

Essex County Environmental Center ~ Public Programs

FALL 2023



*The Essex County Environmental Center is located at 621-B Eagle Rock Avenue in Roseland in Essex County West Essex Park, 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 and payment are required for all programs unless otherwise noted, and all programs require a minimum number of participants to run.***

For more information, please call 973.228.8776.

The Essex County Environmental Center offers a variety of seasonal environmental education programming for individuals, groups, and families. While mask wearing and social distancing is no longer required in our facility and on our grounds, we respect the choices individuals make for their comfort and safety. To mask or not to mask, please join us in practicing mutual respect for others and their choices.

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 / Lenape Learning Area Tour & Lenape
Skills / Camping 101 / Fish & Fishing 101 / Passaic River
Studies / Mighty Migrations / Butterflies / Wild about
Wildlife / Recycling (*grant funded and free for Essex
County institutions while funds last*) / Green Building Tour
Honeybees & Native Pollinators ...and more!

IN-PERSON FIELD TRIPS

Organized Group Bookings

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

All ages. Maximum of 20 participants including group leaders/chaperones. Program length is 1.5 hours. Choose from a variety of 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. Fall topic selections include: Autumn 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! All programs are held completely outside. One group at a time with a limit of 6 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).**

CLUBS FOR CHILDREN

For all programs, unless otherwise noted, pre-registration and payment is required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar. THANK YOU!

LITTLE EXPLORERS

Mondays—September 11, 25; October 16, 30; November 13, 27; December 4, 18

For Ages 2 and 3; 10am to 11am AND For Ages 2 to 5; 3pm to 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

Tuesday, September 12

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: \$10/child/session**

FROG POND CLUB

Wednesdays—September 20, October 11, November 8

4pm to 5pm

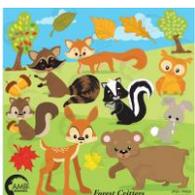
For children ages 5 through 9. Uncover and discover ecosystem interactions at the frog pond. Explore with nets, magnifiers, and microscopes to investigate what lives at the pond and learn from a naturalist what can be done to protect and conserve the pond inhabitants. This is a drop-off and pick-up class (children only). **Fee: \$10 per child per session**



FOREST FRIENDS CLUB

Thursdays—September 14, October 19, November 16, December 14

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. This is a drop-off and pick-up class (children only). **Fee: \$10 per child per session**

For all programs, unless otherwise noted, pre-registration and payment is required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar. THANK YOU!

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF ESSEX COUNTY

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



4-H is the youth development component of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, connecting youth and our community to Rutgers University ([4-H Connects Kids with Rutgers](#)). The 4-H Youth Development Program uses a learn-by-doing approach to enable youth to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring, and contributing citizens of the world. This is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of caring adults: To learn more about 4-H programs hosted throughout Essex County, visit <https://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h/>.

4-H YOUNG GARDENERS CLUB

Saturdays—September 2, 16, 30; October 7, 21, 28; 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.

FALL HARVEST CONTEST

Adult and youth project entrees welcome at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Fall Harvest Showcase! The showcase will be held in partnership with the Annual Fall Family Festival at the Essex County Environmental Center on Saturday, September 23, 2023. A detailed fair submission book can be found at <https://essex.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h/youth/fairs/>. Youth and adults can submit projects in any of the fall divisions including Outdoor Gardening, Food and Nutrition, and Fruits and Vegetables. Projects will be judged, showcased and ribbons will be given to all submissions. Cash prizes for best in division and best in class!

