



Eco-Events May 2026

The Natural Resources Department's Calendar of Events

Friday, May 1st, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – FRIDAY MORNING YOGA AT THE NEST – Start your weekend with intention and ease. Join us for a gentle, alignment-based Hatha yoga class designed to lengthen and strengthen the body while cultivating awareness through mindful movement and breath. This slow-flow session is beginner-friendly and open to all levels. Program suitable for adults. *Please bring mats, towels, and water. Other props are provided by the instructor. Reservations are required.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-yoga>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Friday, May 1st, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – NATURE PLAY FESTIVAL – Come play in nature! Build forts, search for birds, smash geodes, meet our tortoise, learn to read a map, try guiding a remote operating vehicle underwater (ROV), and so much more. At Robinson Preserve NEST- enjoy a fun evening for the whole family! Program suitable for all ages. *Program sponsored by Soar in 4 and Remake Learning Days in partnership with Manatee County. Reservations not required but suggested.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/nature-play-fest-2026>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Saturday, May 2nd, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM – SNEAK PEEK TOUR: PILLSBURY MOUND – Explore a little-known piece of Manatee County's region's history: the Pillsbury Mound. This unique sand mound dates back to 400 AD and served as the site for a temple and burial ground for the indigenous people in the area. Join us for a short walking tour as we explore the history of this site. Program suitable for all ages. *This tour will meet at Robinson Preserve and then travel to the historic site. Spaces are limited, sign up early. Reservations are required.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/sneak-peek-tour-pillsbury-mound>. For more information please contact aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Parking Lot**

Saturday, May 2nd, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations are required. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Friday, May 8th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – TIDE TREKKERS – RYE WILDERNESS PRESERVE – Join us for a special edition of Tide Trekkers at Rye Wilderness Preserve! This month we're trading saltwater for the scenic Upper Manatee River for a one-of-a-kind shoreline cleanup experience. Whether you're a Tide Trekkers regular or joining us for the first time, this is a great opportunity to get your feet wet (literally!) while making a meaningful impact on one of Manatee County's most beautiful natural waterways. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty, bring water, and come ready to get out there! Program suitable for ages 13 and up. *Kayaks, ice water and all supplies needed will be provided. Please bring a reusable water bottle. Reservations are required.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/tide-trekkers-rye-wilderness-preserve>. For more information please contact shelby.reece@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Rye kayak launch**



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*Saturday, May 9th, 7:00 AM – 11:00 AM – 39TH ANNUAL JERRY HILL MEMOPRIAL KIDS FISHING TOURNAMENT – The Jerry Hill Memorial Kids Fishing Tournament is a local Bradenton tradition encouraging children and their families to spend time together outdoors since 1987. The tournament is catch and release. Young anglers of ages 5-14 years old and all skill levels and experiences are welcomed. Join us for a fun outdoor experience at Tom Bennett Park! Prizes awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each age category. Program appropriate for children between 5-14 years of age and their families *All participants must have a parent or guardian on site to participate. Bait will be provided for use during the tournament. Anglers must bring their own rods. Loaner rods are available upon request on a limited quantity. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://kidsfishingtournament2026.eventbrite.com>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Tom Bennett Park – North Lake by Pavilion****

*Saturday, May 9th, 7:00 AM – 12:00 PM – VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION: 39TH ANNUAL JERRY HILL MEMORIAL KIDS FISHING TOURNAMENT – We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help support the 39th Annual Jerry Hill Memorial Kids Fishing Tournament! This beloved community event celebrates young anglers and we need your help to make it run smoothly. As a volunteer judge, your role will include measuring fish and carefully helping to remove hooks, making sure every kid has a safe, fun, and memorable experience. No fishing expertise required, just a love of kids, community, and the outdoors. Come be part of a cherished Manatee County tradition! Volunteer opportunity suitable for ages 13 and up. *Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/volunteer-registration-2026-fishing-tournament>. For more information please contact shelby.reece@mymanatee.org. **Tom Bennett Park****

*Saturday, May 9th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations are required. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***



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Saturday, May 9th, 7:15 AM – 8:15 AM – AM RISERS: BIRDING FOR ADULTS – Join us for an early-morning birding walk at Neal Preserve. We'll explore sunrise bird activity, discuss the species that thrive here, pause at the observation tower for viewing opportunities, and enjoy a peaceful trail experience. We'll meet at the main entrance at 7:15 a.m. sharp and begin our walk along the Tower Trail, where cooler temperatures and soft morning light create ideal conditions for spotting active bird species. Along the way, participants will enjoy elevated conversations about the birds we may encounter, their behaviors, and the unique habitats they rely on. Program suitable for adults.

