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Madison Public Library's Naturalist-in-Residence Program Encourages Madisonians to Explore Nature

MADISON, WI -- Madison Public Library is launching a new residency all about nature! Local naturalist John C. Newman has been named the first Naturalist-in-Residence at Madison Public Library and will lead a series of events, walks and workshops throughout September and into October.

The goal of the Naturalist-in-Residency project is to encourage the Madison community to explore, learn, and reflect upon our natural world and their place in it, through the guiding vision of an experienced local naturalist. Those who participate will get to enjoy Madison Parks, as well as the many green and urban spaces around the city and at libraries.

"Libraries are places of learning, enrichment and joy," said Kristina Gómez, Community Engagement Librarian at Central Library and program coordinator. "The new Naturalist-in-Residence brings those elements to the outdoors as we celebrate nature and build awareness of our role in preserving and protecting the environment. With free and accessible events throughout Madison, the residency will be a welcoming and inclusive space for both those experienced with and new to naturalism."

The theme of Newman's residency is Nature is for Everyone, and it will include a series of nature experiences aimed at inspiring wonder and stewardship of the world around us. Newman will lead or work with partners to share nature-inspired art activities, walks in beautiful new places, nature-inspired art projects, foraging expeditions, and more.

"Being a naturalist for me is about seeing the connections between the world of life and the world under our feet or above our heads. A lot of people have this idea that nature is somehow separate, and that to be a naturalist you must go out to a place far away that we call 'nature,'" said Newman. "I think to be a naturalist can certainly involve visiting beautiful places, but it also is about recognizing how we ourselves are nature, and how the homes and communities we create are part of nature. Nature is all around us, and even inside of us. I want to help as many people as possible start to see the world this way."

The first event in the residency takes place on Saturday, September 3 at Lakeview Library from 11-noon and is an opportunity for the community to Meet the Naturalist. Learn about Newman's naturalist journey, their passion for nature conservation, and their vision for the residency. The event will also include a short walk to Warner Park to explore and observe nature with a Notes on Nature activity.

Other activities include a birding outing with the Feminist Bird Club - Madison Chapter, a foraging expedition, a modeling nature art workshop, a canoe trip, and more. Keep up with all the naturalist programs online at madpl.org/naturalist!

The Naturalist-in-Residence program is made possible in part by generous support of the Friends of Madison Public Library and in partnership with Madison Parks.

About Madison Public Library

Madison Public Library's tradition of promoting education, literacy and community involvement has enriched the City of Madison for more than 145 years. Visit the library online at www.madisonpubliclibrary.org, [@madisonpubliclibrary](#) on Facebook, [@madisonlibrary](#) on Twitter, or [@madisonpubliclibrary](#) on Instagram.



About John C. Newman

John Newman (he/him) is a neurodivergent naturalist from the Midwest. He's been a lifelong forager, a giant science nerd, a passionate educator, and the kid who would excitedly start sentences with "Hey, did you know that ___?" He comes with a Bachelor of Science in Botany from UW-Platteville, and has been a Wisconsin Master

Naturalist since the Summer of 2019. A few of his favorite things are Black Raspberries, Camping, Dungeons & Dragons, Stargazing, and learning about the Tree of Life.