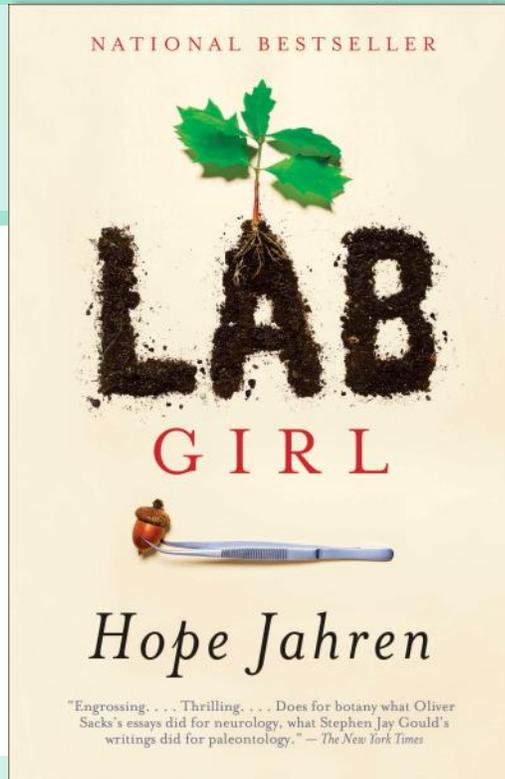


NEA Big Read: Chillicothe



2021 Program Guide



NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

Now you ask a question about your leaf.
Guess what? You are now a scientist.

...

So let me tell you some stories, one scientist to another.

Hope Jahren, Lab Girl

CHILICOTHE
PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
READ • LEARN • SHARE • GROW

Programs and Events

All events are free, open to the public, and will take place virtually via Zoom, unless otherwise noted. During in-person outdoor programs, masks must be worn over the nose and mouth when unable to maintain a 6' distance from others. For more information, visit chillipld.org.

 These programs are guided hikes.

 Flat terrain: stroller & wheel/powerchair accessible.

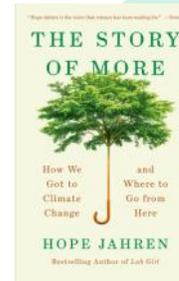
 If you have interpretation needs for an event (ex., American Sign Language), please call 309-274-2719 at least two weeks in advance, and we'll do our best to provide accommodations.

- Tue., Mar 2, 9, 16, 23**
11:00 am
Making Room: Eliminating the Barriers to Telling Your Story
Register by 3 pm on Feb 26 at bit.ly/3nEj7P2 to save your spot. Whether you're hung up on the technicalities of writing or burdened with never having enough time to craft your story, let's remove the barriers together in this memoir-writing workshop facilitated by Carmen Smith. Open to adults; no writing experience needed.
- Wed., Mar 3**
10 am
Seed-Starting Workshop Attend: bit.ly/3bXgHsu
Save dollars and get a jump-start on your garden this spring by growing your own seedlings! Learn the basics in this workshop.
- Mar 8-12**
NEA Big Read Kick-off Week (Chillicothe Public Library)
Stop by the library any time this week during open hours to pick up a copy of *Lab Girl*, participate in our community mural, visit the herbarium exhibit, reserve a tree for our tree-planting event, grab a seed-starting kit, and more!
- Thur., Mar 18**
5:00 pm

Soils 101: Dig It Like Bill ([Coal Hollow Park](#))
Register via the events on the [Friends of Coal Hollow Facebook page](#). Join Naturalist Mike Contratto and Ed Stermer, Professor of Geology, for an intro to soils, soil profiles, and the geology of the Chillicothe area. You will have an opportunity to try your hand at defining soil horizons (no digging required—sorry, Bill).
- Mon., Mar 22**
12:00 pm
Prioritizing Mental Wellness Register: bit.ly/3rE2EwP
Self-care strategies and information on community resources for mental wellness will be shared by Dr. Ted Bender, President of [UnityPoint Health – UnityPlace](#).
- Thur., Mar 25**
7:00 pm
Illinois Women in Science Register: bit.ly/36Nk7KX
Panelists from the [National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research](#) in Peoria, IL offer a lively glimpse into the minds of some deeply inspiring women scientists, past and present, whose real-life stories have surprising parallels to Hope Jahren's funny, gritty, and fascinating life, described in *Lab Girl*.
- Fri., Mar 26**
9:00 pm
 
