



Eco-Events April 2024

The Natural Resources Department's Calendar of Events

Wednesday, Apr 3rd, 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM – MANATEE AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRDING TOUR: EMERSON POINT – Search the skies for Florida's fabulous fliers! Our Audubon guide will lead participants on a tour through Emerson Point's coastal hammock and mangrove habitats. Check out the "locals" as well as the migratory birds that are wintering here. Program suitable for adults. Program sponsored by Manatee County Audubon Society in partnership with Manatee County. Reservations are required. To register please contact billielknight@yahoo.com or call (941) 592-7622.

Emerson Point Preserve – Ranger's Station

*Wednesday, Apr 3rd, 10:15 AM – 11:00 AM – LIBRARY LEARNING: POWERFUL POLLINATORS – Bees, butterflies, bats, and more - Buzz into the library to discover the important creatures that call Florida home. Through games, movement, and crafts your young family members will become a flutter about these special wildlife. Program suitable for Preschool age children. Reservations not required. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Braden River Library***

*Thursday, Apr 4th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – EXPLORE NATURE: MANATEE POP-UP – Stop by our education table at beautiful Portosueno Park and learn all about manatees! These gentle giants are our county's namesake and are frequent visitors of the park. Enjoy interactive activities to learn about the amazing anatomy of manatees, and discover how you can help protect them in the wild. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations required. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Portosueno Park***

*Friday, Apr 5th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – NATURE TALES: ROUND ROUNDUP – Does your kiddo enjoy stories and nature? Join us at Conservatory Park in Nature Tales. Meet monthly at Conservatory Park for an interactive story and activities. This month, we will discover why the sphere shape is hidden in plain sight. Program suitable for 8-year-olds and down. Reservations are required. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Conservatory Park – Playground Pavilion***

*Friday, Apr 5th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – EXPLORE NATURE: TOWER TALK – Visit the top of the tower at Robinson Preserve to take in the beautiful views of Tampa Bay! Stop by to chat with a naturalist and learn about the plants, animals, and history of the preserve. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations required. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Robinson Preserve – Tower***

*Saturday, Apr 6th, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM OR 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – YOUTH ARCHERY – Set your sights on the exciting outdoor activity of archery! This program will provide participants with basic archery instruction, familiarization with archery equipment, and instruction in shooting techniques that create successful archers. All equipment will be provided for use. Program is suitable for children ages 6 to 16. Program sponsored by the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in partnership with Manatee County. Two identical sessions are offered. Please register for only one session each month. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/april-youth-archery>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Rye Preserve – Pavilion***



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Saturday, Apr 6th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Walk the grounds of the historic Reasoner Tract and observe botanical giants collected from around the world. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Learn about upcoming programs and exciting new additions to Robinson Preserve. Program suitable for all ages. No reservations required. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org.

Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

Monday, Apr 8th, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM – SOLAR ECLIPSE WATCH PARTY – Join us on the lawn of the NEST for a rare event: a partial solar eclipse! This is guaranteed to be a unique viewing experience. The first 50 attendees will receive a free pair of eclipse glasses to view the eclipse safely. Program suitable for all ages. *The partial eclipse starts at 1:42 PM to a maximum at 2:59 PM before ending at 4:15 PM.* Reservations are recommended. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/solar-eclipse-watch-party>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Monday, Apr 8th, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM – SUNSET TAI CHI AT THE NEST – Join us for this monthly class at the NEST! At sunset on the second Monday of the month, Dr. Brian Nell, a certified Tai Chi instructor, will lead the group through the gentle movements of Tai Chi. This is a great way to shake off the stressful work week. Improve your balance, loosen your joints, and improve flexibility as you relax and breathe. This class is perfect for beginners and will include an exploration of several different styles of Tai Chi and Qigong. This class is held rain or shine. Program suitable for adults.

Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-tai-chi>. For more

information please contact aedan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Wednesday, Apr 10th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – BUILDING A BURROW – Come help us construct a gopher tortoise burrow for Genbu in his new enclosure. Genbu is a rehabilitated gopher tortoise who is an ambassador for our education team that teaches the importance of gopher tortoises in Florida. We will be using shovels, cinder blocks, and treated lumber. Program suitable for adult volunteers.

