

Conservation Field Day Session Descriptions

Saint John's Abbey Arboretum - Collegeville MN

Saturday October 8, 2022 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Oak Regeneration Tour: Tour 20 years of oak regeneration work. Learn several techniques for getting young oak trees started (especially in challenging areas with high deer populations and intense understory competition). You will get a chance to see fenced deer enclosure areas, shelterwood cuts, strip regeneration harvests, natural and planted oak seedlings, individual tree cages, and more.

Leader: John Geissler – Saint John's Abbey Land Manager

Activity Level Description: Bus ride to areas where you will take less than 100 yard short hikes on uneven terrain through forested areas.

Pollinator Gardens, Rain Gardens, and Natural Shoreline Tour: Visit and the learn the techniques for installing and maintaining a pollinator garden, rain garden, and natural shoreline. Leaders will identify many native plants along the way and discuss the ecological benefits to these efforts – biodiversity, water quality, beauty, and cost savings.

Leader: Wayne Cymbaluk (Stearns County SWCD)

Activity Level Description: 0.75 mile roundtrip hike from the Science Center. 1 steep hill to go down and come up.

Habitat Restoration Project: Enjoy a tour of the most biodiverse 1.5 mile loop trail in Minnesota. A beautiful hike through 160 acres of restored prairie, restored oak savanna, deciduous forest, coniferous forest, and across two large boardwalks spanning restored wetlands. If you are looking for a beautiful and biodiverse hike, this session is for you!

Leader: Kyle Rauch – Assistant Director - Saint John's Outdoor University

Activity Level Description: Bus ride to 1.5 mile loop hike starting at prairie kiosk.

Invasive Species Removal: Learn how to identify invasive species common buckthorn, tartarian honeysuckle, and garlic mustard. Followed by and hands on demonstration of techniques and tools for controlling these aggressive invasives in your forest.

Leader: Cheryl Jirk – Founder of Landscape Restoration, Inc.

Activity Level Description: Bus ride to area where you will have to walk less than 100 yards to see the various invasives. Hands on demonstration will occur in areas that are active removal areas. There will be cut stumps and some downed brush to walk through.

Tree and Shrub Identification: Learn how to identify about 20 common trees and shrubs of Minnesota forests in the field. We will learn what to look for on the leaves, branching arrangement, bark, seeds, and where they are growing to help us in identification.

Leader: Steve Saupe – retired CSB/SJU Biology professor

Activity Level Description: Slow 1 mile round trip hike visiting various tree species just off woodland trails.

Trail Construction and Maintenance:

Learn the essential elements of trail design, construction, and maintenance. We will visit several existing woodland trails with common challenges and discuss various methods to improve the trail condition.

Leader: Neil Slifka – Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Area Resource Specialist

Activity Level Description: Bus ride to trail entrance... tractor hayride to various trail sites.

Red and White Pine Stand Stewardship

Learn how to prune and bud cap (deer browse protection) young red and white pine trees. Hands on demonstration to learn how to decide when to thin a pine plantation and which trees to remove.

Leader: John Geissler – Saint John’s Abbey Land Manager

Activity Level Description: Bus ride to areas where you will take less than 100 yard short hikes on uneven terrain through forested areas.

Session I 8:30 a.m.		
Oak Regeneration	Tree and Shrub ID	Invasive Species
Session II 10:30 a.m.		
Pollinator Gardens, Rain Gardens, and Natural Shorelines	Invasive Species	Habitat Restoration Project
Session III 1:30 p.m.		
Woodland Trail Construction/Maintenance	Pollinator Gardens, Rain Gardens, and Natural Shorelines	Tree and Shrub ID
Session IV 3:30 p.m.		
Pine Stand Stewardship	Habitat Restoration Project	Woodland Trail Construction/Maintenance