Stars over Peoria ([Tawny Oaks](#), meet in parking area)
Registration required by noon on 3/25: call 309-274-2719. Naturalist Kelsey Ernst ([Peoria Park District](#)) will be your guide.
- Sat., Mar 27**
10:00-11:30 am

Restoring the Illinois River Bluffs ([Forest Park Nature Center](#))
Registration required by noon on 3/26: call 309-274-2719. Hit the trails with Chief Naturalist Kristi Shoemaker ([Peoria Park District](#)) to learn about restoration efforts and their importance.
- Tue., Mar 30**
7:00 pm
NAMI—Ending the Silence Register: bit.ly/39SG9hy
Designed for middle and high school students with the aim of decreasing stigma around mental health issues. Beth Lawrence (NAMI ally) will discuss warning signs of mental health conditions and what steps to take if you or a loved one are showing symptoms. Owen Johnson, a young adult with a mental health condition, will share his journey of recovery. Questions welcome.
- Sat., Apr 3**
9:00-11:30 am
and
Tue., Apr 20
9:00-11:00 am

Illinois Ag, Medicinal Herbs, and Restoration ([Horseshoe Bottoms](#))
Learn about the history of agriculture in Central Illinois from indigenous people through Western technology, medicinal herbs, and restoration ecology on this guided hike with David Pittman ([Friends of Rocky Glen](#)). Terrain is mostly flat and can be muddy in places. To confirm the event (in case of weather, etc.) text David Pittman at 309-573-2354.



Giveaway:
The Story of More
Some events will feature a surprise drawing for a copy of Hope Jahren's new book! Must attend to win.

***Lab Girl* Book Discussions**

Join virtual chats at bit.ly/2MUaRh7

Mon., Mar 22 @ 6:30 pm

Hosted by Chillicothe Public Library's Books+Tea @ the Library book club

Sun., Mar 28 @ 3 pm

Facilitator: Ellie Tiley, biological science technician at the Ag Lab
Focus: higher education, mental health

Wed., Apr 7 @ 10 am (in person)

Stroll & Chat: Meet at the library for a rambling, fresh-air book discussion

Tue., Apr 13 @ 7 pm

Facilitators: Mike Contratto and Kristen Gerstner, who ran a test lab together
Focus: dynamics of females working in traditionally male-dominated spaces

Herbarium: A Library for Plants

March 8-May 1

Visit the library to view this exhibit curated by [Forest Park Nature Center](#), which holds a collection of thousands of preserved plant specimens, many collected in the late 1800s through the early 1900s by Virginus Chase, a botanist from Peoria Heights, IL.

Herbariums can be critical to understanding an area's ecology, past and present, in a time of rapid change and habitat destruction. QR codes posted throughout the exhibit link to videos for a virtual docent tour of the exhibit.

Locations for Guided Hikes

- CAMP WOKANDA** 620 E Boy Scout Rd, Chillicothe
COAL HOLLOW PARK 22004 N Yankee Ln, Chillicothe
FOREST PARK NATURE CENTER 809 N Forest Park Dr, Peoria Heights
HORSESHOE BOTTOMS Meet at West end of St Mary's Cemetery, 421 N Sterling, West Peoria
ROCKY GLEN 176-450 N Kickapoo Creek Rd, Peoria
TAWNY OAKS 715 W Singing Woods Rd, Edelstein

