



Above: The gazebo and the upton at Cedar Point in winter. Below: Some renovations occurring on the Goodall Lodge at Cedar Point. What do you think they are doing here? Photos by Stella Uiterwaal..

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# CEDAR POINT TIMES

The Newsletter of Cedar Point Biological Station (CPBS)  
School of Biological Sciences  
University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
[Newsletter archive](#)

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## On deck for 2026

If you think Cedar Point Biological Station is synonymous with summer, you are not alone (see page 2). But for all the great times to be had at Cedar Point in the summer (see page 3), there are months of offseason work to conduct repairs and ready the station in the spring. This offseason, we have major renovations in progress on Goodall Lodge (see teaser photo below). We are having windows replaced, disability access points added, and a lakeside deck constructed. If you want to appreciate the full scope of improvements, you'll have to come out for one of our events this year and see for yourself!--John P. DeLong

--Cedar Point Social - April 18 - At Laszlo's Haymarket in Lincoln! Join us to catch up and get new swag.

--Volunteer weekend - April 24-27 — Come and enjoy a quiet few days at Lake Ogallala while helping us open up the station.

--Alumni weekend - August 14-16 — Join us to revisit friends and good times.

--Ogallalalooza - September 6-7 — The inaugural Ogallalalooza will be the can't-miss 10k/5k run, music jam, and barbecue event of the year!



YOU CAN SUPPORT STUDENT EXPERIENCES AND THE STATION OVERALL BY DONATING TO THE CEDAR POINT WORKS FUND.





## A winter retreat at Cedar Point

To me, Cedar Point is synonymous with summer. I've spent my last ten Junes, and many of my Julys, at the station. Summers are by far my favorite time of year, and I've been lucky to spend so many of them at one of my favorite places. Winter, on the other hand, is a dreary inevitability for me. In theory, I love a good snowfall and the serenity of winter landscapes, but in reality, I don't think I'll ever like the cold.

This year, I hatched a plan: what if I spent some of my least favorite season at one of my favorite places? How amazing would it be to see Cedar Point, which lives in perpetual summer in my mind, cloaked in snow? I would need some help: I live in Maryland now, so someone would need to drive me from the airport to the station. Luckily, my mom Trudie Teijink [[see Cedar Point Times issue 6](#)] lives in Nebraska and loves Cedar Point just as much as I do. She happily agreed to come with me, and thus our mini retreat was born.

We arrived at sunset (a depressing 4:18pm) on an incredibly windy Wednesday in December. By Thursday morning, the wind had strengthened and Lake Ogallala was choppiest than I've ever seen it. Anyone from Nebraska knows that strong winds bring changing weather, so I checked the forecast. 50s and 60s for the next few days. I couldn't complain about t-shirt weather in December, but so much for snow!

We spent a long weekend walking, exploring, and getting some work done. We hiked up the gazebo trail to check on the new barn owl nest boxes and spotted a feather. An owl had stopped by! We explored the north side of Lake Mac, futilely looking for a very lost Crested Caracara that had been reported the days prior but had likely been blown away by now. And we drove up to Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge to soak up the endless sky, only to be chased away by an oncoming thunderstorm in true Sandhills fashion.

My mom, who has done a few artist-in-residencies at the station, also used our mini retreat to work on her art. We rearranged the dining room of Swallow Barn, and then the classroom in Lubber Lab, as makeshift studios. The dormant landscape, dried vegetation, and the insect and bird collections provided ample inspiration.

On the winter solstice, we watched the sunset from the Lake Mac lookout point (where the wind had blown the picnic shelter roof off). To my surprise, the winter sun set over the land south of the lake, completely different from the summer sunset over the water. More than anything, this dispelled my imagined eternal Cedar Point summer.

My mom and I thoroughly enjoyed our warm but wonderful winter retreat. Still, I want to see the station in the snow! Later, Jon Garbisch told me that February would be our best bet. Sounds like we have to plan another stay next winter!-- Stella F. Uiterwaal [Note from the Director - you too can set up your own retreat at Cedar Point - just go to [our lodging request page](#) and ask!]



Top: The Gazebo Trail in winter. Middle right: A barn owl feather below one of the barn owl nest boxes made by Dru DeLaet and installed at Cedar Point. Below right: A moth from the insect collection at Cedar Point. All photos by Stella F. Uiterwaal.

