

OFFICIAL NATURE NERD

May—June Outdoor Report 2024



A guide to Stewardship,
Conservation, Interpretation
and Wellness

JUNE is Men's Health and PTSD Awareness Month

May is

Mental Health Awareness Month

SUICIDE PREVENTION -

Send text to 988

Or call - 1 (800) 273 - 8255

VETERANS CRISIS LINE 1 (800) 273-8255

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

call SAMHSA @ 1 (800) 662 - 4357

Crisis hotline – text HOME to 741741



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WELLNESS. THROUGH. SERVICE.

Nature fosters:

Stress Reduction | Improved Mood | Lower
Blood Pressure | Sense of Belonging

Acts of Service Create:

Stress Reduction | Improved Mood | Lower
Blood Pressure | Sense of Belonging

do good.
feel good.
be good.



(Common Ivy, European Ivy, Ivy)



English Ivy (Hedera Helix) - non-native invasive species

English Ivy

Brought to America in 1727.

Still sold in nurseries and garden centers throughout MD and the U.S. despite its environmental damage.

Some believe English Ivy was imported to be used as lashings (rope) to bind wood for boats, furniture and houses due to its fast growth and high tensile strength.

English Ivy Removal Tips

Best Practices and Methods



Folding hand saws are the **BEST** tool for removing large vines .



Pry bars, screw drivers and even spoons are ideal for smaller vines against the trunk and in the grooves of the bark.

WINDOW CUTS



“Window cuts” are the preferred method for Ivy management and maintenance. Cut vines at both eye level and at knee level, making a straight line through the vines all the way around the tree. Use pry-tool to help pull vines off the tree at the point where the two connect. Clean up area to expose and reveal “window”.



Emerald Ash Borer



**** Tree killer ****

Introduced to MD in 2003

Leaves a distinctive pattern on the inner bark.
Depending on the size of the infestation they can take anywhere from 2 - 5 years to kill a tree.
On rare occasions its been spotted on trees other than ash throughout the region.

EAB

(Emerald Ash Borer)

Identification and Management

- EAB, Gypsy moths, Asian longhorn beetles and chestnut blight are just a few of the invasive species that can hide in firewood.
- Do Not bring wood into the forest. Buy or collect wood at your location.

Making Treatment Decisions

Emerald ash borer will kill all ash trees that are not protected with insecticide. Dead and dying ash trees can be dangerous when they fall on people and property—especially in urban areas. Simply ignoring the ash trees will pose great safety risks. Use the [EAB decision making guide \(pdf\)](#) to guide you through the decision making process.

Save or remove?

Before you decide, consider:

- ✓ **Tree health.** Trees that have lost more than 30% of their canopy should not be saved with insecticides because too much of the tree is already dead.



Photo credit: Cliff Sadoff

- ✓ **Tree location.** Remove trees that are likely to encounter obstacles as it grows (power lines, buildings, etc.). Save trees planted where they are likely to thrive and provide a service to the community.

Biological Control

Three species of small, stingless wasps are being used to control EAB throughout Indiana and the US. These wasps kill large percentages of EAB in their native range in Asia. All wasps have been thoroughly tested to ensure that they will not attack native insects. It is unlikely that these wasps alone will eradicate EAB, but they help protect ash trees growing from seedlings in the forest. Although more wasps are reared every year, they are only given to professionals for release to ensure that they have the best chance for success.

Don't Move Firewood

Develop a local disposal plan when removing dead and dying ash tree. On its own, EAB can only move about half-a-mile per year but can spread across the country in a matter of days with human help.

EAB isn't the only pest that hides in firewood: both native and invasive pests can hitch a ride inside loads of wood and some were spread even before they were identified as problems. Gypsy moths, Asian longhorned beetles, and chestnut blight are just a few of the invasive species that can hide inside firewood.



BOX TREE MOTH

First spotted in New York in 2021

Last seen headed west and last spotted in Ohio.



Box tree moth is an invasive pest that can significantly damage and potentially kill boxwood (*Buxus* species) plants if left unchecked. The caterpillars are ravenous feeders, and heavy infestations can completely defoliate host plants. After the leaves are gone, they feed on the bark which eventually kills the plant. Boxwoods are a popular ornamental evergreen shrub common to many landscape environments in the United States.

The moth is native to East Asia and has become a prolific pest in Europe. In 2021, APHIS confirmed box tree moth in New York, and since then it has been confirmed in Michigan and Ohio. The moths are highly mobile and good fliers.

