



# Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER

## Become a Member and Receive:

- 20% discount on programs
- FREE admission to the Nature Museum
- 10% discount in the Nature Shop
- Early registration for summer camps
- Invitations to members-only events
- Discounted/free admission to select nature centers across the nation
- And more!

[www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org)

215-887-6603

September - December 2022

## Fall & Winter Hours

### Business Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

### Dede Long Nature Museum:

OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

### Admission:

- Briar Bush Members: Free
- Abington Residents: Free
- Others: Pay what you can

### Griscom Bird Observatory:

OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

### Trails:

OPEN Daily: Dawn to Dusk

*Remain aware of trail closures.*

### Pond:

OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

*\*Masks are strongly recommended.\**

*Hours are subject to change to accommodate privately scheduled programs. Call before you visit for the most up-to-date BBNC hours.*

## Fall & Winter program guide starts on page 4.

The Nature Center will be closed on Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Trails are always open dawn to dusk.

[www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org)



## Newsletter and Calendar

## Bringing Nature Play Back at Briar Bush

Richard Louv coined the phrase "Nature Deficit Disorder" in his book, *Last Child in the Woods* in 2005. He used the term to describe the stark consequences found in his research including higher rates of emotional and physical illnesses that were directly related to the declining number of hours individuals spend outside in our society. However, Louv and his colleagues also proved that nature play improves a child's overall health and development through increased physical activity and duration of play, better focus, and feelings of empowerment. An added perk was the conclusion that individuals who spent more time in nature as children were more likely to become stewards of their environment as adults.



These findings resonate with the very mission of the Friends of Briar Bush. In 2010, the organization responded to the problem by designing and building the BBNC Nature Playscape with hopes of encouraging unstructured nature play within our community. This special space on the

Briar Bush property where children are welcome to dig, splash, pick, build, and wreck was the first of its kind in the Abington area and quickly became a well-used community feature.

Due to its very nature and purpose and despite regular maintenance, the Nature Playscape encountered natural wear and tear over the past 12 years. The water feature was in need of continual maintenance, the natural benches used for both resting and playing were rotting, and the flora that created a living tunnel and native habitat was destroyed. The FOBB had created a play space that was well-loved and it showed. It was in desperate need of repairs. (*continued on page 2*)



215-887-6603

# Briar Bush News and Information



A generous grant award by BLBB Charitable to the FOBB in the early winter of 2022 made the necessary renovations to the BBNC Nature Playscape possible. Since then, many enhancements have been completed to this unique area for outdoor play. We began with a new and improved water feature that was professionally designed to be safer and more durable. This will allow us to provide the magic of water play for years to come. The old natural wood benches that have since been recycled back into our forest floor have been replaced with new log benches crafted from locally milled wood. The benches provide a place for caregivers to rest while children use them as props during open-ended play transforming them into store counters, crafting tables, loose parts construction areas, and whatever else a child's imagination might manifest. Another exciting addition is the restoration of our living willow tunnel which will add a fairy tale touch to the Playscape and enhances the natural habitat for birds and other wildlife.

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All of the "loose parts" seemed to be in order – sticks, rocks, sand, and water, but something was still missing. FOBB wanted to provide children with a material that they could manipulate safely into larger structures. BLBB Charitable funding enabled us to purchase the solution - Builder Boards! These natural wooden planks are lightweight, durable, and notched to fit together. They provide openings for creative problem-solving, cooperative, and social play. We are excited to be able to offer these during BBNC public programs and events.



To encourage families to take advantage of these wonderful updates and resources, BLBB Charitable included funding for BBNC to host Nature Playdates. Nature Playdates are free, public drop-in events during which special play materials including Builder Boards and other mud kitchen toys are made available by staff and volunteers. Nature Playdates offer a time for caregivers to gain mental health and provide children a safe space to play and learn independently which is valuable for their development. During two of our Nature Playdates, Director Mark Fallon will present Nature Play Workshops for caregivers to gain a better understanding of the benefits of nature play. Childcare will be available at the

Nature Playscape during these workshop events. (*You can find more details about Nature Playdates and Nature Play Workshops on page 6.*)

Briar Bush believes that nature is for everyone. This philosophy led to the creation of the FOBB Scholarship Fund, an initiative that helps children in need attend programs that include and encourage nature play. As summer camp at Briar Bush is a time when campers are submerged in nature, the FOBB decided to set a goal for the 2022 summer camp season to reserve one space of camp for a scholarship recipient in each of our 54 sessions. BLBB Charitable has shown amazing support for this effort by providing additional funds to help make this goal a reality.