- Sat., Apr 3**
1:00-3:00 pm
and
Tue., Apr 20
1:00-3:00 pm

- Local Geology, Native Plant Communities, and More** ([Rocky Glen](#))
Join David Pittman ([Friends of Rocky Glen](#)) for a guided exploration of local geology, complex native plant communities, and the impact of invasive species. Terrain is steep and physically challenging. *To confirm the event (in case of weather, etc.) text David Pittman at 309-573-2354.*
- Mon., Apr 5**
6:30 pm
- Cooking with a Low-Carbon Footprint** Register: bit.ly/3aF4KWg
The Poeppel family of [Broad Branch Farm](#) will demonstrate some recipes and discuss how we can enjoy delicious, healthy food while having a lighter impact on the environment.
- Fri., Apr 9**
10:00-11:30 am
 
- Forest Trees of Illinois** ([Forest Park Nature Center](#))
Registration required by noon on 4/8: call 309-274-2719.
Naturalist Kelsey Ernst ([Peoria Park District](#)) will lead you on an exploration of the living framework of our local forests.
- Sat., Apr 10**
9:00 am

- Spring Wildflowers** ([Coal Hollow Park](#))
Register via the events on the [Friends of Coal Hollow Facebook page](#).
Take a hike and see what's blooming with naturalist Mike Contratto.
- Thur., Apr 15**
7:00 pm
- "Moldy Mary"** Register: bit.ly/36Wae5
Dr. Martha Vaughan ([NCAUR](#)) will present the story of Mary Hunt and her role in the development of the mass production of penicillin.
- Sat., Apr 17**
11:00 am
- Keynote Address: Dr. Hope Jahren** Register: bit.ly/3rij418
Seven NEA Big Read communities from around the United States will gather online for an insightful and inspiring lecture and Q&A by the author of *Lab Girl*.
- Wed., Apr 21**
10:00-11:30 am

- In Search of Woodland Wildflowers** ([Camp Wokanda](#))
Registration required by noon on 4/21: call 309-274-2719.
Meet in the lower parking area for a guided hike with Program Specialist Cathy Lane ([Peoria Park District](#)) and keep your eyes out for those ephemeral jewels of spring.
- Wed., Apr 21**
7:00 pm
- Meet the Filmmaker: Lisa Merton, *Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai***
Register: bit.ly/3p55ARc
Hear how Merton and her filmmaking and life partner Alan Dater met Wangari Maathai and got the chance to make a film about her remarkable life. Watch the movie ahead of time at vimeo.com/223901837 (Password: takingroot4u), and bring your questions!
- Apr 21-23**
- Seedling Swap** (Chillicothe Public Library)
Did you start more seedlings than you have space for in your garden? Label each plant clearly and drop them off at the table under the library portico. While you're here, browse the seedlings that others have brought, and feel free to take a few home!
- Tue., Apr 27**
6:00 pm

- What Is Forest Bathing?** ([Coal Hollow Park](#))
Registration required: call the library at 309-274-2719.
Broadly speaking, forest bathing or forest therapy (shinrin-yoku, in Japanese) means taking in the forest atmosphere with all of one's senses, to improve physical and mental wellbeing. Join Mike Contratto to learn more and give it a try!
- Sat., May 1**
10:00 am
- Tree-Planting Extravaganza** (Chillicothe Public Library)
Attend a brief tree-planting demo at the library before claiming your reserved tree* and bringing it home to plant. From noon to 2pm, reconvene at the library for a picnic on the lawn and a concert by Bones Jugs. Visit chillipld.org for detailed event info.
*Reserve your tree by April 23 at bit.ly/3a3UBC8.
- Rain date:*
Sun., May 2
1:00 pm
- Fri., May 7**
10:00-11:30 am
 
- Migratory Birds of the Illinois River Valley** ([Camp Wokanda](#))
Registration required by noon on 5/6: call 309-274-2719.
Explore the wonderful world of migratory birds on this walk with Program Coordinator Susie Grana Ingram ([Peoria Park District](#)). Meet in lower parking area.
- Sat., May 22**
1:00-2:30 pm
 
- Hike Through the Tallgrass Prairie** ([Tawny Oaks](#), meet in visitor center)
Registration required by noon on 5/21: call 309-274-2719.
Wend your way through the prairie and learn about this fascinating ecosystem with Mike Miller, [Peoria Park District](#) Environmental & Interpretive Services Supervisor.