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Nature Therapy

NATURE & STRESS

Science has proven that:

- Just looking at pictures of the forest , the ocean, rivers or trees can help reduce stress on a chemical level within the body.
- Many, if not all, birds sing at 432hz which has been proven to be the frequency that increases a person's mental clarity and perception as well as unlock intuition, reduce blood pressure, slow down heart rates and reduce anxiety.
- Scratching the dirt with a stick before you sit will stir up microbes in the soil that boost serotonin production and norepinephrine when inhaled.
- Trees release Phytoncides which increase the activity of tumor killing cells called NK cells.



HIKING FOR HEALTH

We all know that:

- Hiking releases endorphins that improve mood.
 - Hiking helps lose weight
- Hiking builds all muscles including the heart.

But did you know that:

- Hiking boosts bone density?
- Hiking lowers diabetes and blood pressure?
- Hiking can help boost self esteem
 - Hiking is FREE!!!



Trash & debris pickup are not only good for nature:



**It's good for exercise.
It's good for immersion.
It boosts self esteem.**



Benefits of Nature:

Reduce stress and anxiety. Improve mood.
Creates sense of belonging. Exercise.



yieldcamp

WELLNESS. THROUGH. SERVICE.

Benefits of Volunteering:

Reduce stress and anxiety. Improve mood.
Creates sense of belonging. Exercise.

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NATURE INTERPRETATION

Knowing information and facts about nature can create meaningful and true interpretation opportunities that will help foster connection.



Nature Interpretation is the practice of extracting life lessons and wisdom from the natural environment that can be applied to everyday situations or studied, developed and codified into sustainable strategies and personal philosophies.



Similes and metaphors are great ways to build strong connections and interpretations.

Outdoor Exploration and Adventure BEST PRACTICES

NATURE NEWBIE CHECKLIST

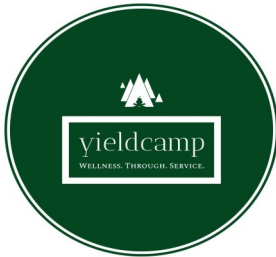


1. Never step ON anything that you can step OVER.
2. When looking under logs, roll them towards you, not away.
3. Add water, bug spray and a whistle to your first aid kit.
4. Make sure your cell phone is fully charged.
5. Make sure someone knows where you are and for how long.
6. Remove ear buds and be aware of your surroundings.
7. Where possible, use maps when hiking in a new area.

EASY WAYS TO GET INTO NATURE

- *Take a walk* in your neighborhood. Believe it or not, when you step outside you are in nature.
- *Have a picnic in the park* with family and friends. A quick and easy way to get nature immersion.
- *Fly a kite*. Exercise while in nature multiplies nature's impact. And it takes work to fly a kite.
- *Pick up trash*. If running around to get a kite in the air is too much, try this, it'll pick up your mood too.
- *Go fish*. No really, go fishing. Now you're adding meditation and the impact of water with immersion.
- *Build and hang a bird house*. You will engage creativity as well as foster feelings of belonging and joy.
- *Take pictures* of trees, flowers and nature. Studies show that simply viewing nature photos is healing.

Awarenesses and Observations in MAY



Walking in nature eliminates Stress & Anxiety

NATIONAL WALKING MONTH

- Nature, in all forms, can reduce blood pressure.
 - Nature immersion increases (NK) cells
 - Soil microbes can elevate serotonin
- Just 20 minutes in nature can significantly reduce one's level of cortisol.
- Getting direct sunlight on your face and skin is vitally important to the body's natural ability to fight and eliminate stress.
- Nature exposure helps us to be present in the moment which distances us from our stress.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Regular outside time can help to reduce stress and hypertension as well as blood pressure.

Nature exposure and immersion can help to improve emotional regulation.

The sensory input imbalance experienced by autism can actually help to increase and foster a deeper connection with nature.

Nature exposure and immersion for those new to the outdoors can be challenging but if a connection is able to be made then progress is sure to follow.

Minority Health Disparities

Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) are more likely to suffer with a wide range of physical and mental challenges.

BIPOC also struggle to receive adequate and accurate care and evaluations.

Studies show that Acts of Kindness are:

- * linked to increased feelings of well-being
- * linked to Improved self-esteem
- * able to boost feelings of confidence



do good.
feel good.
be good.

Take care of yourself. We're cheering for you.





Leave No Trace & Relevant Life Lessons

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

BE ORGANIZED

HIKE AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

BE IN ACCORDANCE

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

BE A GOOD STEWARD

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

BE A PRODUCER NOT A CONSUMER

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

BE WISE

RESPECT WILDLIFE

BE COMPASSIONATE

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

BE RESPECTFUL