*The Friends of Briar Bush would like to give special thanks to BLBB Charitable for their support as we continue in our mission in the hope to provide access for everyone in our community to experience the benefits of spending time in nature.*



# Briar Bush News and Information

## New Board Member



**Janet Lewis** – Janet recently moved to Abington with her son and took an interest in Briar Bush when her nephew attended camp there. She and her son have spent many hours exploring Briar Bush's trails, her son attended the School's Out program and is looking forward to camp. Janet was looking for a way to get more involved with the local community and is thrilled to be selected to join the leadership of Briar Bush moving forward. Janet currently oversees sponsorships for Desert International Horse Park and has previously worked in HR, benefits and special events. She earned her MBA and a Master's in Sports Administration after attending Duke University where she was on the track team and diving team. She is an avid runner and can be seen running around town or through the trails of Pennypack. She is looking forward to spending more time exploring Briar Bush with her son over the coming years.



## Get Involved at Briar Bush!

### Become a Friends of Briar Bush Member

Your membership helps us meet our mission to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to explore and protect nature by encouraging curiosity and scientific inquiry.

Benefits of membership include:

- \* 20% discount on most BBNC Programs
- \* Priority registration for summer camp
- \* 10% discount on gift shop items
- \* Reciprocity to partner ANCA organizations
- \* Subscription to our Newsletter
- \* Invitations to members only programs  
*(See page 6 for this fall's Members-only event.)*

Visit our website or call Briar Bush for more information about FOBB Membership!

### Volunteer with the Friends of Briar Bush

Briar Bush could not accomplish its goals without the help of dedicated volunteers. Whether you have a lot of time or very little, we can help to find a way for you to make your mark at BBNC.

Opportunities for:

- \* Youth (ages 12-17 can volunteer on their own)
- \* Families (with children ages 8+)
- \* Adults
- \* Groups (businesses, Scouts, schools, groups)
- \* Internships

Opportunities include: hike guides, community outreach, animal care, grounds maintenance

Interested? Email [volunteer@briarbush.org](mailto:volunteer@briarbush.org).

**Board of Director Opportunity:** The Friends of Briar Bush is currently seeking Board of Director candidates with backgrounds in community leadership, business, finance, non-profit management, and education.

Support us with  
**amazon smile**  
You shop. Amazon gives.

### Remember Briar Bush this giving season!

Help our dedicated staff create affordable high quality programs by choosing **Friends of Briar Bush** as your charity when you shop on Amazon using [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com).

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the Friends of Briar Bush at no charge to you.

# Programs for Children

Advanced registration is required. To register, visit [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org) or call (215) 887-6603.

Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

Due to Township regulations, masks may be required indoors. Visit our website for updated information.



## Magic Mornings

### 2-5-year-olds with adult

Hey, toddlers! Bring your favorite adult to Briar Bush for walks, animal encounters, activities, and more! Each week features a new theme, which repeats throughout the week (register for one day per week).

**Day:** Tues, Wed, Thurs, or Fri (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 10:30am-11:30am

#### Cost per Session:

- Participant: \$12.50
- Additional child in same household: \$7.50
- Abington Resident: \$11.25
- Additional child in same household: \$6.75
- Briar Bush Member: \$10.00
- Additional child in same household: \$6.00

	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
<b>SEPT</b>	20 X	21 28	22 29	23 X
<b>OCT</b>	4 11 18 25	X 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28
<b>NOV</b>	1 X 15 X 29	2 9 16 X 30	3 10 17 X	4 X 18 X
<b>DEC</b>	6 13 20 X	7 14 21 X	1 8 15 23	2 9 16 X

## Nature Pioneers

### 4-6-year-olds

Children are invited to join us on their own for age-appropriate activities, walks, animal encounters, and more! Each week features a new theme (register for one day per week).

