

Sustainable Southfield News and Updates

The Health Benefits of Forest Bathing

Forest bathing is a practice known for immersing yourself in nature and connecting with your natural surroundings. The origins of forest bathing are traced to Japan in a practice known as *shinrin-yoku*, which means bathing in the forest atmosphere. What makes forest bathing a unique experience? The purpose of forest bathing is to disconnect from your daily life and enjoy the forest by soaking in the sights, listening to the peaceful surroundings, and inhaling fresh air. You can practice forest bathing in any season and in group settings regardless of your age and fitness level.



Berberian Woods Nature Preserve



Valley Woods Nature Preserve



Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve

(Photos by Souzan Hanna)

Forest bathing is considered a form of natural therapy due to its numerous benefits. These benefits have been linked to improved mental and physical health. So what exactly can immersing yourself in nature do? Well, here are a few scientifically-proven benefits that will encourage you to dedicate more time to the great outdoors:

- Spending more time outside helps you cope with stress
- Natural settings lower blood pressure and boosts the immune system
- Patients in hospitals heal quicker when they have access to nature
- Natural settings reduce the likelihood of depression and anxiety

The City of Southfield has many parks and nature preserves where you can unwind, relax, and immerse yourself in the forest bathing experience. For the complete list of park locations, please visit the Park Locations page on the Parks & Recreation Department website:

<https://www.cityofsouthfield.com/departments/parks-recreation/park-locations>

Stay Happy and Healthy!

Southfield Sustainability Team



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