Tools, gloves, and water will be provided. Please bring a water bottle, wear closed-toed shoes, and dress for construction outdoors. Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/building-a-burrow-for-gopher-tortoise-day>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6035. **Robinson Preserve –**

Education & Volunteer Office



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Thursday, Apr 11th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL CREATURE FEATURE: GOPHER TORTOISE – Zoom into the natural world and focus on one wondrous animal species. Discover the identifiable movements and features of the wildlife and their favorite habitats to haunt. Then venture into one of Manatee Counties' preserves with your homeschooler to track the featured creature in the wild. This month, crawl into Robinson Preserve Expansion to discover our shelly reptilian friend. Program suitable 5-year-old and up. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/homeschool-creature-feature-search-for-gopher-tortoise>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Expansion**

Thursdays, Apr 11th, Apr 18th, Apr 25th, May 2nd, May 9th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM & Saturday, May 11th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – BAY ROVERS: UNDERWATER ROBOTICS COURSE – Form a team with other young engineers and compete in our underwater robotics challenge! Learn the basics of electronics and engineering by building an ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle). This 5-week course will cover topics of buoyancy, tool building, and robotics design as each team learns to build their own robot designed to survey a simulated shipwreck. Program suitable for students ages 12 and up. *This 5-week program meets weekly on Thursday evenings April 11 - May 9, with a final engineering challenge on the morning of Saturday, May 11. Participants must be able to attend all 5 classroom sessions and the challenge session. The Bay ROVERS program is funded by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program's Bay Mini-Grant.* Pre-registration is required. To register please visit <https://forms.gle/gQyz4j8KAkBjf7eX9>. For more information please contact adan.stockdale@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Friday, Apr 12th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TALL TAIL TRIBE: PONDERING PONDS – Down below the rippled fresh water are ponds teeming with life. Bring your toddler to discover the wild world hiding in the murky water, the animals and plants that call it home. Through hands-on discovery, songs, and games, we will explore the rich life of Florida ponds. Program suitable for Preschool age children. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/tall-tail-tribe-pondering-ponds>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Classroom Pavilion**

Saturday, Apr 13th, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead**



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Saturday, Apr 13th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Walk the grounds of the historic Reasoner Tract and observe botanical giants collected from around the world. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Learn about upcoming programs and exciting new additions to Robinson Preserve. Program suitable for all ages.

Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

Saturday, Apr 13th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – PLANTS & PEOPLE: EDIBLE & MEDICINAL PLANT WALK AT CONSERVATORY PARK – Did you know that the plants growing right outside your door can become a meal or medicine"? Our beautiful and wild home state of Florida provides an incredible array of plants that can help support our health and nourish us, something that the residents of the state have known since the most ancient of times. Join Melissa "Misha" Nell, Registered Herbalist (American Herbalists Guild), botanist, and Certified Interpretive Guide, and discover the lore of our local plants. Misha will take you on a casual trek through Conservatory Park, an oasis of nature in a very urban setting and teach you how to identify and become familiar with a variety of edible and medicinal plants. Program suitable for adults. *Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/plants-and-people-edible-and-medicinal-plant-walk-at-conservatory-park>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Conservatory Park**

Saturday, Apr 13th, 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead**

Saturday, Apr 13th, 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM – STARRY NIGHT ASTRONOMY – Join us for an astronomical extravaganza! Dozens of local astronomers will be set up in the Robinson Preserve Expansion with telescopes at the ready. Be sure to bring a sense of wonder and exploration as we view the skies through high-powered telescopes. Learn how to identify heavenly bodies, and how you can stargaze at home too. Program suitable for all ages. *Program sponsored by Suncoast Stargazers in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-astronomy>. **Robinson Preserve – Expansion Parking Lot**



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*Tuesday, Apr 16th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead***

*Wednesday, Apr 17th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TRAIL TRIMMING AND CLEANUP – Come lend a hand and help us clean up the trails at the secluded Moody Branch Preserve! We will be clearing the trails of fallen and overgrown branches and debris. Program suitable for volunteers 10 years and older. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. *All materials will be provided, including materials, tools, and gloves. Please wear closed-toed shoes and dress for the outdoors. Car-pooling may be available on a first-come, first-serve basis, leaving Robinson Preserve at 7:30 AM.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/trail-cleanup-at-moody-branch-preserve>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6035. **Moody Branch Preserve***

