

Essex County Environmental Center ~ Public Programs

SPRING 2024



*The Essex County Environmental Center is located at 621-B Eagle Rock Avenue in Roseland in Essex County West Essex Park and is a facility of the Essex County Parks System. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Saturday from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Essex County West Essex Park is open to the public every day from dawn until dusk. Pre-registration is required for all programs unless otherwise noted. **All programs require a minimum number of participants to run.** For more information, please call 973-228-8776.*

The Essex County Environmental Center continues to offer a variety of seasonal environmental education programming for groups and families. While mask wearing and social distancing requirements have been lifted, we remain cautious and ask our patrons to please be responsible, keeping the health and safety of everyone in mind.

Thank you for your continued support, cooperation, and participation!

FIELD TRIP OFFERINGS FOR ORGANIZED GROUPS **(Schools, Scouts, Church/Community Organizations, Home Schools, Etc.)**

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

\$75 per program, 45 minutes

Choose from the Following Virtual Field Trip Topics

Seasonal Discovery Nature Tour/ Frog Pond Science
Backyard Birding/ Butterflies/ Fish & Fishing 101
Camping 101/ Lenape Learning Area Tour & Lenape Skills
Passaic River Studies/ Mighty Migrations/ Wild about Wildlife
Honey Bees & Native Pollinators/ Green Building Tour
Recycling (*grant funded and free for Essex County institutions while funds last*)...and more!



IN-PERSON FIELD TRIPS

Organized Group Bookings

(Institutions, Scouts, Municipal Recreation Programs, Homeschoolers, Etc.)

All ages. Program length is 1.5 hours. Choose from a variety of seasonal topics offered by the Essex County Environmental Center. Inquire by calling the Center at 973.228.8776. Minimum of 10 person booking requirement (if less booked, minimum booking fee applied). **Fee: \$10 per participant (including leaders/chaperones)**

Small Groups/Pods and Families

All ages. Spring topic selections include: Spring Seasonal Adventure, What's in That Hole? Lenape Village Tours, Camping 101, Backyard Birding, Geodesic Dome Gardening, Frog Pond Science, Wildflower Walk, Nature Journaling, Wetland Biodiversity and MORE! One group at a time with a limit of 10 people. Schedule your 45-minute time slot by calling the center at 973.228.8776. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult. *Where noted, additional fees apply.**

CLUBS FOR CHILDREN

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.



LITTLE EXPLORERS

Mondays – March 11, 25; April 8, 22; May 6, 20; June 3, 17

For Ages 2 and 3; 10am to 11am

For Ages 2 and 5; 3pm-4pm

Join us for explorations of nature as we study plants and animals and observe the colors, shapes, textures, and sounds in the Environmental Center's forest habitat. Please come dressed for the weather; all classes include an outdoor adventure. All children must be walking and accompanied by an adult. Paths cannot accommodate strollers. Please be prepared for all weather conditions. Maximum of two children per adult. All sessions are limited to 10 children. This is not a drop off class; adults must accompany children. **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

GARDEN DISCOVERY CLUB



**Tuesdays – April 23; May 7, 21; June 4, 18; July 9, 23; August 6, 20; Sept. 10
4pm to 5pm**

For ages 5 and up. Together we'll grow food in our garden plot and learn about everything from soil to seeds along the way. Participants will get hands-on experience with planting, harvesting and cooking. Session themes include soil and composting, seed planting and labeling, thinning, weeding and watering, selective harvest, garden pests, healthy eating and more! This is a drop-off and pick-up class (children only). **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

FROG POND CLUB

Wednesdays – March 20, April 17, May 15, & June 12 **4pm to 5pm**

For children ages 5 through 9. Uncover and discover ecosystem interactions at the frog pond. Explore with nets, magnifiers and microscopes to investigate what lives at the pond and learn from a naturalist what can be done to protect and conserve the pond inhabitants. **Fee: \$12 per child per session**

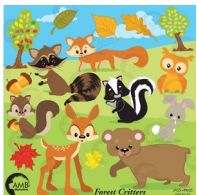


FOREST FRIENDS CLUB

Thursdays – March 14, April 11, May 9, June 6

4pm to 5pm

For children ages 5 through 10. We'll explore the forest using nets, binoculars, magnifiers, and microscopes to investigate nature in our wooded wetland habitat. Together we hope to foster an ethic of stewardship and offer an opportunity to take part in hands-on conservation projects. **Fee: \$12 per child per session**



Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

CLUBS FOR CHILDREN



ESSEX COUNTY 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

To explore programming for all ages, visit <http://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h>! Join us at the County Fair! Essex County 4-H would like to invite all youth K-12 to participate in the Essex County 4-H Spring Fair. The fair will be held in partnership with the Essex County Environmental Center's Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 20th. A detailed fair submission book can be found at <https://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h/youth/fairs/>. All projects will be showcased and awarded based on the Danish judging system. This year will have a special live showcase for Small Animals and Technology. Each submission will receive a participation ribbon and judges' notes. Youth can submit projects in any of the spring divisions including Indoor Gardening, Arts and Crafts, Small Animals, Writing Technology, Photography and Environmental Education. Scouts, school groups and homeschool groups are encouraged to submit projects.

4-H, in partnership with the Montclair Community Farms Coalition, is recruiting a team of teenage youth to address food security while exploring urban agriculture, culinary arts, and entrepreneurship, expanding the market for local grains via the development and sale of pizza, organic grain products, and other farm based "value added" products. For more information, please visit <https://www.montclaircommunityfarms.org/farmpreneurs-internships>.

4-H YOUNG GARDENERS CLUB

Saturdays – April 27; May 4, 18, 25

10am to 11am

For children in grades K to 12. Have you ever wondered how vegetables and flowers grow? From where spaghetti sauce comes? How to find a rainbow in a garden? The 4-H Young Gardener's Club can provide find the answers to these questions and more. Learning and fun happen all the time here. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. Advanced registration required; please call 973.353.1337.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS



HORTICULTURE FOR SENIORS

Mondays—April 15, May 20, June 17

1pm to 3pm

For senior citizens. Join the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County for this horticulture class especially designed for senior citizens. The monthly topics are: *All About Bulbs* (reserve your seat by April 8); *The Great Jersey Tomato* (reserve your seat by May 13); and *Herbs You Can Grow and Eat* (reserve your seat by June 10). Meet in Garibaldi Hall, 621A Eagle Rock Road, Roseland. Advance registration is required one week prior to the program. For more information or to register, please call the Master Gardener Helpline after March 4th at 973.228.2210.

Free

NEW JERSEY WOODTURNERS

Monthly on the 4th Monday

7pm to 9:30pm

For adults and children ages 3 and up. Learn to turn with the NJ Woodturners Association. Discover the wonders of creating art from found pieces of wood. Topics vary by the month. Meet in Garibaldi Hall on the fourth Monday of every month; dates may change, call the Center prior to meeting date to confirm the schedule. For details, please email Bob Amarant at bobamarant@gmail.com and to learn more about the organization, visit <https://www.njwoodturners.com>. **FREE for NJWA members**



MONTHLY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS



ESSEX COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Monthly on the 2nd Tuesday

7pm to 9pm

For adults and children ages 12 and up. The Essex County Beekeepers Society (ECBS), a chapter of the NJ Beekeepers Association, is dedicated to teaching new beekeepers how to manage their bees and helping experienced beekeepers to do it better. If you think you might be interested in keeping honeybees and would like to explore what's involved, you're welcome to join.

ECBS meets at Garibaldi Hall from 7pm to 9pm on the second Tuesday of every month unless otherwise noted. For more details on monthly programs, visit www.njbeekeepers.org and www.ecbs.squarespace.com. **FREE for ECBS and NJBA members**

GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

Meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday

6pm to 9:30pm

For adults and children ages 12 and up. Attendees bring trees, pots, and tools for display, discussion, and problem-solving. Each meeting features a special topic related to the training and cultivation of bonsai for everyone from beginners to masters. Check out the Facebook page [greatswampbonsaisociety](https://www.facebook.com/greatswampbonsaisociety) for the latest updates on meeting topics and special events. For more information, email John Michalski at huonia@aol.com. **FREE for GSBS members**



MARCH 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

MARCH MAPLE SYRUP: HOW SWEET IT IS!