GET READY FOR GLOW BIG RED IN FEBRUARY! OR GET A HEAD START BY [DONATING TO THE CEDAR POINT WORKS FUND.](#)



## Cedar Point courses continue to have impact

This story is from Meredith Fontana, who answered a question in an Orientation Leaders application about the best class she had taken at UNL with this essay:

“The best class I have taken at the University of Nebraska was LIFE 121: Principles of Biological Sciences II, which I completed during a three-week summer session at Cedar Point Biological Station in Ogallala, Nebraska. This course transformed my understanding of biology by taking it out of the lecture hall and into the living, breathing ecosystems of western Nebraska.

Instead of memorizing facts from a textbook, I spent my days outside, learning through direct observation and hands-on investigation. Each morning, our small class hiked through prairie grasslands, wetlands, and canyons, using our surroundings as our laboratory. We studied the behavior of box turtles and collected and identified different species of algae by wading into shallow swamps. We examined the complex relationships between native grasses, insects, and the animals that depended on them. Every ecosystem we explored became a new chapter in understanding how life interacts, adapts, and competes.

One of the most memorable assignments was photographing examples of biological processes in the field, such as competition, mimicry, or mutualism. Searching for these concepts in the wild forced me to look closer at the environment—to see biology not as abstract theory but as patterns unfolding right in front of me. I began to notice how even small details, like the distribution of a plant species or the behavior of a grasshopper, could reveal larger ecological dynamics.

Living at Cedar Point added another dimension to the experience. I stayed in a cabin with students I had never met before, but through long days of fieldwork and late nights talking under the stars, they became some of my closest friends. The sense of community at the station was just as educational as the coursework. We learned to collaborate, share discoveries, and appreciate the challenges of field research together.

By the end of those three weeks, my view of biology, and of learning itself, had changed. I realized that understanding life requires immersion: touching the soil, observing movement, and experiencing the interconnectedness of species firsthand. The class taught me not only scientific methods but also curiosity, patience, and respect for the natural world.

LIFE 121 at Cedar Point Biological Station was more than just a course; it was an experience that redefined what it means to study science. It reminded me that the best learning happens when you step outside, pay attention, and let the world itself become your classroom.”--Meredith Fontana



Top left: Abner Sanchez, Luke Wegman, Leah Bates, Meredith Fontana, and Maguire Anderson, from left to right. Photo by Benjamin Reed. Top right: Praying mantis volunteering for measurement. Middle right: A white pelican rescue. Lower right: The white pelican freed and heading back to the lake. All other photos by Meredith Fontana.

**CEDAR POINT HAS A MAINTENANCE BACKLOG. IF YOU'D LIKE TO HELP US CATCH UP, CONSIDER A DONATION TO THE CEDAR POINT STATION FUND.**



Cottonwoods along Lake Ogallala. Photo by Stella F. Uiterwaal.

## About the Station

Cedar Point Biological Station is a site for research and experiential learning located along the banks of Lake Ogallala in western Nebraska. CPBS is surrounded by a wide range of habitats, ponds and lakes, and landscape features such as box canyons, making it an ideal place to learn about and interact with nature. CPBS is operated by the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. The station provides unparalleled experiential learning in the high plains through a wide range of courses and partnerships with the School of Natural Resources; the School of Art, Art History, and Design; the College of Architecture; the Department of Hospitality, Tourism, and Restaurant Management; and the School of Global Integrative Studies at UNL.

## From the Vault

This bit of history was provided by John Janovy Jr.: During the Field Parasitology course in 2000, Jaclyn Helt (on the right, now a teacher at Archbishop Alter High School in Ohio) and Laura Duclos (on the left, now the Director of Product Development with the MPet group focused on pet products in Nebraska) used sieves to sort through the sandy soils for invertebrates. In particular, they were hunting for fingernail clams, which are hosts to hairworms (*Nematomorpha*). This class trip was to a site along Cedar Creek, a regular stop for the course north of Paxton. At that time, Jaclyn was a masters student in the Janovy Lab, studying Trematoda, while Laura was a PhD student in the Nickol Lab, studying Acanthocephala.



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