



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Nature Institute marks its 40th anniversary

TNI rolls out environmental education for the community this year with Riverbend Trash Tag Challenge, Discovery Day Camp, Mighty Acorn program, and 50th Earth Day Celebration at its fall BioBlitz.

Godfrey, IL, April 15, 2020 --- For 40 years, The Nature Institute has stood high above the Mississippi River atop the bluffs, providing opportunities for the public to engage with nature. “This year is no different - we are striving to meet our mission to foster awareness and appreciation of the natural world through preservation, restoration, and education in new and unique ways” said Rebecca Steiner, TNI Outreach Director.

Currently during the Illinois “Shelter in place” we are involved with a month long, community trash pickup, #RiverbendTrashTagChallenge, a partnership with Alton Main Street and Piasa Palisades Sierra Club. “To further prevent the spread of COVID-19, and in accordance with Illinois Stay at Home order, The Nature Institute has closed all trails and facilities, and all events are cancelled indefinitely. We feel this trash pickup challenge is a great way to foster stewardship for the environment and contribute to the community, all while maintaining social distancing and getting outdoors” said Angela Moan, TNI Executive Director.

Discovery Day Camp at The Nature Institute provides children ages 3-13+ an exciting opportunity to explore the outdoors at a fun and safe day camp, accredited through American Camp Association. Camp sessions run weekly, June 1- July 31, 2020 with half day sessions for 3-6 years, and full day sessions for 6+, dates and age ranges vary. Camp details and registration are found on the TNI website <https://www.thenatureinstitute.org/discovery-day-camp-2-2/>. There are still spaces open for campers, register today.

Mighty Acorns (<https://www.mightyacorns.org/what-is-ma/>) is an environmental education program managed by The Field Museum, Chicago IL, that connects 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students to meaningful and sustained interactions at a local natural area that serves as an outdoor learning laboratory. “We are proud to offer this program for Fall 2020 with North Elementary as our pilot school. We hope to engage more schools in the future, get more students outdoors, and help transform their attitudes about nature” said Ramona Puskar, TNI Environmental Educator.

We invite the public to celebrate our 40th anniversary, get outside, and explore at the TNI Earth Day BioBlitz on Saturday, September 12, 2020, 10 am – 2 pm, rain or shine (rescheduled from April). A BioBlitz is an opportunity to gather as much biological data as possible in a short period of time. “We are asking citizens and a myriad of scientists to join us and count organisms observed at The Nature Institute” explained Emily Ehley, TNI Environmental Educator.

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