

# DEEP PORTAGE

## Learning Center

Summer 2024

### Deep Portage Learning Center

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 Hackensack, MN 56452  
 Phone: (218)-682-2325  
[www.deep-portage.org](http://www.deep-portage.org)

### Our Mission:

Through the exploration of woods, water, and wildlife, Deep Portage prepares and inspires learners of all ages to sustain and celebrate our natural world.

### Who Are We:

We are a nonprofit residential environmental education center located on more than 6,000 acres of lakes, bogs, rivers, and woodlands. For nearly fifty years, we have provided extraordinary outdoor experiences for school groups, campers, families, and all who love the great outdoors.

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### Social

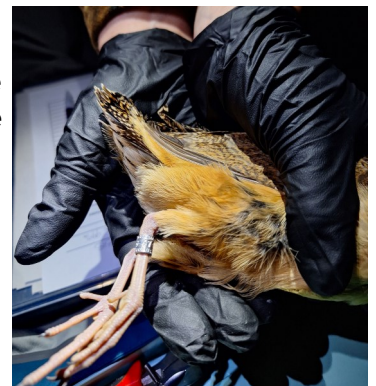
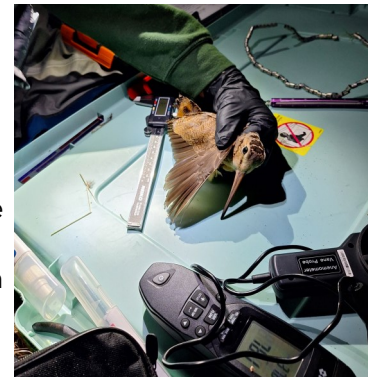


## Woodcock Banding at Deep Portage

Deep Portage is a great place for research! This spring, University of Oklahoma Ph.D. student Christina Kolbmann, used the Deep Portage Conservation Reserve as part of her on-going study of American woodcock peenting grounds. Her research focuses on soundscape preference in courtship grounds to determine if small or larger males prefer breeding sites with certain sounds over others. She placed sound recorders and mist nets in four ideal peenting ground locations. During dusk hours, American woodcock males do courtship flights to attract females. During flight, they make a beautiful twittering sound with their wings as they circle high up in the air.

Aside from sound composition, she is a certified bird bander and allowed us to come along for a couple of evenings. She captures woodcock by placing lines of tall mist nets (thin, lightweight nets used to live catch birds without harming them) in strategic locations. She plays spring mating calls to attract them closer, and hopefully land in the net. Once caught in the net, she quickly runs out to release the bird out of the net and brings them back to her research area. Data collected off the bird includes sex, age, condition of the bird, and size measurements. The last item is to place a small, lightweight metal identification band on the bird's leg. If the woodcock is harvested by a hunter, recaptured in another survey, or found in any other way you report the band to the official Bird Banding Laboratory. They'll be able to match up the band and tell you the approximate age of the bird when it was banded and its banding location!

After Christina places the band on its leg and is finished with measurements, they are sent free. We look forward to the completion of her work and the knowledge she may uncover about these unique birds!



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## DONATE TO DEEP PORTAGE

There are a few ways you can help support Deep Portage by donating. Please take a look at the different ways below. Your contribution goes towards educating kids about the environment and other programs in environmental education, resources management, conservation, recreation, and community services.

Deep Portage Learning Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

### “BRICK BY BRICK” DONATION

Make a \$100 gift and a personalized, engraved brick will be displayed at Deep Portage as a reminder of your support of our environmental education programs.



### \$50 MUG DONATION



Each year Deep Portage puts out a new mug with the year and a critter you might find at Deep Portage. The 2024 mug features a Water Scorpion, artwork by Sophie Bishop. Water scorpions are large macroinvertebrates that we find in Bass Pond with students.

### MATCHING GIFTS

Double your impact! Does your employer match gifts? View a list of Minnesota companies that have matching gift programs [here](#).

### IRA GIVING

If you are the age of 70 1/2 or older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distributions annually from your IRA account. You can donate up to \$105,000 total to one or more non-profits each year. This will avoid income taxes on the funds you give directly to Deep Portage.

### STOCKS, BONDS, MUTUAL FUNDS

You can gift stocks, bonds, or mutual fund shares to a non-profit while avoiding the capital gains taxes. You can also receive a federal income tax deduction for the current value of the gift.

### DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

Make charitable gifts over time by creating a donor-advised fund. In most cases, you can earn a tax deduction. These are offered at investment firms and community foundations such as St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation.



# "Meet Us in the Forest"

## *Deep Portage Summer Rendezvous*

On **Saturday, August 17th**, Deep Portage is hosting its first annual Deep Portage Summer Rendezvous! This fundraising event will include dinner, raffles, silent auction, and the option to participate in some special activities. You do not need to attend the pre-dinner activities to qualify for the onsite raffle drawings, but you must attend the dinner. Attendees are welcome to bring their own alcoholic beverages. The dinner will be \$75.00 per person with extra cost associated with the activities. Registration opens on July 1, 2024 on our website.

### **Itinerary**

2:00pm-4:00pm - Deep Portage led activities

- Sporting Clay Course
- Birding Hike
- Archery Course
- Canoeing the Boy River
- Nature Craft

4:00pm-6:00pm - Social hour

- Raffles
- Silent Auction

6:00pm - Dinner

7:00pm - Raffles are drawn and silent auction closes



Are you interested in sponsoring this event? Please let us know and we would be happy to get you the form to fill out by emailing [office@deepportage.org](mailto:office@deepportage.org) or call at 218-682-2325. Sponsorship opportunities are available to strengthen your support of Deep Portage Learning Center and raise awareness of your company with our constituents. Thank you for your consideration!

<b>SPONSORSHIP LEVELS</b>				
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>White Pine \$5,000</b>	<b>Red Pine \$1,000</b>	<b>Red Oak \$500</b>	<b>Paper Birch \$250</b>
<b>Social Media recognition</b>	●	●	●	●
<b>Log recognition on printed program</b>	●	●	●	●
<b>Verbal recognition from podium during event</b>	●	●		
<b>Recognition in the Fall 2024 Deep Portage Newsletter</b>	●			

# 2023-24 School Year Wrap Up

By: Marissa Olsen (Education Manager)

Another school year has come to an end and what a year it was! Over 5,470 participants visited Deep Portage from September-May as part of our school year program. We hosted roughly 58 schools on overnight trips and an additional 12 groups came for day visits. Three new schools came on trips for the first time this year: Schroeder Middle School from Grand Forks, St. Jude's from Mahtomedi, and Central Lakes Adventure School from Pillager. On Two separate occasions we welcomed students from Special Olympics Minnesota to participate in team building and hone their adventure skills. It's a great feeling to welcome new students and teachers to experience all that Deep Portage has to offer!

The most distinctive feature of this past year was the winter - or lack thereof. This school year felt like a strange transition from a prolonged fall into an early spring. While this winter was a bust for usual snow activities like skiing and snowshoeing, it did offer a unique opportunity for Lake Park-Audubon sixth graders to do outdoor archery in February! Deep Portage staff made the best of the winter we were given, and students had just as much fun on our bare trails as they would have in the deep snow.



This school year would not have been possible without the hard work of our education staff. They came from all over the county - California, Arizona, Montana, Illinois, and of course, Minnesota. They brought their different backgrounds and talents to the job and made an impact on the lives of thousands of students this school year. Thanks Education Team!

A highlight of my job is interacting with students and hearing how much they have enjoyed their trip. Many students tell me they hope to come back to Deep Portage and summer camp is brought up often as a chance to do just that. As we transition into the summer season, I'm looking forward to seeing how many familiar faces pop up at our various camps this summer.

With this school year in the books, I'm already looking ahead to the next and I know it's going to be a great one!



# Public Programs

We are having multiple public programs this summer! Please join us for some fun activities including pizza making in our brick oven, climbing wall, and archery. We hope to add more events to our summer calendar, so please check back on our website and Facebook! Please register at least a day in advance for a program. You can register online [HERE](#) or call 218-682-2325. Space is limited.

