

# LEARNING FROM THE LAKE

FROM THE GREAT LAKES AQUARIUM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

MAY 2011

The Education Newsletter is a new monthly resource for families, educators, and naturalists alike! Every month, this newsletter will provide activities for families to do at home; phenology for the current month to keep you updated on migration patterns and happenings in nature; interesting facts relevant to the time of year; astronomical events; and family-friendly events happening around the Duluth area.

Watch for Education Newsletters each month! For inquiries on FREE subscriptions, contact Lindsay Brandt via email [lbrandt@glaquarium.org](mailto:lbrandt@glaquarium.org) or phone (218) 740-2027.

## Family Activity—Sprouting Necklace from FamilyFun.com

April showers bring May flowers! Discover the process flowers and other plants experience as they grow.

### What You Need:

- ◆ Screw eye
- ◆ Small plastic jar (i.e. spice jar)
- ◆ Pushpin, if needed
- ◆ String
- ◆ 3 cotton balls—moistened with water (not dripping)
- ◆ 1-4 seeds of your choice



Carefully twist the screw eye into the lid of the jar. Create a pilot hole with a pushpin, if necessary. Braid string through the screw eye to create a lanyard, making sure the loop can fit over your head. Then, moisten the cotton balls and place them inside the jar. Press the seeds between the jar wall and the cotton, so they are visible from outside the jar. Screw on the cap. Then, don your sprouting necklace! Keep out of direct sunlight to avoid overheating.

## Phenology—May 2011 from Minnesota Weatherguide

### First and Second Week

- ◆ Maples and basswoods begin to leaf out.
- ◆ Canada geese can be seen with their newly-hatched goslings.
- ◆ Crabapple, apple, and lilac flowers are fragrant and showy.
- ◆ The second week is the prime time to hunt morel mushrooms.
- ◆ Minnesota's fishing opener, May 14th.

### Third and Fourth Week

- ◆ Baltimore orioles begin weaving their nests
- ◆ Fawn white-tailed deer are born.
- ◆ Baltimore orioles, house finches, and woodpeckers visit grape jelly feeders.
- ◆ Leaf lettuce, green onions, and radishes are harvested.
- ◆ Native wildflowers, including columbine and wild geranium's are blooming.

## Did you know?!

Arbor Day is the celebration of trees. The celebration originated in 1872 when one man, J. Sterling Morton of Nebraska, believed the Great Plains needed more trees. He sponsored a campaign for tree planting in Nebraska. Other states adopted the celebration on various dates. Minnesota was the fourth state to adopt the tradition, designating the month of May as Arbor Month and the last Friday of the April as Arbor Day. Trees are not just an attractive addition to a landscape, they also help naturally clean our air of toxins and provide our air with more oxygen.



### Celebrate Arbor Day!

This month, take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about trees and act in making our community a better place. Plant your own tree!

Trees are important to us for the following reasons:

- ◆ Providing shade on a hot summer day.
- ◆ Producing oxygen.
- ◆ Provide us with chewing gum, crayons, soap, glass, suntan lotion, medicine, paper, syrup, pencils, firewood, building materials, and more!
- ◆ Providing valuable habitats and food for many animals.
- ◆ Rotting trees are eventually decomposed back into soil, providing other plants with essential nutrients to grow.



# May Astronomy



## May 4th—Pleiades Star Cluster

An open cluster of stars, Pleiades is also known as the Seven Sisters. This cluster contains hundreds of stars with only a handful being visible to the naked eye. Pleiades, or the Seven Sisters, have an extensive presence in ancient mythology. Numerous stories surround the reason why the Seven Sisters became a permanent fixture in the night sky. According to Greek legends, the sisters longed to be transformed into doves. One day, Zeus answered their appeal and placed them among the stars.

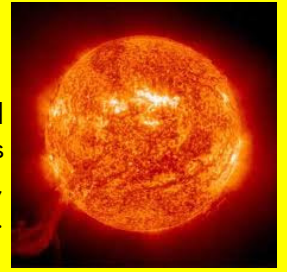
The Seven Sisters will be visible in the western sky just above the evening crescent moon.

## May 18th—Red Supergiant, Antares

Meaning, “Rival of Mars”, this star will be visible just below and to the left of the moon.

### Star Classifications

How is a star classified as a red supergiant? What kind of star is our Sun? Stars are classified according to the amount of light they give off, the color of light emitted, temperature, and size. Stars emit white, blue, yellow, orange, and red light. They vary in size from dwarf stars (astronomically small, up to 20 times larger than our Sun) to hypergiants (astronomically large, the size of our solar system). Our Sun is classified as a yellow dwarf star.



## Local Events

- May 8: Happy Mother’s Day!
- May 8: Lake Superior Zoo Celebrates Moms!
- May 19—20: Earth Tracks at LS Zoo
- May 21: Armed Forces Day
- May 21: Lumberjack Laps Fun Run at Cloquet High School Track
- May 21: Youth Outdoor Expo at Hartley Nature Center
- May 27: Life of a Voyageur Presentation at Gooseberry Falls State Park
- May 29: Curious Kids: X Marks the Spot! at Itasca State Park
- May 30: Memorial Day

## MAY 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## Summer Programming at Great Lakes Aquarium

### Fly Fishing Camp, June 10th—12th

Children and parents will have the opportunity to become introduced to the exciting sport of fly fishing. Campers (youth & adults) will learn to cast with a fly rod, tie flies for fishing, and explore fish habitat. The last day of camp, participants will practice their new fly fishing skills at a local river or lake. For more information or to register, contact Jay Walker at [jwalker@glaquarium.org](mailto:jwalker@glaquarium.org).

### Animal Care Camp, June 20th—23rd

Take an active role in animal care at Great Lakes Aquarium. Learn what it takes to keep our resident animals healthy, happy, and active. Prepare meals, keep the exhibits clean, test water quality and create enrichment toys for otters, birds, and more!

### SCUBA Camp, July 11th—14th or August 1st—4th

Dive into the world of SCUBA. Discover techniques, gear, and diving safety with a PADI certified dive master. Explore the science behind diving and use all of your new diving skills at an open warm water dive.

For more information on Animal Care and SCUBA Camp or to register, contact Jillian Godfrey at [jgodfrey@glaquarium.org](mailto:jgodfrey@glaquarium.org).