Tuesday, March 19

5:15pm to 7:15pm

For families. Maple syrup is a sweet treat that has been harvested ever since the Lenape Native Americans lived here on the landscape. Let's celebrate the spring equinox together and hear the story of how maple syrup was discovered, learn to identify our maple trees, tap tree stumps with hand augers and taste the real thing drizzled over mini pancakes that we make together and cook on a campfire! **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.**



SPRING FOREST EGG HUNT

Saturday, March 23

9:30am to 10:30am OR 11am to 12pm

For families with children ages 1 to 6. Celebrate the beginning of spring with a reading of the "Little White Rabbit" and an egg hunt within the forest grounds of the Environmental Center. Kids can bring their favorite basket to collect eggs and earn surprises! In the spirit of being "green," participants will exchange eggs for small prizes. The eggs are sanitized and reused for future programs. The Rutgers 4-H Small Animal Club makes a special visit with a live bunny rabbit. Refreshments and a spring craft giveaway per child included. Limited space available. **Fee: \$15 per child**

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

APRIL 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar

FAMILY DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, March 23

1:30pm to 3:30pm

For families with young children ages 4 and up. Meet at the end of Locust Avenue in Roseland and hike 1 mile total to explore this National Historic Landmark that is home to three-toed Grallator dinosaur tracks from the late Triassic age. Using clay, we'll make and take an impression of an existing track and leave the site undisturbed for future paleontological study. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.**



SPRING CAMP

Tuesday, April 2; Wednesday, April 3; Thursday, April 4

9:30am to 3:30pm



For children ages 6 to 10. Restore the bond between children and nature. Children will have the opportunity to explore nature right here at the Essex County Environmental Center's varied habitats—forest, wetland, pond and river. For details, call the Center at 973.228.8776. **Fee: \$210 per child for all 3 days OR \$85 per child/per day.**

gARTbage ART CONTEST

Register by Wednesday, April 10

Project Drop-Off is Saturday, April 13 from 11am to 2pm

For children in PreK through 12th grades. Do your part to contribute to a cleaner greener world by creating art out of garbage! The Environmental Center's g'ART'bage contest takes a creative approach to protecting our planet from plastic pollution by pulling plastics out of the waste-stream and transforming them into works of public art. Contest participants are challenged to be thoughtful and creative in crafting art made from single-use plastic garbage (non-recyclable plastics). Team and individual projects are welcome. Projects must be crafted to withstand the elements, as they will be showcased in an outdoor setting on the grounds of the Essex County Environmental Center. Winning entrees will be displayed during the week of Earth Day! Grand prizes are awarded to entries that place 1st in all categories; 2nd and 3rd place entries will be recognized with a plaque, certificate, and a small gift from the Environmental Center.



g'ART'bage ART WORKSHOP

Thursday, April 11

4pm to 6pm



For families. Join Center staff to create an entry for our contest! Some materials will be provided; however, participants are encouraged to bring personal items to add a unique artistic flair. The g'ART'bage Art Contest takes a creative approach to protecting our planet from plastic pollution by pulling nonrecyclable plastics from the waste-stream and transforming them into works of public art. All workshop participants will have their projects entered into our g'ART'bage Art Contest. For more information, call 973.228.8776. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two**

children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.

APRIL 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar

FAMILY DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FIELD TRIP

Tuesday, April 16

5:15pm to 7:15pm

For families with young children ages 4 and up. Meet at the end of Locust Avenue in Roseland and hike 1 mile total to explore this National Historic Landmark that is home to three-toed Grallator dinosaur tracks from the late Triassic age. Using clay, we'll make and take an impression of an existing track and leave the site undisturbed for future paleontological study. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**



EARTH DAY 2024

Saturday, April 20

11am to 3pm



All ages. Yay, it's EARTH DAY! Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to our annual outdoor Earth festival. On this special day, the Essex County Environmental Center makes extra efforts to share its wonder and appreciation of the natural world with its patrons, partners and friends. Enjoy a day filled with crafts, games, and recreational opportunities, such as canoeing, hiking, and rock-climbing. Enjoy entertainment, demonstrations, information, a local eco-vendors sale. Environmental Center staff and partner groups are on hand to guide you throughout this exciting Earth-centric the day!