**Day:** Wed or Thurs (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 1:00pm-2:30pm

#### Cost per Session:

- Participant: \$15.00
- Abington Resident: \$13.50
- Briar Bush Member: \$12.00

	WED	THURS
<b>SEPT</b>	21 28	22 29
<b>OCT</b>	X 12 19 26	6 13 20 27
<b>NOV</b>	2 9 16 X 30	3 10 17 X
<b>DEC</b>	7 14 21 X	1 8 15 22 X



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## School's Out, Get Outside!

**Grades K-6**

When school is not in session, students can spend a day at Briar Bush exploring the outdoors, meeting live animals, making crafts, playing in nature, and more. Be sure to pack a lunch, snacks, water bottle, and full change of clothes.

**Day:** Select Holidays (See chart for dates.)

**Time:**

- Full-Day Session: 8:30am-3:30pm
- Half-Day Session: 1:00pm-3:30pm
- After-Care Session: 3:30pm-5:30pm

**Cost per Session:**

- Full-Day Session:
  - Participant: \$75.00
  - Abington Resident: \$67.50
  - Briar Bush Member: \$60.00
- Half-Day Session:
  - Participant: \$30.00
  - Abington Resident: \$27.00
  - Briar Bush Member: \$24.00
- After-Care Session: \$12.00

	DATE	HOLIDAY	TIME
<b>SEPT</b>	26	Rosh Hashana	Full-Day
	27	Rosh Hashana	Full-Day
<b>OCT</b>	5	Yom Kippur	Full-Day
<b>NOV</b>	8	Election Day	Full-Day
	21	Fall Break	Half-Day
	22	Fall Break	Half-Day

## Woodland Explorers

**Grades K-6**

Connect with fellow nature lovers in our Woodland Explorers After-School Club! Children will experience the wonders of their favorite backyard nature center through live animal encounters, guided hikes, nature play, crafts, and more.

**Day:** Tues and Thurs (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 4:00pm-5:30pm

**Cost per Session:**

- Participant: \$15.00
- Abington Resident: \$13.50
- Briar Bush Member: \$12.00

	TUES	THURS
<b>SEPT</b>	20 X	22 29
<b>OCT</b>	4	6
	11	13
	18	20
	25	27
<b>NOV</b>	1	3
	X	10
	15	17
	29	X
<b>DEC</b>	6	1
	13	8
	20	15
	X	22

# Programs for All Ages

Advanced registration is required. To register, visit [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org) or call (215) 887-6603.

Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

Due to Township regulations, masks may be required indoors. Visit our website for updated information.

## Family Nature Night



**Children with sensory processing disorders and families**

Join us for a fun night of animal encounters and interactive stations relating to the theme of the night - all at your own pace. Family Nature Nights are now featuring a forest therapy segment!

**Fall Program Theme:** The Color of Nature

**Day:** Friday, October 14, 2022

**Time:** 6:00pm-7:30pm

**Cost:** FREE

Sponsored by Child Development Foundation



## Weekend Walks

**All Ages**

Join Briar Bush educators and trail guides on interpretive hikes and activities around Briar Bush.

**Day:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Month

**Time:** 9:30am-10:30am

**Cost:** FREE (*Registration is not required.*)

*Call ahead during inclement weather.*

## Nature Playdates

**All Ages**

Families are invited to join us at the BBNC Nature Playscape for unstructured nature play. Special play materials will be provided by BBNC staff and volunteers during each event.

**Day:** Select Weekend Days (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Cost:** FREE (*Registration is not required.*)

*Call ahead during inclement weather.*

Sponsored by BLBB Charitable

	SAT	SUN
<b>SEPT</b>	10	25
<b>OCT</b>	8	23
<b>NOV</b>	12	20
<b>DEC</b>	10	18



## Annual Members' Meeting

**Friends of Briar Bush Members**

All Friends of Briar Bush Members are invited to the annual business meeting and program. Learn more about the work of *your* organization and enjoy a members only program.



BBNC Director, Mark Fallon, will take members on a walk in the Briar Bush woods to rediscover plants that people have used for centuries as food, medicine, and materials. Come get a taste for the bounty of the forest with samples of pine needle tea and more!