## Pizza Making

- Wednesday, June 26th, 2024
- 11am-1pm
- \$15 per pizza (pizzas serve 1-2 adults)

## Pizza Making

- Wednesday, August 14th, 2024
- 5pm-7pm
- \$15 per pizza (pizzas serve 1-2 adults)

## Climbing Wall

- Friday, July 12th, 2024
- 9am-11am
- Free will donation

## Archery

- Wednesday, July 17th, 2024
- 9am-11am
- Free will donation

# New Interpretive Signage at Deep Portage!

Deep Portage's newest trail is complete and ready for exploration! The new trail is located within the newly designated Fay Harrington Izaak Walton League Memorial Pine Stand and Outdoor Classroom. In 2022, the Cass County Board of Commissioners dedicated these 30 acres in honor of Fay's accomplishments as Cass County Land Commissioner, and his role in helping establish the Deep Portage Conservation Reserve and Learning Center.

Deep Portage board members were instrumental in proposing this project to the county, creating the signage and educational content, while DPLC staff and the Conservation Corps of Minnesota went to work establishing the footpaths. The trail gently meanders through the north side's old growth pine, while the south explores a recent pine stand thinning. Educational signs cover topics focusing on forestry management and the forest's importance to its users. The trail is located about halfway down the driveway and there is a small parking lot along the south side of the stand. It takes approximately 20-30 minutes to walk the trail, and will provide beauty and intrigue in all four seasons!





# Outdoor School for All Update

**Outdoor School for All MN** has been dropped from consideration for the 2024 MN legislative session. The outcome of May 16 was not what we hoped or expected, the dropping/deletion of OSFA from the Env and Nat Resource Omnibus bill. This occurred during some strange and unforeseen times in the legislature: very challenging conditions and tensions in both the house and senate, no new money being added at the end by leadership, complications and drama created by Senator Nicolle Mitchell's legal trouble, and simply very little money to work with in this supplementary budget (year 2 of the two year budget). While we had built a tremendous level of support amongst 69 authors in the house and 10 in senate, and with the highest bipartisan authorship of any bill in decades, our setback yesterday was not due to value or belief that OSFA is important for MN, rather it was simply a matter of inadequate money. We were dropped such that the committee could fund a commitment to the inventory of the future commitments to water quality for the lakes and rivers of MN.

While this is a momentary setback, there was also a late night and new addition into the bill. Something very targeted to us and that sets us up for a better chance of success next year. By early in next year's legislative session, by March 25, 2025, there will be recommendations from the DNR provided to legislators for

"...program and policy change to increase opportunities to serve additional Minnesota youth through Outdoor Schools for All legislations or other proposals..."

This inclusion to the bill sets a tremendous foundation for us next year. We know from conversations with legislators and DNR leaders that they love the OSFA bill. They were clear that next year, with data driven evidence and recommendations, and that it will be negotiating with a full two year budget, we will be in a significantly stronger position to get this passed and funded. We were also told by a Senate committee chair that he wants an outcome of funding that is ongoing, larger than the \$2M we suggest for this year, and to create a grant program with funding that continues year after year for OSFA.

While we now have to readjust our timeline, we remain focused on and will continue to work collaboratively on what may become an even better outcome in 2025 than we hoped for this year.



# Lake Superior Agates

When the North American continent was splitting, lava emerged in the northern part of Minnesota. Bubbles of carbon dioxide were trapped in the lava and while it cooled, water got into those holes depositing minerals including iron and quartz. This created our Lake Superior Agates. We are able to find these agates on Deep Portage land because of erosion and the movement of glaciers 10,000 years ago.

Lake Superior agates are irregular-shaped to beautiful spheres. They are made out of mostly quartz and iron which causes the red, orange, and yellow colors. The layers that were deposited creates rings much like a tree. They can also be found with crystals with the multiple layers surrounding it. Another fun feature of some agates are round bands creating an "eye". Agates can be found in many sizes all the way down to the size of a poppy seed.

In 1969, the Lake Superior agate become the official gemstone of Minnesota. To find the gemstone, you should look near bodies of water, recently logged areas of forest, and gravel roads. There are a few things to look for when searching for agates. The first one to look for is the rich bands. These are even more visible when they are in water or are wet. The bright red color with shades of yellow is another great indicator. If it has a glossiness and translucence to the stone, that is a great sign that it is an agate.

The agates in the pictures were found on Deep Portage property in a wide variety of areas. Take a look at what amazing gemstones that the glaciers brought down to Cass County. Our trails are open 365 days a year, so good luck on your adventure of finding Lake Superior agates!