*Thursday, Apr 18th, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM – SEASHELL SHORE WALK – Calling all beachcombers and seashell enthusiasts! Join us for a relaxing walk on the beach to search for seashells and learn to identify them. This program will explore what makes mollusks unique and bring you up to speed on the latest research in malacology. Learn about ethical seashell collecting methods while discovering a new appreciation for our beautiful shorelines. Program suitable for all ages. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/seashell-shore-walk>. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Coquina Beach South – Longboat Key Bridge***

*Thursday, Apr 18th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – TREETOTS: RESPECTING THE REPTILE – Lizards, alligators, and turtles are all members of this scaly family. Come discover the amazing and wild reptiles that call Florida Home and come nose to nose with one of our reptilian friends. TreeTots is an interactive program that uses song, action, and play to encourage the youngest family members to explore nature. Program suitable for children ages 2-year-old and younger. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/treetots-respecting-reptiles>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST***



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Thursday, Apr 18th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: TALL TALL TREES – Trees provide many services for people such as providing oxygen and even paper! But did you know, trees can also tell time? Take a closer look at the rings of a tree and how they help tell time and past climate changes. Explore the preserve looking for unique tree species. Program recommended for students ages 7-13. Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of this session.

*Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/homeschool-science-club-rye>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Rye Preserve – Pavilion***

Friday, Apr 19th, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL SCIENCE CLUB: TALL TALL TREES – Trees provide many services for people such as providing oxygen and even paper! But did you know, trees can also tell time? Take a closer look at the rings of a tree and how they help tell time and past climate changes. Explore the preserve looking for unique tree species. Program recommended for students ages 7-13. Homeschool Science Club explores scientific and natural concepts through games, crafts, and activities encouraging students to be active outdoors. Guardians are responsible for identifying the learning maturity of their child. Please note the location of this session.

*Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/homeschool-science-club-emerson>. For more information please contact sara.alvarezcollazo@mymanatee.org. **Emerson Point Preserve – Nature Classroom***

Saturday, Apr 20th, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – SATURDAY MORNINGS AT THE NEST – Join us at the Mosaic Center for Nature, Exploration, Science, and Technology for a morning of discovery. Walk the grounds of the historic Reasoner Tract and observe botanical giants collected from around the world. Explore the canopy boardwalk among the banyans, climb to the top of the crow's nest, take in breathtaking panoramic views, and make an exciting exit from the building via slide. Learn about upcoming programs and exciting new additions to Robinson Preserve. Program suitable for all ages.

Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

*Saturday, Apr 20th, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM – OSCAR SCHERER 35TH ANNUAL EARTH DAY FESTIVAL – The Friends of Oscar Scherer present the 35th Annual Earth Day Festival. This years theme "Planet vs. Plastics". A free event with live music, guided hikes, tram tours (fee associated), kids coloring contest, plenty of kids activities, yoga classes, fun environmental booths and exhibitors. The photo contest will be on display, be sure to vote for your favorite photo for "People's Choice". Event suitable for all ages. *Coloring Contest winner will be displayed on next year's Earth Day flyer.**

Oscar Scherer State Park

*Saturday, Apr 20th, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM – BRADEN RIVER LIBRARY EARTH DAY CELEBRATION – Join us and fellow community partners for an Earth Day Celebration at the Braden River Library! Come visit our Sensory Garden and meet local groups that help keep our environment happy: crafts, activities, talk to a master gardener, plant a seed. Event suitable for all ages. **Braden River Branch Library***



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Saturday, Apr 20th, 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL STEAM FEST – Nature + Tech = Fun! Unleash your inner inventor at our FREE Homeschool STEAM Fest! Code robots, craft with slime, explore circuits & more! Ra es, prizes & hands-on learning for all ages! Don't miss out! Event suitable for all ages. *All are welcome to this FREE event. Bilingual English | Spanish* Registration is encouraged. To register please visit <https://forms.gle/hTnmY81NL2jqZ29v8>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Sunday, Apr 21st, 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM – HOMESCHOOL STEAM FEST – Nature + Tech = Fun! Unleash your inner inventor at our FREE Homeschool STEAM Fest! Code robots, craft with slime, explore circuits & more! Ra es, prizes & hands-on learning for all ages! Don't miss out! Event suitable for all ages. *All are welcome to this FREE event. Bilingual English | Spanish* Registration is encouraged. To register please visit <https://forms.gle/hTnmY81NL2jqZ29v8>. **Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST**

