

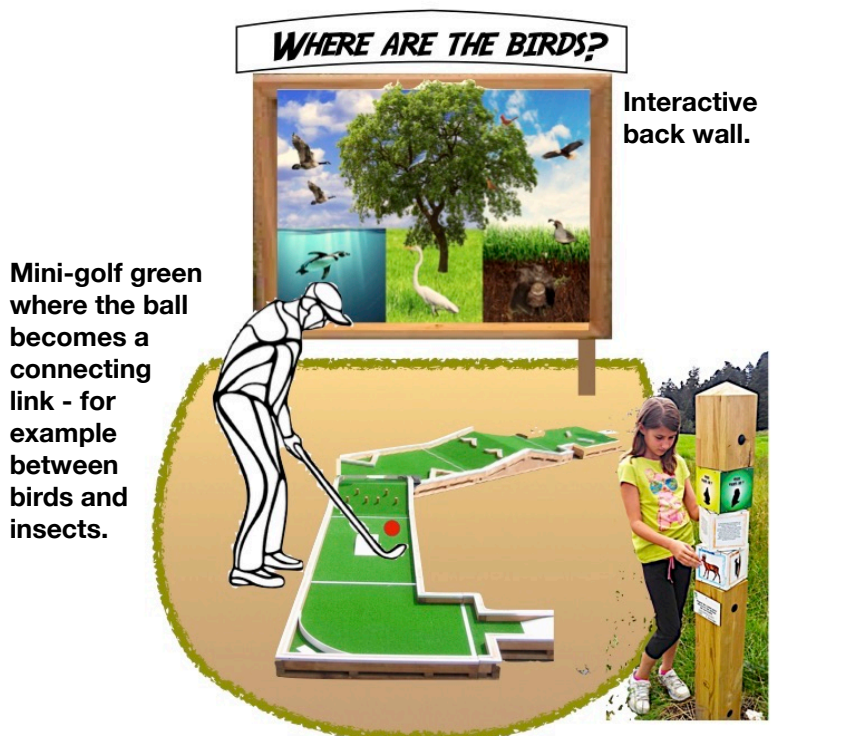
Dear Angels, Members, Helpers, Volunteers, Foundations, Sponsors and Community ~

We are SO excited about moving forward with the outdoor trail part of the O.N.E. Discovery Center! We have merged the concepts of a mini-golf experience with our outdoor discovery trail plans. Each of 9 holes of **Missing Links Mini-Golf** will feature a hands on exhibit about nature. Between the holes, on the lovely forested trail to the next exhibit and hole, will be a connecting concept exhibit. Again, each connecting exhibit will feature a hands-on activity to emphasize the **links** and interdependence of all nature. For more info, give us a call or drop in to a planning meeting. We are seeking local talent and skilled crafts people for fabricating the exhibits. Call or text: 541-287-0172.

Oregon Nature & Environmental Discovery Center

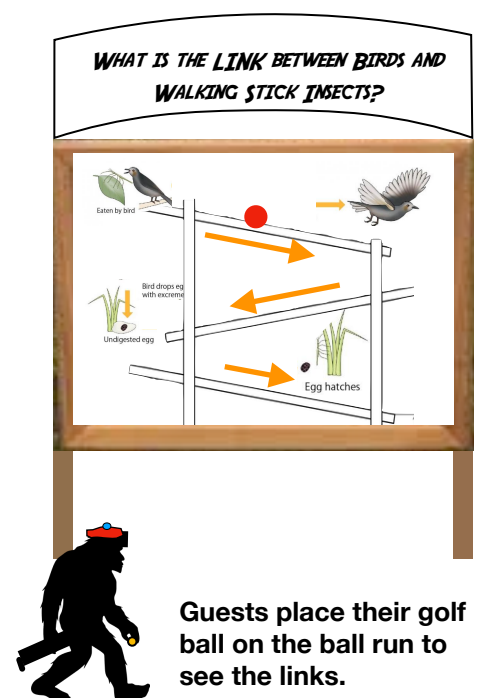


Exhibit draft example



Standing cubes to show relationships in the ecosystem.