STEM Story Times with special guest readers

Kids can enjoy picture books about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, selected and read by women working in these fields. Videos will be posted on our YouTube channel: bit.ly/3jz3asT.

STEM Take-and-Makes

Activity kits are available to pick up at the library starting on the dates listed. One kit per child, while supplies last.

March 1: Marshmallow Engineering
Build a tall structure using only marshmallows and toothpicks.

March 15: Food Science
Taste test salty, sweet, bitter, and sour flavors.

March 29: Bridge Building
Use recycled materials to build a beam bridge and a suspension bridge. Then compare their strengths.

April 12: Upcycled Siphon
Use recycled materials to build a siphon.

April 26: Egg Drop Test
Use cushioning materials to keep an egg from cracking when dropped from high up.

Virtual Film Fest

Immerse yourself in forests around the world and brush up on your scientific knowledge with these films.



Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai

Stream for free Mar-Apr at vimeo.com/223901837

Password: takingroot4u

Chillicothe Public Library patrons: watch any time on Kanopy!

Special Q&A with filmmaker Lisa Merton on April 21. Register at bit.ly/3p55ARc.

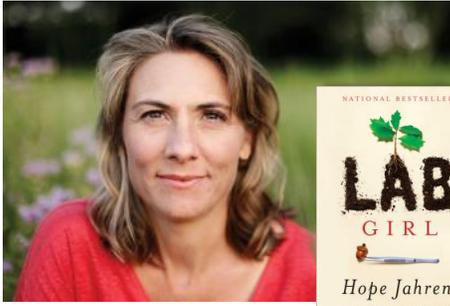
Chillicothe Public Library patrons can access the following movies on demand with a valid library card:

The Cloud Forest ([Hoopla](#) & [Kanopy](#))

Forests ([Kanopy](#))

NOVA: Decoding the Weather Machine ([Hoopla](#) & [Kanopy](#))

Dr. Hope Jahren presents the NEA Big Read 2021 Keynote Address



Sat., April 17
11:00 am
live online event

Don't miss this special opportunity to hear from the author of [Lab Girl](#)! Seven NEA Big Read communities from around the United States will host an insightful and inspiring lecture and Q&A by Hope Jahren, a scientist from rural Minnesota who not only knows her trees and flowers but also “has some serious literary chops” (*The Washington Post*).

Register today at bit.ly/3rij4L8

NEA Big Read Kick-off Week



March 8-12 at the library

Stop by for a family-friendly, socially-distanced celebration!

- Free copies of [Lab Girl](#)
- Community mural: *Red Oak*, by Bert Hoddinott, Jr.
- Herbarium exhibit
- Take-&-Make seed starting kit
- “Be a Scientist: Ask a Question” bulletin board
- Reserve a tree to plant at the grand finale event on May 1

Tree-Planting Extravaganza



May 1 at the library

10:00 am—Welcome & tree-planting demonstration

10:30 am—Claim your reserved tree* and plant it

12-2:00 pm—Picnic on the library lawn & concert by [Bones Jugs](#)**

Bring a 5-gallon bucket for free mulch.

Not planting your own tree? You can help [Chillicothe Park District](#) or the [Shademakers](#) with their plantings.

*Fill out the enclosed form or visit bit.ly/3a3UBC8.

**Please bring your own picnic, blankets & lawn chairs. Households will be seated in appropriately distanced sections. Masks must be worn during all activities, except when seated with your household in your designated picnic area.

Check out the [Seed Library](#) at CPLD!

Stop by to browse during regular library hours, or visit bit.ly/3aidnFN.



Read-alikes

These books share similar themes with [Lab Girl](#). Find even more at chillipld.org.

