has a different intensity. Intern Theo Berenson has focused on developing his skills as a naturalist by taking frequent hikes to work on plant and animal identification.

Theo also has been researching some projects for Reinstein Woods when we are able to return. Theo is drafting a Zero Waste Policy for Reinstein Woods as well as working on developing a “Sensory Walk” for Reinstein Woods visitors who have autism.

Intern Nick Morelli’s “COVID contributions” to education at Reinstein Woods include a “mindfulness walk” - a series of prompts for visitors to the Lily Pond Loop Trail, a new “EcoTinker” backpack for children to borrow once the education center reopens, and a “Bucket List” of Reinstein Woods activities for visitors to achieve over their lifetime!

He’s also presenting a virtual workshop on nature art to Reinstein Woods’ volunteers.

“I’ve learned that adapting to scenarios to meet the needs and accessibility of the public is one of the biggest priorities in wildlife education,” said Nick. “It’s not always what you teach, it’s how you teach it.”

While this is not the traditional path the interns expected, they have all been hard at work to continue to educate themselves and the community.

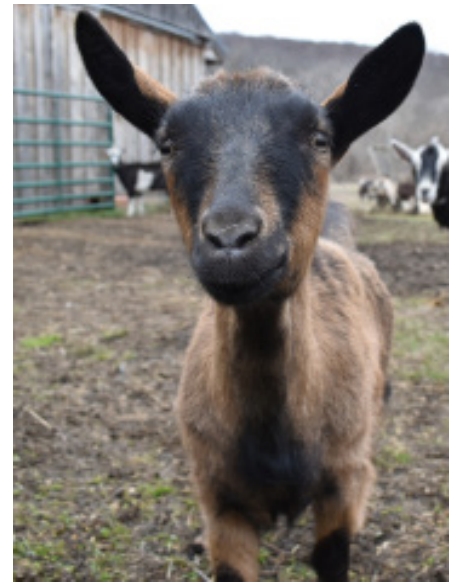


Intern Theo Berenson presents at in-school program

Invasive Species Control Project Moves Forward

Around the time that you receive this newsletter, some furry friends will be munching away at invasive Japanese knotweed plants on one of Reinstein Woods' trails. Retired milking goats from **Let's Goat Buffalo** (www.goatbuffalo.com) will spend two weeks eating this plant, which grows in dense stands and crowds out native plants preferred by wildlife. During the day, the goats will graze inside an electrified fence. Their activity may result in some trail closures; please respect the "no trespassing" signs if you visit during this time. And watch for videos about their progress on our website and social media. While the goats will not eradicate the knotweed completely, their activity is a non-chemical way to limit the spread of this plant.

Funding for this program is provided by Friends of Reinstein Woods.



Thank you to all our generous donors!

November 1, 2019 - May 15, 2020

Amos Acree	Lindsay Dzielski	Andrew Moon
Gasper Aronica	Elma United Methodist Coop Preschool	Mark and Bonnie Morgante
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Maura Duffey		Heidi Zanelli

Welcome to all our new members!

November 1, 2019 - May 15, 2020

Frima Ackerhalt	James Hufnagel	Melissa Samons
Ashley Wadsworth and Jonathan Bauer	Kevin Weber and Jackie Karlis	Barbara Sandall
Bob and Lynn Besant	Annette King	Katie Santelli
Karen Brown	Erica Kinney	Shari Senefelder
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Daniel Haeusser	David Preneta	Howard Wiseman
Colin Henry	John Rath	Donna Wysokanski
Stephanie Huffnagle	Vineeta Risbood	Clarissa Zador

Remember Reinstein

You can plant the seeds to ensure future generations have the same opportunity to enjoy nature. When you remember Reinstein in your will or designate a portion of your retirement plan to go to Reinstein Woods, you leave your legacy to respect nature forever. Each gift, no matter the size, transforms the lives of countless individuals and provides opportunities for everyone to share in nature's harmony. To start the conversation, please contact Hanna O'Neill at (716) 683-5959 or hanna@reinsteinwoods.org. You can also learn more at www.reinsteinwoods.org/donate/planned-giving/

Reinstein Woods Contact Information



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Daniel Mlodozieniec, Camp Director x205



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

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Meaghan Boice-Green, Center Director x206
Mary Ronan, Environmental Educator x201
Kristen Rosenburg, Program Coordinator x202
Ginger Wszalek, Volunteer Coordinator x204

** Please note: While staff are not onsite, they are still working remotely and are able to return calls **

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