

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IMMERSION DAY(S) SUMMARY

### GROWING LOCAL CAPACITY FOR SUPPORTING ENDANGERED SPECIES OF KANKAKEE COUNTY

- WHAT:** An environmental education field day in Kankakee county, complete with a user manual for everyday people who want to support health and vitality of local endangered species and wildlife using regionally available plant material.
- Attendees will experience 3 – 4 local ecosystems and interpretive hiking events, along with a computer based presentation containing suggested land management practices and ecosystem-specific species lists for home owners.
- This is a rain or shine event. Specific wardrobe suggestions include waterproof hiking shoes, 1 -2 more layers than one thinks they need, a good hat and a windbreaker.
- This includes the presentation of my Directed Research conducted through the UIUC Master of Landscape Architecture program I'm anticipating graduating from in May.
- WHO FOR:** All those who are interested in supporting the well-being, health and vitality of our natural habitats, wildlife and people are welcome to join. Anyone attending with plant ID, naturalist, permaculturist, or related knowledge is welcome to contribute during interpretive field day activities. : ) This event will also appeal to those interested in sustainable food production. Note-taking materials may be useful for attendees to bring along, though not necessary.
- Nature photographers may also enjoy the opportunity. No photo waivers have been made so please use discretion in including people.
- WHEN:** Tuesday, April 18 and Saturday, April 22. The same content and public green spaces will be experienced both days.
- WHERE:** Tuesday, April 18 beginning at a public wildlife area in Pembroke township, followed by other public green spaces in the county and a computer based presentation at Green Drinks held at Brickstone Brewery and Restaurant in Bourbonnais. Saturday, April 22 "Earth Day", beginning at the Kankakee Library, followed by visits across various public green spaces.

## PEOPLE WILL

BE ABLE TO: Determine which ecosystems may do best on their land; identify specific plant species to consider including accordingly; and integrate best practices benefiting local wildlife on their property.

## RSVP AND

CONTACT: Tonia Andreina at [toniaa2@illinois.edu](mailto:toniaa2@illinois.edu)

## ABOUT THE

FACILITATOR: I'm originally from Alton, IL in the township of Bourbonnais. Growing up across the street from the Kankakee River State Park, I grew a deep appreciation for wonders of the natural world. My grandfather grew many different plants in our yard including fruit trees which my grandmother taught me to turn into delicious pies and breads. This foundation inspired my professional and academic experiences.

Dedicating about 10 years to environmental education program facilitation and management for youth grades pre K through 12, my last position resulted in over \$200k fundraised to build a public school garden designed by students in an after school garden club I facilitated.

I attained a Bachelor degree in Geography, Nature and Society from DePaul University, graduating summa cum laude as Outstanding Senior in Geography and am anticipating May 2023 graduation from a Master degree program in Landscape Architecture at University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign.

I've worked for organizations such as the Peterson Garden Project, Greencorps Chicago Youth Program and A Just Harvest. My work has been featured by local media DNA Info, The Mike Novak Show and NBC Community Spotlight.

My additional interests and areas of study include food forests, permaculture design and community gardening.

After graduation I hope to work for a landscape architecture company providing environmentally regenerative design solutions to various green spaces across the region for a couple years before expanding my personal landscaping company, Earth Mama Design. Simultaneously, as I prepare to graduate I'm working on developing a local community garden / food forest in Kankakee county featuring woody perennials and environmental education programming through nonprofit Earth Mama Ed, which I'm founder of.

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