HORSE SCIENCE CLUB

The model horse club teaches youth about horse science and will be guided by youth interested to learn about horses. Program volunteers will facilitate learning during monthly club meetings and field trips. This club meets once a month from October to May on the third Saturday of the month. Youth in grades 4-12 are welcome. For more information, families can email essex4h@njaes.rutgers.edu

EVERYTHING ABOUT ANIMALS CLUB

Our animal club teaches youth about animals including pets, farm animals and wild animals. This is a long-term club commitment and topics will be selected based on club member interest. Leaders will facilitate a variety of activities including show and tell, crafts, science projects and field trips. This club meets once a month from October to May on the third Saturday of the month. Youth in grades 4-12 are welcome. For more information, families can email essex4h@njaes.rutgers.edu

RUTGERS MASTER GARDENERS OF ESSEX COUNTY

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 mastergardenerrec@gmail.com.

HORTICULTURE FOR SENIORS; Meets Monthly on the 3rd Monday; 1pm to 3pm



For senior citizens. Join the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County for this once-a-month horticulture class especially designed for senior citizens. Monthly topics vary. **Advanced registration is required one week prior to program;** contact Amy Trimarco at 973.731.2449 or aatrimarco@comcast.net or the Master Gardener Helpline at 973.228.2210 or mastergardenerrec@gmail.com. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **FREE**

MONTHLY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS



NEW JERSEY WOODTURNERS

Meets Monthly on the 4th Monday

7pm to 9:30pm

For all ages. Learn to turn with the NJ Woodturners. 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. **Fee: \$10 per child, \$12 per adult; free for NJWA members**

ESSEX COUNTY BEEKEEPERS SOCIETY

Meets 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. 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**



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 different area of focus, including a particular species, designs, and horticultural issues. The October meeting will feature guest artist Sergio Cuan. Meet in Main Center classroom. For more information, email John Michalski at huonia@aol.com or join our Facebook page, [greatswampbonsaisociety](https://www.facebook.com/greatswampbonsaisociety). **Fee: \$10 per child, \$12 per adult, free for GSBS Members**

SEPTEMBER 2023 PROGRAMS



ESSEX COUNTY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Submissions are due by Wednesday, September 6

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 Parks System. For rules and regulations, please contact the Essex County Environmental Center at 973.228.8776.

HOW TO ELECTRIFY YOUR HOME, CUT UTILITY BILLS AND RECEIVE INCENTIVES TO DO IT—A CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY INFO SESSION

Wednesday, September 13

7pm to 8:30pm

For homeowners and renters who would like to make their homes more energy efficient and more friendly to our environment. Sponsored by the Essex County Environmental Commission. Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) local chapters in Essex and Morris counties are organizing this information session to show you how to take advantage of new state and federal government incentives. We will cover everything from home energy audits to the installation of efficient electric appliances for heating and cooling. The session will have 30 minutes of presentation followed by 30 minutes of Q/A.

FREE

SEPTEMBER 2023 PROGRAMS

S'MORES n' MORE NIGHT HIKE

Wednesday, September 13

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. Come out to build a campfire and practice fundamental fire skills in a safe and controlled environment. Once we get our fire burning, we'll roast marshmallows and make s'mores. All ages are welcome. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child; \$12 per adult**



EVENING CANOE PADDLE ON THE PASSAIC



Wednesday, September 20

5:30pm to 7:30pm

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**

18th ANNUAL FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 23

11am to 3pm

For all ages. Come celebrate the Autumnal Equinox at the Environmental Center! There will be fun-filled activities for the entire family to enjoy, including hands-on nature games and crafts, naturalist-led walks, live butterflies, live animals, canoeing, Native American life, a pumpkin patch, petting zoo, food, and more. **FREE EVENT; some items may be for sale.**



FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS



Monday, September 25

5:30pm to 7pm

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**

DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FAMILY FIELD TRIP

Thursday, September 28

4:45pm to 6:45pm

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**



COMMUNITY COMPOST BIN AND RAIN BARREL SALE

Pick-up on Saturday, September 30

9am to 11am



Backyard composting is an excellent way to reduce trash going to landfills and allows you to make your own compost! Rain barrels reduce water costs, keeps our water clean and provides a natural source of water for plants and gardens all while reducing the number of pollutants that enter our storm drains. Orders must be placed by September 29th. Pick-up at Essex County Environmental Center main building. For more information and for purchasing options, please visit <https://essex.compostersale.com>.