Participants should bring a water bottle and wear clothing appropriate for the weather and bring binoculars or other personal cameras Reservations are required. For more information please contact cierra.nelson@mymanatee.org. Neal Preserve

Monday, May 11th, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM – SUNSET TAI CHI AT THE NEST – Join us for this monthly class at the NEST! At sunset on the second Monday of the month, Dr. Brian Nell, a certified Tai Chi instructor, will lead the group through the gentle movements of Tai Chi. This is a great way to shake off the stressful work week. Improve your balance, loosen your joints, and improve flexibility as you relax and breathe. This class is perfect for beginners and will include an exploration of several different styles of Tai Chi and Qigong. This class is held rain or shine. Program suitable for adults.

Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-tai-chi>. For more information please contact aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST Lawn

Tuesday, May 12th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – VOLUNTEENS – EMERSON POINT PRESERVE – Calling all teen volunteers! Join Manatee County Natural Resources for a VolunTeen morning at the beautiful Emerson Point Preserve. This is a fantastic opportunity for teens to earn service hours while connecting with nature and contributing to the care of one of Manatee County's most treasured natural spaces. Whether it's your first time or you're a VolunTeen veteran, come ready for a fun, hands-on morning outdoors. Details on specific activities will be shared with registered participants ahead of the event. Program suitable ages 13 - 18 *Tools, gloves, and guidance will be provided.*

Volunteers should wear closed-toe shoes, bring water, and dress for outdoor work conditions. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/volunteens-emerson-point-preserve>. For more information please contact shelby.reece@mymanatee.org. Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Pavilion

Tuesday, May 12th, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM – HSSC FIELD NOTES AND FLYOVERS: TEEN BIRDING LAB – Explore Neal Preserve through the eyes of a naturalist. Observe coastal birds and their behaviors, learn how the environment shapes the landscape, and participate in guided activities that build real wildlife observation and critical-thinking skills—designed specifically for curious learners ages 10–15. Program is suitable for children ages 10 - 15 *This program is designed for intermediate-level young adult birders. Participants should bring a water bottle and wear weather-appropriate clothing. We recommend sun protection, bug spray, and closed-toed shoes. Binoculars will be provided, and participants are welcome to bring their own.* Reservations are required. For more information please contact cierra.nelson@mymanatee.org. Neal Preserve



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Wednesday, May 13th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SOAR LAB – Our partners at Soar in 4 just opened an incredible interactive museum for the youngsters in your life, called the Soar Lab. Inside is a room devoted to building complete with a giant Light Brite and Legos. A tinker room filled with kid-friendly tools and a gigantic art room packed with easels, puppets, and a stage. Open five days a week, check out soarin4.org for more detailed information. One Wednesday a month, our education staff will join the museum for some fun hands-on nature play. The theme this quarter is science. Program suitable for children 3rd grade and below. *Program sponsored by Soar in 4 in partnership with Manatee County. No reservations are required. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. Soar Lab*

Thursday, May 14th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – LIBRARY LEARNING: STORYTIME WITH GENBU THE GOPHER TORTOISE – Crawl into the Palmetto Library for a shell-tastic tortoise program. Learn about our amazing digging reptile through games, movements, and stories and meet our very own gopher tortoise, Genbu. Program suitable for young children and their families. Reservations are not required. For more information please visit <https://manateelibrary.libcal.com/event/16384512>.