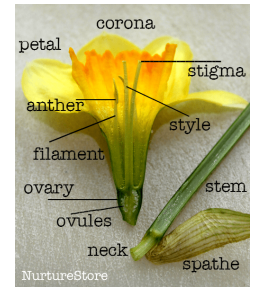
Seeking eco-organizations and vendors with a sustainable mission. For more information, call 973.228.8776. **FREE EVENT (items may be for sale)**

FAMILY DAFFODIL DISSECTION

Monday, April 22

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. We'll pick and dissect a daffodil to better understand flower anatomy and pollination, play a game of pollinator family feud and take a walk on the Environmental Center trails. There we will discover spring wildflowers like Trout Lily, Violet, Spring Beauty, and Solomon Seal. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.**



DESIGNING AND INSTALLING A TEACHING POLLINATOR GARDEN: CONNECTING CURRICULUM TO OUTDOOR SPACES

Monday, April 22

6:15pm to 8:15pm

For adults. Imagine turning your space into a vibrant learning oasis! Our workshop guides educators and community folks on a seamlessly blended academic curriculum to achieve a lively pollinator garden, creating a holistic learning experience for everyone involved. This workshop is designed by Dena Corbin, founder and CEO of Natural Ground 1, a unique platform dedicated to fostering wellness and well-being through a harmonious blend of workshops. The focus revolves around the intrinsic connection between native plants, personal wellness, and the therapeutic benefits of essential oils. **Fee: \$15 per adult** (Scholarships available for Essex County Urban Aid District teachers and community leaders; call the Center for details at 973.228.8776)



FISHING 101

Thursday, April 25

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. We'll begin with an introduction to freshwater fishing and learn to target specific fish species, fishing equipment, knots, bait selection, and technique. Participants will make their own "Altoids Tin Fishing Tackle Kit" to use on site and then take home. Basic equipment provided but you are welcome to bring your own. Meet at the waterfront area in the Essex County South Mountain Recreation Complex, West Orange, near the Clipper Pavilion and boat rental. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**

APRIL 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

WILDLIFE TRACKING & PLASTER CASTING

Tuesday, April 30

For families with young children ages 5 and up. Predict what tracks you might find in our wooded wetland habitat and go search the forest and river edge. We'll discover hoofed, clawed and webbed animal feet and see how wildlife is especially adapted to the terrain. We'll make our own plaster animal tracks from the tracks that we find. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.**

6pm to 7:30pm



MAY 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

ESSEX COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Master Gardener grown tomato plants, basil and herbs will be featured along with perennials, shrubs, and woodies at the Annual Plant Sale. Local honey and honey products will be for sale. Spring planting advice from trained volunteers. Sale takes place in two Essex County park locations. For more information, visit our website www.mgessex.org.

Friday, May 3, 10am to 4pm & Saturday, May 4, 9am to 3pm

At Essex County Presby Memorial Iris Gardens, Upper Montclair, NJ

Saturday, May 11, 9am to 3pm

At Essex County Environmental Center Garibaldi Hall, Roseland, NJ

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.



FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS

Monday, May 6

For families. This rrrribbetting program will take an up-close look at our wetland and pond ecosystem. Search out and identify the life found in the pond through magnifying glasses, microscopes and field guides. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.**

6pm to 7:30pm

SPRING WILD EDIBLE WALK

Friday, May 10

For families. Take a walk along our trails to identify and discuss the variety of forest groceries available for harvest around our local landscape. You'll meet Spice Bush, Ostrich Fern, Mountain Mint, Stinging Nettle, Wild Leek, Trout Lily and others. Learn some of the folklore behind the plants and, as we walk and talk, we'll discuss proper identification, ethical harvest, growing environment and methods of preparation. On our return, we'll collect a few dandelions to fry up as bite size fritters and leave with a greater appreciation for the ephemeral beauty of our changing seasons. **Fee: \$40 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**

6pm to 7:30pm



MAY 2024 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar

PROJECT WET TEACHER WORKSHOP



Water Education for Teachers

Monday, May 13 **9am to 3pm**
For educators of grades K through 6. The Project WET curriculum guide is a collection of science-based, interdisciplinary activities and lesson plans that are teacher-tested and classroom ready. They are sure to help educators feel confident addressing themes of water in the classroom and empower students to build a more resilient future. Project Wet is aligned with Common Core and NGSS standards. Bring a lunch and dress for the weather. Certificates are given for the workshop hours completed. Led by Environmental Center Senior Naturalist David Alexander. **Fee: \$35 (includes curriculum activity guide) (scholarships available for Essex County urban aid district teachers; call the Center for details)**

UPPER PASSAIC RIVER CANOE TRIP



Wednesday, May 15

6pm to 8pm

For adults and children ages 10 and older. Take a leisurely paddle on the Passaic River! Paddlers will enjoy scenery and peacefulness as they paddle up the river and float downstream. Geared for beginners and children 10 and up accompanied by a parent or guardian. Meet in the Garibaldi Hall parking lot. **Fee: \$20 per person**

