

Essex County Environmental Center ~ Public Programs

SPRING 2023



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: \$10 child, \$12 adult or \$30 per family (2 adults, 2 children).** *Where noted, additional fees apply.

CLUBS FOR CHILDREN

LITTLE EXPLORERS

Monday – March 6, 20; April 3, 17; May 8, 22; June 5, 12

For Ages 2 and 3; 10am to 11am

For Ages 4 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: \$10 per child per session**

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

YOUTH GARDEN CLUB

Tuesdays, April through September

4pm to 5pm

Dates: April 18; May 9, 23; June 6, 20; July 11, 25; August 8, 15; Sept. 12



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: \$10 per child per session**

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

FROG POND CLUB

Wednesdays – March 22, April 19, May 10, & June 7

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: \$10 per child per session**

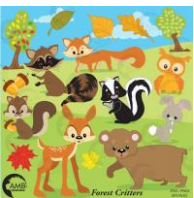


Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

FOREST FRIENDS CLUB

Thursdays – March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15

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: \$10 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 Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 22nd. A detailed fair submission book can be found at <http://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h>. All projects will be showcased and awarded based on the Danish judging system. 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.

The Essex County 4-H Healthy Small Animals Club is recruiting new members. Youth in grades 4-8 meet to share their passion about animals, learn about small pet care and participate in state and county small animal events. Meetings occur on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month from 4pm to 5pm. To register, contact Essex4h@njaes.rutgers.edu.

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 SMALL ANIMAL CLUB INFORMATION SESSION

Saturday, April 1

12pm to 1pm

Parents and youth are welcome to join us for an hour session for animal show and tell and discuss opportunities for new Essex County animal clubs. We want to hear about the interest the youth have and are looking for adult volunteers! We will also share upcoming animal-related events for young people to participate. Meet at Garibaldi Hall. For more information, email Essex4h@njaes.rutgers.edu or **RSVP** at <https://go.rutgers.edu/ixsp3gxt>.

4-H YOUNG GARDENERS CLUB

Saturdays – April 1, 29; May 6, 20, 27

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

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. For details, please email Bob Amarant at bobamarant@gmail.com and, to learn more about the organization, visit <https://www.njwoodturners.com>. Meet in Garibaldi Hall on the fourth Monday of every month. **Fee: \$10 per child, \$12 per adult; 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. **Fee: \$10 per child, \$12 per adult, free for ECBS and NJBA members**



MARCH 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS



MAKE STICK BREAD

Tuesday, March 14

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. We'll build a winter campfire and bake acorn bannock bread on sticks over the flames. Drizzle with honey or maple syrup for a cold weather treat (maybe even add chocolate chips). **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**

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

FAMILY DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FIELD TRIP

Thursday, March 30

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: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**



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

APRIL 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

SPRING FOREST EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 1

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 events and programs. 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 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS



SPRING CAMP

**Tuesday, April 4; Wednesday, April 5; Thursday, April 6
OR Tuesday, April 11; Wednesday, April 12; Thursday, April 13
9:30pm to 3:30pm**

For children ages 6-10. Restore the bond between children and nature. Children will have the opportunity to explore nature right here at the Essex County Environmental Center. **Fee: \$210 per child for all 3 days OR \$85 per child/per day**

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

gARTbage ART CONTEST

Register by Friday, April 7



Project Drop-Off is Saturday, April 15 from 11am to 2pm

Do your part to contribute to a cleaner greener world by creating art out of garbage! This gARTbage contest aims to challenge youth to be thoughtful and creative in building a sculpture made of garbage (non-recyclable material). Team and individual projects are welcome in the following categories: Grades Pre-K-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 and Grades 9-12. Projects must be able to withstand the elements as they are showcased in an outdoor display on the Essex County Environmental Center 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. Pre-registration is required; call 973.228.8776 or email

tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org.

gARTbage ART WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 8

11am to 1pm

Join the 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 gARTbage 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. Contest participants are challenged to be thoughtful and creative in crafting art made from single-use plastic garbage (nonrecyclable plastics). Team and individual projects are welcome. Projects must be made to withstand the elements, as they will be showcased in an outdoor setting on the grounds of the Essex County Environmental Center. All workshop participants will have their projects entered into our gARTbage Art Contest. For more information, call 973.228.8776.