Palmetto Branch Library

Thursday, May 14th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: FRESHWATER DIPNET – Get your feet wet and explore the shore as we dip our nets in the water. Take a closer look at sea or freshwater creatures in their natural environment! Who eats who and why are they here? We'll answer these questions and more! Program recommended for students ages 7-13 *Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of this session. Don't forget to register for the waitlist if at capacity! Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/freshwater-dipnet-rye>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. Rye Preserve – Pavilion*

Friday, May 15th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – FRIDAY MORNING YOGA AT THE NEST – Start your weekend with intention and ease. Join us for a gentle, alignment-based Hatha yoga class designed to lengthen and strengthen the body while cultivating awareness through mindful movement and breath. This slow-flow session is beginner-friendly and open to all levels. Program suitable for adults. *Please bring mats, towels, and water. Other props are provided by the instructor. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-yoga>. Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST*



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*Friday, May 15th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: SALTWATER DIPNET – Get your feet wet and explore the shore as we dip our nets in the water. Take a closer look at sea or freshwater creatures in their natural environment! Who eats who and why are they here? We'll answer these questions and more! Program recommended for students ages 7-13 *Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of this session. Don't forget to register for the waitlist if at capacity! Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/saltwater-dip-net-emerson>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org.**

Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Pavilion

Friday, May 15th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM – GAME NIGHT AT THE NEST – What is more family than Board Game Night? Drop into the building for an evening of tabletop gaming fun! Borrow a nature-themed game from our game library or bring your favorite game from home. Meet new people and try something new. Role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons are welcome too. We only ask that all content and conversations remain family-friendly. Snacks will be provided. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/may-2026-game-night-at-the-nest>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org.

Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

*Saturday, May 16th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations are required. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***

Wednesday, May 20th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – RIP SQUAD: OYSTER SHELL DRILLING – Join the RIP Squad for a hands-on, outdoor volunteer event focused on restoring local waterways! At this oyster shell drilling and “oyster pin” building event, you'll help transform recycled oyster shells into structures that will later be installed in the Manatee River to support new oyster habitat. No experience is needed - just a willingness to get a little dirty and make a big environmental impact.

*Volunteers will work together to drill shell and assemble oyster pins that play a key role in shoreline stabilization and water filtration. It's a fun, social way to support restoration efforts while learning how oysters help keep our waterways healthy. We'll have everything needed for you to drill shell and assemble pins safely, including gloves, eyewear, dust masks, and earplugs. Feel free to bring your own if you prefer! Program suitable ages 13 and up. *Tools, gloves, and guidance will be provided. Volunteers should wear closed-toe shoes, bring water, and dress for outdoor work conditions.**

*Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/rip-squad-oyster-shell-drilling>. For more information please contact shelby.reece@mymanatee.org. **Robinson***

Preserve South



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Wednesday, May 20th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – KAYAKING FOR FIRST TIMERS – If you'd like to try kayaking, come on out! No prior experience necessary! Join our instructors from WayneAdventures and Manatee County Natural Resources for a 3-hour class during which we will explore the marshes and mangroves of Robinson Preserve. This will be a slow-paced paddle intended to give you time to get used to your kayak while exploring the Preserve. There will be plenty of time to try out kayaking and get some coaching, too. Program suitable for adults. *Program sponsored by WayneAdventures in partnership with Manatee County. Participants should bring a water bottle and wear clothing appropriate for the weather. We recommend sun protection, bug spray, and closed-toed shoes; no flip flops. Participants must wear a life jacket. Kayaks and gear are available to borrow. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/kayaking-for-first-timers-xbbuet88>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Expansion - South Kayak Launch***

Thursday, May 21st, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – ESTUARY PADDLE – Explore the mangrove tunnels of Emerson Point Preserve in this guided kayak paddle. Learn about the different mangrove species, observe wildlife in its habitat and enjoy the wonders the estuary has to offer. Program suitable for adults. *This is an easy paddle but participants may have to duck around mangrove limbs. Participants are responsible for helping unload and load kayaks in and out of the water. Kayaks available for registered participants. All participants must wear a life jacket and whistle during the program. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/estuary-paddle>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Tera Ceia Kayak Launch***

Friday, May 22nd, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM – WILDLIFE SPOTLIGHT: SEAHORSES AND PIPEFISH – Let's discover a fascinating family of fish - the Sygnathids! Learn about the amazing adaptations and lifecycle of seahorses and pipefish and the conservation efforts put in place to protect them. We will also be dip netting to look for these unique creatures so we can explore them up close! Program suitable ages 13 and up. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/seahorses-and-pipefish-may2026>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – The Point**