*The meeting and program are for adults.*

*Registration is not required. Childcare is available.*

**Day:** Saturday, October 22, 2022

**Time:**

- Meeting/Light Refreshments: 1:30pm-2:00pm

- Program: 2:00pm-3:00pm

**Cost:** FREE (FOBB Members only)

## Nature Play Workshops

**Adults**

For parents, caregivers, and educators, this workshop will focus on simple, realistic ideas for including more nature play in the lives of kids. We will begin with a brief presentation about the importance of and barriers to nature play. Afterward we will hit the trails to visit the BBNC Nature Playscape to observe kids in action. This is a fantastic chance to learn, discuss, brainstorm, and, yes, PLAY with other caregivers!



**CHARITABLE**

THE GIVING ARM  
OF BLB&B ADVISORS

**Day:** Sunday, November 20, 2022

**Time:** 10:30am-11:30am

**Cost:** FREE (*Registration is not required.*)

*This workshop is for adults.*

*Drop-off childcare is available at the museum.*

Sponsored by BLBB Charitable

# Programs for Adults

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## SAGE Sessions

### Adults

Join the Briar Bush Staff for an afternoon discussion of interesting and relatable environmental topics. Light refreshments will be available at the end of the program. Ample parking is available.

**Day:** Select Fridays (See below for dates.)

**Time:** 1:00pm-2:00pm

#### Cost per Session:

- Participant: \$6.25
- Abington Resident: \$5.56
- Briar Bush Member: \$5.00

#### Venomous and Poisonous

*Friday, October 7, 2022*

It's one of the most common nature-related questions: is it venomous/poisonous? This month we'll explore the venomous and poisonous plants and animals of Pennsylvania, how these defenses work, and just how dangerous these toxins are to humans.

#### Turkey Talk

*Friday, November 18, 2022*

The side dishes may vary from house to house, but in most homes, you'll find turkey at the table on Thanksgiving Day. Why did turkey become a Thanksgiving staple? First, learn more about these interesting creatures, then find out why they end up on our dinner tables!

## Adventures in the Field

### Adult Birding Series

Time spent in nature can be both relaxing and stimulating. Join us for enriching nature experiences and field trips. This season we will connect with Briar Bush's roots in bird conservation. Beginning birders will learn basic identification techniques and apps, while more seasoned participants can join our efforts to collect data for community science projects. See below for each session's details.

#### Feeder Birds at Briar Bush Nature Center

Join us at Briar Bush for an indoor presentation on basic bird identification followed by a visit to our Griscom Bird Observatory. At the Observatory, we'll practice identification skills and collect data.

*Notes: This session will require a short walk of a few hundred feet on level trail, with an optional short hike on steeper, rougher terrain along the Briar Bush trails.*

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2022 (RD: 9/22/2022)

**Time:** 1:00pm-2:30pm

#### Cost:

- Participant: \$15.00
- Abington Resident: \$13.50
- Briar Bush Member: \$12.00

#### Hawk Watch at Fort Washington State Park

Each fall, migrating raptors by the thousands begin their journey southward. For the last 27 years, a hawk watch has been held at Militia Hill in Fort Washington State Park to record their passage. We will be spending about one hour on an observation deck searching for raptors overhead with the help of a Briar Bush educator and hawk watch volunteers.

*Notes: Participants will meet at Briar Bush at 9:45am, then travel in the Briar Bush van to Fort Washington State Park. This session will require a short walk on level paved trail to the observation deck. The lower deck of the platform is ADA accessible. Bring a lunch. Feel free to bring a camp chair if you prefer a soft seat.*

**Date:** Tuesday, October 18, 2022 (RD: 10/20/2022)

**Time:** 10:00am-1:00pm

#### Cost:

- Participant: \$30.00
- Abington Resident: \$27.00
- Briar Bush Member: \$24.00



Briar  
Bush  
NATURE CENTER

1212 Edge Hill Road  
Abington, PA 19001

U.S. Postage Paid

Nonprofit Permit

No. 719

FT Washington, PA

*Electronic Service Requested*

*Visit our website for more information & purchase tickets today!*



Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Abington Art Center \* Online Auction Begins 9/16/2022