NON-FICTION

[Forest Bathing: How Trees Can Help You Find Health and Happiness](#), by Qing Li

[Hidden Figures](#), by Margot Lee Shetterly

[The Hidden Forest](#), by Jon R. Luoma

[The Hidden Life of Trees](#), by Peter Wohlleben (for another perspective, see this article from the Ecological Society of America: bit.ly/3pvESC9)

[The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative](#), by Florence Williams

[Replenishing the Earth](#), by Wangari Maathai

[The Sirens of Mars: Searching for Life on Another World](#), by Sarah Stewart Johnson

[The Soul of an Octopus](#), by Sy Montgomery

[The Story of More](#), by Hope Jahren

[The Tree: A Natural History of What Trees Are, How They Live, and Why They Matter](#), by Colin Tudge

FICTION

[The Man Who Planted Trees](#), by Jean Giono

[The Overstory](#), by Richard Powers

YOUTH NONFICTION

[Girls Who Looked Under Rocks: The Lives of Six Pioneering Naturalists](#), by Jeannine Atkins

[The Leaf Detective: How Margaret Lowman Uncovered Secrets in the Rainforest](#), by Heather Lang

[Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story](#), by Suzanne Slade

[Rachel Carson and Her Book That Changed the World](#), by Laurie Lawlor

[Trailblazers: 33 Women in Science Who Changed the World](#), by Rachel Swaby

[The Tree Lady: The True Story of How One Tree-Loving Woman Changed a City Forever](#), by H. Joseph Hopkins

[Wangari Maathai: The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees](#), by Franck Prevot

YOUTH FICTION

[Counting by 7s](#), by Holly Goldberg Sloan

[The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate](#), by Jacqueline Kelly

[Growing Trees](#), by Judith Bauer Stamper

[The Lorax](#), by Dr. Seuss

[Maple](#), by Lori Nichols

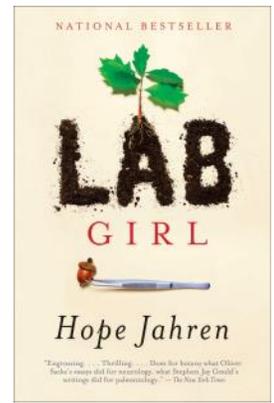
[The Secret Garden](#), by Frances Hodgson Burnett

[We Planted a Tree](#), by Diane E. Muldrow

[Who Will Plant a Tree?](#), by Jerry Pallotta

About the Book

This is a nature lover's story about digging in dirt and discovering new things about old growth. It's a scientist's story about running experiments, wondering, asking for funds, and fending off doubt. It's a Midwesterner's story of moving to new places and noticing the differences. It's a girl's story about becoming what she wants to be. And it's a woman's story about fighting stereotypes, sacrificing, feeling vulnerable, trusting in friendship, getting sick, getting help, finding love, and writing it all down.



About the Author

Hope Jahren is an award-winning scientist who has been pursuing independent research in paleobiology since 1996. She currently holds the J. Tuzo Wilson professorship at the University of Oslo, Norway.

Conservation volunteer opportunities

Get your hands dirty at these volunteer workdays in the Chillicothe area!

COAL HOLLOW

Sat., Mar 26, Apr 24, May 22 @ 10am-12pm

Sign up for Saturday workdays through the events page on the [Friends of Coal Hollow Facebook page](#), or call/text Mike Contratto at 309-256-4233.

Wednesdays & Fridays

@ 8:30am (open-ended)

To confirm that a W/F workday is a go, call/text Mike Contratto.

PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Camp Wokanda: Tue., Apr 27 @ 1-3pm

(meet in lower lot)

Tawny Oaks: Thur., Apr 29

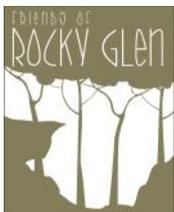
@ 1-3pm (meet at picnic shelter)

No registration required. Participants must sign a waiver upon arrival. Ages 8+ (minors must have a guardian-signed waiver; kids under 14 need to have a parent present.) Questions? Call Forest Park Nature Center at 309-686-3360.

ROCKY GLEN

Sat., Mar 20 & Sun., May 2 @ 9am - 12pm

No registration required. To confirm the event (in case of inclement weather, etc.) text Dave Pittman at 309-573-2354. Meet in parking lot on Kickapoo Creek Rd.



[Chillicothe Public Library](#) enriches lives, builds community, and encourages success by bringing people, information, and ideas together.



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