FREE

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

FAMILY DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FIELD TRIP

Tuesday, April 18

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 Gallator 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: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**



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

APRIL 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

EARTH DAY 2023 Saturday, April 22

11am to 3pm

All ages. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to our annual outdoor Earth festival. On this special day, the Essex County Environmental Center will make 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 and hiking. Enjoy demonstrations, information, a local eco-vendors sale, with Environmental Center staff and partner groups on hand to guide you throughout the day. **FREE EVENT (items may be for sale)**



COMPOSTING FOR KIDS



Monday, April 24

6pm to 7pm

For families or elementary age children. Join an Environmental Center naturalist to meet some worms and learn about the wonderful world of compost. Together we can reduce our waste and take better care of mother earth! **FREE (This program is sponsored by the Essex County Utilities Authority.)**

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

FISHING 101

Thursday, April 27

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, right near the Clipper Pavilion and boat rental.

Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult



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

MAY 2023 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 or visit the online store at www.mgessex.org.

Friday, May 5, 10am to 4pm & Saturday, May 6, 9am to 3pm
At Essex County Presby Memorial Iris Gardens, Upper Montclair, NJ

Saturday, May 13, 9am to 3pm
At Essex County Environmental Center Garibaldi Hall, Roseland, NJ

MAY 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS



FAMILY WETLANDS DISCOVERY WALK

Wednesday, May 3

5:30pm to 7pm

For families. Explore our trails with a naturalist, identify spring wildflowers, visit the frog pond and uncover and discover ecosystem interactions. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**

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

FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS

Tuesday, May 9

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. This rrrribbetting program will take an up-close look at our pond ecosystem. Search out and identify the life found in the pond through magnifying glasses, microscopes and field guides. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**



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

SPRING WILD EDIBLE WALK

Friday, May 12

6pm to 7:30pm

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: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**

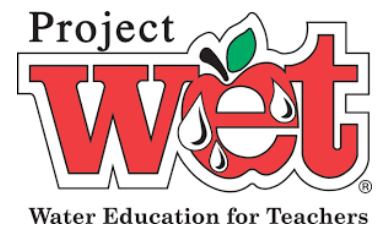
Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar.

PROJECT WET TEACHER WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 16

9am to 3pm

For educators of grades K-8. 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 David Alexander. **Fee: \$35 (includes curriculum activity guide) (scholarships available for Essex County urban aid district teachers; call the Center for details)**



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



PASSAIC RIVER CANOE TRIP

Thursday, May 18

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**

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

MAY 2023 SEASONAL PROGRAMS

PASSAIC RIVER CANOE TRIP

Saturday, May 20

9am to 1pm

For adults and children ages 12 and up. Paddle up the Passaic River from the Environmental Center to Okner Park in Livingston! Pack your own snack to enjoy at the park and then float back down to Garibaldi Hall where we launched. The session includes basic paddling safety and techniques and all equipment. For intermediate and advanced paddlers. Children ages 12 and up may paddle with a parent guardian. **Fee: \$40 per person**



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

SPRING JOURNALING OUTDOOR CLASS

Monday, May 22

5:30pm to 7pm



All ages (children under 5 require caregiver supervision). Discover the joy of phenology, the cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, especially in relation to climate and plant and animal life. Let us find a special place to write and draw our spring discoveries and appreciate the warmth and change of the season. Maybe partake in some spring birding! We will also hike the grounds to note seasonal changes and beautiful discoveries. We will make our journals here on site. Friends and family are encouraged to join. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or**

\$10 per child, \$12 per adult

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

LOOKING AHEAD

WILDERNESS SKILLS SUMMER CAMP

July 10 to July 14

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 10 to July 21, Grades Pre-K and Kindergarten 9:30am to 12:30pm

July 24 to August 4, Grades 1 and 2 9:30am to 1:30pm

August 7 to August 18, 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 15 to Saturday, July 29, 2021

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

Saturdays, July 15, 22 & 29 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 12

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)**

2023 ESSEX COUNTY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Submissions are due by Wednesday, September 6, 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.

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER PARTNER AGENCIES

New Jersey Audubon (NJA) – Scott Barnes 908.396.6506

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

West Essex Park Conservancy (WEPC) – Ron Pate 973.669.8030

Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County (MGEC) – Amy Rowe 973.228.3179

New Jersey Woodturners Association (NJWA) – Bob Amarant 908.442.4729

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

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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