LOOKING AHEAD

WILDERNESS SKILLS SUMMER CAMP

July 8 to July 12

1:30pm to 4:30pm

For grades 5 to 8. Join Senior Staff Naturalist David Alexander for some exciting lessons in outdoor skill building. Participants will identify wild plants, learn to track animals, create fires, go canoeing, make natural cordage, build shelters & much more! Call the Center at 973.228.8776 for details. Advance registration is required. **Fee: \$300 per child/per week**



NATURE EXPLORERS SUMMER CAMP



July 8 to July 19, Grades Pre-K and Kindergarten 9:30am to 12:30pm

July 22 to August 2, Grades 1 and 2 9:30am to 1:30pm

August 5 to August 16, Grades 3 and 4 9:30am to 1:30pm

Enjoy exploring and discovering woodland and river habitats for insects, birds, amphibians, Lenape life and much more. Sign up for one or two weeks per grade level. Call the Center at 973.228.8776 for details. Advance registration is required.

Fee: \$210 per child/per week for Pre-K and K, \$230 per child/per week for Grades 1 and 2; \$250 per child/per week for Grades 3 and 4

BUTTERFLY TENT SAFARI

Saturday, July 13 to Saturday, July 27, 2024

Tent Hours ~ Monday through Friday from 12pm to 3pm

Saturdays, July 13, 20 & 24 from 10:30am to 1:30pm

For all ages. Featuring live butterflies and butterfly-themed programming for all ages. Must book a time slot. Advance registration is required. Walk-ins will not be accommodated. **\$8 per person (includes a take-away item per paid participant)**



LOOKING AHEAD



BUZZFEST

Saturday, August 10

10am to 11am; 11:30am to 12:30am; OR 1pm to 2pm

For all ages. Have you ever wondered how honey goes from hive to jar? Come join our local beekeeper and see a real hive! You'll even get a sample taste. Learn about bees, their current challenges, and how we can help. Take home a bee themed craft. Limited space per time slot; must book from one of three time slots. Advance registration is required. **Fee: \$15 per participant (includes a take-away item)**

2024 ESSEX COUNTY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Submissions are due by Wednesday, September 11, so *grab a camera and visit an Essex County Park!* Anyone with a camera is invited and encouraged to submit photos that capture a part of your visit to the County Park System. For rules and regulations, please contact the Essex County Environmental Center at 973.228.8776.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION—Meetings are held hybrid—in person and virtually—on the first Monday of each month at 6pm at the Essex County Environmental Center. Some dates may change. Opening slots are available, if interested, please email a letter of interest and resume to tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org. For an up to date listing of meeting dates or for more information, please contact Essex County Environmental Affairs Coordinator Tara M. Casella at 973.228.8776 or visit <https://www.essexcountyparks.org/facilities/environmental-center/partners>.

GARDENING—Do you have garden-related questions? Contact Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County and a Master Gardener will gladly assist you on their FREE helpline service. Helpline hours are Monday through Friday from 10am to 2pm. Call 973.228.2210 or e-mail mastergardenerec@gmail.com. **PLEASE NOTE THE HELPLINE OPENS MARCH 4, 2024.**

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER PARTNER AGENCIES

Essex County Beekeepers Society (ECBS) – John DeBenedett johndebenedett@yahoo.com

Essex County Environmental Commission—Tara M Casella 973.228.8776

Essex County 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H) – Marissa Blodnik 973.353.133

Great Swamp Bonsai Society—John Michalski huonia@aol.com

New Jersey Audubon (NJA) – Scott Barnes 908.396.6506

New Jersey Woodturners Association (NJWA) – Bob Amarant 908.442.4729

Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension of Essex County – Amy Rowe 973.228.3179

Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County Help Line—973.228.2210

West Essex Park Conservancy (WEPC) – Ron Pate 973.669.8030

ATTENTION:

If you are not already on our e-mail list and you would like to receive an electronic file of our brochure as well as other e-notices and alerts, please call the Center at 973.228.8776 or e-mail tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org with an e-mail address. Thank you!



Our Environmental Center has become the premiere location for environmental education and nature appreciation. With the help of our partner groups, our dynamic schedule of events and activities will captivate all ages. Walk in our woods, discover habitats, get pointers on gardening, learn about nature photography and much more. It's all about nature and it's all at our Environmental Center.

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive

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Essex County Environmental Center
621-B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ 07068

Putting Essex County First