Monday, Apr 22nd, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – EARTH DAY SHORELINE CLEANUP – Celebrate Earth Day by helping to reduce our human impact on the oceans and the environment! Prepare to get muddy at this low-tide opportunity to clean the mangrove shoreline of this beautiful Preserve! Program suitable for all ages. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. *Please wear closed-toed shoes and dress for the weather. Ice water and all other materials will be provided.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/emerson-earth-day-cleanup>. For more information please contact matthew.tschirgi@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6035. **Emerson Point Preserve – Pavilion #3**

Tuesday, Apr 23rd, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead**

Wednesday, Apr 24th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM – WILDLIFE SPOTLIGHT: SEAHORSES AND PIPEFISH – Let's discover a fascinating family of fish - the Sygnathids! Learn about the amazing adaptations and lifecycle of seahorses and pipefish and the conservation efforts put in place to protect them. We will also be dip netting to look for these unique creatures so we can explore them up close! Program suitable for all ages. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/wildlife-spotlight-seahorses-and-pipefish>. For more information please contact elena.burke@mymanatee.org or call (941) 748-4501 ext. 6036. **Emerson Point Preserve – The Point**



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Thursday, Apr 25th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – GREEN EXPLORERS: CHASING GRAVITY – “Sir Issac Newton once said, “What goes up must come down.” This renowned scientist was talking about gravity! From the ant to the elephant, gravity is a force of nature that affects every creature on Earth. Using hands-on discovery, and the participant's creativity, attendees will have a chance to play in nature. Green Explorers is a structured, highly social, and experience-based activity. Program suitable for all ages. Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/green-explorers-chasing-gravity>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Neal Preserve**

Friday, Apr 26th, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM – NATURE PLAY FESTIVAL – Come play in nature! Build forts, search for birds, meet our tortoise, learn to read a map, try guiding a remote operating vehicle underwater (ROV), and so much more. At Robinson Preserve NEST- enjoy a fun evening for the whole family! Program suitable for all ages. *Program sponsored by Soar in 4 and Remake Learning Days in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations not required but suggested. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/nature-play-fest>. For more information please contact coral.bass@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – NEST**

Saturday, Apr 27th, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM OR 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM – ROBINSON PRESERVE TRAM TOUR – Immerse yourself in Robinson Preserve on our new electric tram tour. Join our knowledgeable guides to discover the history, wildlife, and ecosystems of this unique coastal gem. Gain a deeper understanding of this site's transformation from an empty farmland to a thriving nature preserve. Program suitable for all ages. *A wheelchair ramp is available upon request, please make a note if you have a wheelchair user in your party when you reserve your tickets.* Reservations are required. To register please visit <https://events.humanitix.com/robinson-preserve-tram-tours>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Robinson Preserve – North Entrance Trailhead**

Saturday, Apr 27th, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM – WORLD TAI CHI DAY – Join the World in practicing Tai Chi for a day of One World, One Breath. Come out and learn different forms of Tai Chi and try each one to enjoy benefits including stress reduction, lowering of blood pressure, and improvements in flexibility and balance. Visitors are invited to join instructors from the Manatee-Sarasota area who will share different forms of Tai Chi. Each instructor will provide a follow-along mini-class for you to try their style of Tai Chi or Qi Gong. These instructors are volunteering their time and talents to share their art with the community. Event is open to all ages and skill levels. *Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please contact <https://events.humanitix.com/world-tai-chi-day>. For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **GT Bray – Amphitheater**



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Robinson Preserve – Mosaic NEST

Tuesday, Apr 30th, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – PLANTS & PEOPLE: EDIBLE & MEDICINAL PLANT WALK AT NEAL PRESERVE – Did you know that the plants growing right outside your door can become a meal or medicine"? Our beautiful and wild home state of Florida provides an incredible array of plants that can help support our health and nourish us, something that the residents of the state have known since the most ancient of times. Join Melissa "Misha" Nell, Registered Herbalist (American Herbalists Guild), botanist, and Certified Interpretive Guide, and discover the lore of our local plants. Misha will take you on a casual trek through Conservatory Park, an oasis of nature in a very urban setting and teach you how to identify and become familiar with a variety of edible and medicinal plants. Program suitable for adults. *Program sponsored by Cypress Pillar Healing Arts in partnership with Manatee County.* Reservations are required. To register please visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/plants-and-people-edible-and-medicinal-plant-walk-at-neal-preserve>.

For more information please contact ecoevents@mymanatee.org. **Neal Preserve**