Connecting Link draft example



Nature Service & Immersion Program

In the Nature Service & Immersion Program, members can stay at the nature preserve, pay to serve and help with work such as gardening, tree planting and trail maintenance. This program offers people the opportunity to share in the excitement of regenerating and sustaining the wildlife preserve portion of the organization's property. This program earned less for the center this year, due to closing early for the fire evacuations.

Children's Programs

SUN School This was our 7th year offering the program to help prevent summer learning loss. In 2023 we incorporated Earthworks! and Nature Explorers as part of SUN School.



EarthWorks! Permaculture for Kids, uses hands-on games like **The Interconnections Cards, the Poop Patrol, the Pollinators and the Win-Win-Win Ecosystem Challenge**. Kids have fun outdoors while learning the concepts of sustainability and regeneration, observation, mimicry and a nurturing support of nature.

Nature Explorers Elementary age kids get an introduction to nature, to observation and basic wilderness skills, and teaching the importance of cooperation and community.

Bugs-R-Us For the 7th years in a row, the center sponsored the **Bugs-R-Us Educational Service** to do bugs and bats presentations to the 400+ students at Evergreen Elementary School. Kids got to hold GIANT live bugs, learn about how insects benefit the world and even eat a bug!

These free or sliding scale kids programs offer enrichment and connection to nature for our valley kids, (K - 6th grades), that would otherwise not be available. Children who experience the joy of discovering nature remember that joy all of their lives and grow to value the natural world in a deep and meaningful way that does not happen with only digital or book learning. Families who participate keep coming back year after year.

Events



We brought back the **Mothathon** celebration of Lepidoptera! While dancing the night away, we raised money with the silent auction to help support the center.

We also once again participated in **Cans for Kids**, sponsored by the Illinois Valley Community Development organization, to raise money for our Children's Programs



The Nature Center

Again in early spring the center featured the beautiful Ceanothus Silk Moths. For 2024 we plan to distribute moth chrysalids and viewing enclosures to local schools.

In 2023 the center offered up close and personal experiences with Painted Ladies, Cabbage Whites, Red Admirals and Monarch butterflies, two Western Pond Turtles, Oscar and Butternut bunnies and two visiting lizards.



The Living Soil Ecosystem and **The Living Forest Ecosystem** interactive walls inside the Visitor Center proved to be a continuing enjoyment to both adults and kids. Lots of exploration occurred, looking under flaps, behind “secret” doors and following magnetic connections.



Organization Support

Since 2021 the organization has served over 2000 children, set up the Nature Service & Immersion program, created a camp kitchen, recovered two greenhouses, installed the new Turtle exhibit, opened the Living Soil Ecosystem and Living Forest Ecosystem exhibit walls, and started building the outdoor trail for the ONE Discovery Center.

We are deeply grateful to the **Oregon Community Foundation, FourWay Community Foundation, the Carpenter Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust and Evergreen Federal Bank** for their support in building our Nature Service Glamping facilities, building the new trail, upgrades to the front of the property, general operation support and with underwriting our Children’s Programming.

We simply could not do what we do without our wonderful Angel group of donors, who have made this progress possible, and we love them!

The Volunteers and Staff who help with events, being docents, doing building, planting, weeding, and so much more, are a testimony to the “can-do” nature of our community. Thank you so much Volunteers and Staff!

The remainder of the support for the organization and its programs has come from individual donations and visitors to the Rusk Ranch Nature Center and from the new Nature Service and Immersion program.

We thank you so very much for all of your kindness, your support and your belief in our community!

Warmest regards,

The Board of Directors for Rusk Ranch Nature Center

*Nancy, Erica, Diane, Carol, Chad, Divonna,
Susan, Kaci and Patty*

ruskranchnaturecenter.org.



Birds eat up to 550 million tons of insects each year.