



# Wildlife WHEP Wisconsin 4-H & Wisconsin 4-H Forestry

Website <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/opportunities/projects/outdoor-education/>

Email: [wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com](mailto:wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com)



## “TRACKS” – February 2025

Participation in wildlife & forestry activities is open to all Wisconsin 4-H club members. You can be enrolled in any 4-H project and participate in the activities.

### Wildlife WHEP & Forestry 4-H Friends,

Recently, it was announced that we are in a La Nina weather pattern. What are La Nina and El Niño and what on earth do they have to do with the weather? El Niño and La Niña are two phases of the climate phenomenon known as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). These phases occur in the tropical Pacific Ocean and have significant impacts on global weather patterns.

El Niño is characterized by the warming of sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. Typically, trade winds blow from east to west across the Pacific, pushing warm surface waters toward Asia, which allows cooler water to rise to the surface near the Americas. During El Niño, these trade winds weaken, and the warm water spreads eastward. In the U.S., El Niño usually brings wetter conditions to the southern part of the country, particularly during the winter months. On the other hand, El Niño typically leads to drier and warmer conditions in the northern part of the U.S., including the Pacific Northwest and parts of the Midwest.

La Niña, the opposite of El Niño, occurs when sea surface temperatures in the Pacific cool below normal. During La Niña events, trade winds strengthen, pushing warm water farther west. In the United States, La Niña typically leads to cooler and wetter conditions in the Pacific Northwest, as well as increased snowfall in northern states. The southern U.S., in contrast, experiences drier and warmer-than-average conditions during La Niña winters.

Sources: <http://www.maximum-inc.com/learning-center>; <http://www.noaa.gov/education>

**Wildlife & Woods Explorations - Virtual Sessions:** Designed for K-5 and elementary grade youth. The next interactive sessions for your family are on February 26, March 26, April 23, & May 28. Free registration is available in your family 4-H Online account under the Events section. The Zoom link will be emailed after the registration has been completed. Family members are encouraged to participate in the zoom session.

Questions? Email: [wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com](mailto:wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com)

**Wildlife & Woods Careers & Competition - Virtual Sessions:** Designed for middle and high school youth. The next interactive sessions for your family are on February 24, March 24, April 28, & May 22. Free registration is available in your family 4-H Online account under the Events section. The Zoom link will be emailed after the registration has been completed. Family members are encouraged to participate in the zoom session.

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**Wildlife & Forestry 4-H Art Contest** – It’s time again for the Art Contest – March 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>. There are 18 categories & five age groups: K5-2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 3-4<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade 7-9<sup>th</sup> grade, & 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> grade. The registration form is attached. You can enter 5 items, so bring them, send them with a friend, or ship them to us. Ribbon prizes go to the top 10 items in each class and age division. Have fun & show your skills with others around the state.

**Wildlife WHEP & Forestry Contests** Dates: March 28 & 29, 2025. **Additional study guide information for the contest is available, so email us. We’ll share the information covered in the contests.** The National WHEP (Wildlife Habitat Education Program) Manual [www.whep.org/](http://www.whep.org/) & the National Forestry Manual [www.4hforestryinvitational.org/](http://www.4hforestryinvitational.org/) are nationally accredited resources. It’s also available at <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/opportunities/projects/outdoor-education/> or email us.

**Backyard & Back 40 “Kits-To-Go”. Make your own Activity Boxes:** There are 15 different Backyard & Back 40 wildlife & forestry related programs. Each program offers many different hands-on educational opportunities for kids and adults of all ages. The activities can be presented by your own 4-H youth & adult leaders. We’ll provide the instructions for you to build your own 4-H Club “Kits-To-Go” hands-on activity boxes. Share the kits in your county. Email: [wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com](mailto:wj4hwildlifeforestry@gmail.com)

**Kerri, “TRACKS” Editor**

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Advisor: Carlea Liermann, Calumet Co. 4-H Program Educator



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