Friday, May 22nd, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – FRIDAY MORNING YOGA AT THE NEST – Start your weekend with intention and ease. Join us for a gentle, alignment-based Hatha yoga class designed to lengthen and strengthen the body while cultivating awareness through mindful movement and breath. This slow-flow session is beginner-friendly and open to all levels. Program suitable for adults. *Please bring mats, towels, and water. Other props are provided by the instructor. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-yoga>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***



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Friday, May 22nd, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL BIOLAB: MUCKING IN THE MANGROVES

– Participants step into the role of field biologists as they test water quality, measure salinity and air conditions, and document species diversity while exploring the mangrove forests and ancient shell middens of Emerson Point Preserve Program is suitable for children ages 10 - 15 *This Homeschool Biolab invites young scientists to explore Emerson Point Preserve through real environmental fieldwork. Along a quarter-mile trail leading to the mangrove boardwalk, participants conduct water quality tests, measure salinity and air conditions, and record species diversity to build a snapshot of ecosystem health.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

https://parks.mymanatee.org/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=176169108&Interfaceparameter=WebTrac_NaturalResources. For more information please contact

cierra.nelson@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Observation Tower Trail**

Saturday, May 23rd, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Program suitable for all ages.

No reservations are required. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Wednesday, May 27th – Thursday May 27th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – RIP SQUAD - EMERSON POINT PRESERVE – The RIP Squad is back at Emerson Point Preserve and we need your muscle! We will be pulling invasive species and spreading bank run to help restore and stabilize the preserve's natural habitat. This is hands-on, satisfying work with a direct and visible impact on the health of the preserve. Wear sturdy closed-toe shoes, clothes you don't mind getting dirty, and bring plenty of water. Come join a crew of dedicated volunteers who aren't afraid to get their hands in the dirt for a good cause! Program suitable ages 13 and up. **Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Pavilion**

Wednesday, May 27th, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB ECO CRIME LAB – Step into the role of a field investigator as you explore Robinson Preserve through the lens of wildlife forensics. Teens and tweens will examine real animal evidence—tracks, scat, feeding signs, feathers, shells, and more—to piece together who lives here, who's hunting who, and how the food web stays in balance. Program is suitable for children ages 10 - 15 *Participants should bring a water bottle and wear clothing appropriate for the weather. We recommend sun protection, bug spray, and closed-toed shoes* Reservations are required. For more information please contact

cierra.nelson@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Expansion - South Kayak Launch Pavilions**



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Thursday, May 28th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – GREEN EXPLORERS: SEARCHING WITH SNORKELS – Snorkel into the shallow sea grass and mangrove roots to discover wild creatures below the water's surface. New snorkelers and kids who have snorkeled before will delight in the experience of Neal Preserves Cove. Nets will be available to scoop up animals for closer examination. Green Explorers is a low-structured, highly social, and experienced-based activity. Program suitable for all ages recommended for ages 6-12 year olds. *All participants must be able to swim. Reservations are required.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/green-explorers-searching-with-snorkels-musc6aq8>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Neal**

Preserve

Friday, May 29th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – NATURE TALE: FEATHERS AND HAIR WHAT ANIMALS WEAR – Does your kiddo enjoy stories and nature? Join us at Conservatory Park in Nature Tales. Meet monthly at Conservatory Park for an interactive story and activities. This month, we will discover the fur, skin, and feathers that cover different animals' bodies. Program suitable for ages 8 and under. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/nature-tales-feathers-and-hair>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Conservatory Park**

Friday, May 29th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – FRIDAY MORNING YOGA AT THE NEST – Start your weekend with intention and ease. Join us for a gentle, alignment-based Hatha yoga class designed to lengthen and strengthen the body while cultivating awareness through mindful movement and breath. This slow-flow session is beginner-friendly and open to all levels. Program suitable for adults. *Please bring mats, towels, and water. Other props are provided by the instructor. Reservations are required.* To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-yoga>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic**

NEST

Saturday, May 30th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations are required. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**