SEPTEMBER 2023 PROGRAMS

CREATING A BIRD-FRIENDLY YARD

Saturday, September 30

10am to 1pm

For families. Sponsored by the Native Plant Society and the Essex County Environmental Commission. Join the Native Plant Society for an informative talk from 10-10:45, guided nature walks at 11, 11:45 and 12:30, a kids art activity and sale of native bushes (from 11am to 1pm) that will attract birds to your outdoor space. No registration necessary; walk-ins welcome. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **Free Event; shrubs will be for sale.**



OCTOBER 2023 PROGRAMS

ESSEX COUNTY SOUTH MOUNTAIN RESERVATION ANNUAL FAMILY CAMPOUT

Starting Saturday, October 7 at 12PM to Sunday, October 8 at 11Am (Rain Dates 10/14 & 15)



Activities are designed for children ages 4 through 12. Families with young children seeking a nature-intensive outdoor experience are invited to register for the 9th annual SMR Family Campout, taking place at Summit Field in Essex County South Mountain Reservation. Co-sponsored by the South Mountain Conservancy & Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation, and

Cultural Affairs, this event features programming from the Essex County Environmental Center, nature games, animal exhibits from Essex County Turtle Back Zoo, guided hikes, kids' exploration and crafts, live music, a campfire with stories, morning yoga and a Sunday breakfast. For more information, please email familycampout@somocon.org. Advanced registration is required. Stay up-to-date by signing up for the South Mountain Conservancy eBulletin at www.somocon.org. **Fee: \$50 per family (up to 5 family members).**

PASSAIC RIVER CANOE TRIP

Saturday, October 7

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**



TODDLER SENSORY HIKE

Saturday, October 14

9am to 10am

For children ages 1-5 with caregiver supervision. Bring your toddlers for a sensory exploration outside with a naturalist. Visit the forest trails, frog pond, Passaic River and more. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**

BATS OF NEW JERSEY

Thursday, October 19

5:30pm to 7pm

For students in grades 1 through 5. Ever wonder what kind of local bats are catching bugs in your backyard? Or where they sleep? Learn from a bat enthusiast about our upside-down friends, play the role of a bat biologist in a simulated study and take-home plans to build a bat house! **Fee: \$10 per child**



S'MORES n' MORE NIGHT HIKE

Wednesday, October 25

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. Come out to build a campfire and practice fundamental fire skills in a safe and controlled environment. Once we get our fire burning, we'll roast marshmallows and make S'mores. All ages welcome. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child; \$12 per adult**

NOVEMBER 2023 PROGRAMS

FOREST FRIENDS CAMP

Thursday, November 9

9:30am to 3:30pm

For students in grades K through 3. Learn about New Jersey's forest friends by way of exploration, games and craft activities with a naturalist educator as your guide. Come dressed for the weather. **Fee: \$85 per camper**



HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING

Saturday, November 11

11am to 12pm

For adults. Welcome your friends and family for the holidays with a beautiful holiday wreath! Together we'll use evergreen boughs and other materials to create a seasonal work of art! All materials are included for this hands-on workshop. **Fee: \$30 per person**

HOT CHOCOLATE AND S'MORES HIKE

Thursday, November 16

6pm to 7:30pm

For families. Join us for a hike around the Environmental Center forest, build a winter campfire, sip hot cocoa and make s'mores. Dress warmly. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child; \$12 per adult**



LENAPE LIFE

Saturday, November 18

10:30am to 12noon



For families. Visit our Lenape Learning Area to better understand how they hunted, fished, foraged, and farmed using sticks, stones and bones. Make a clay pot and explore topics such as fire-friction, plant identification, games, clothing, and more. **Fee: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult**

NJ AUDUBON BIRDING FIELD TRIPS IN ESSEX COUNTY



NEW JERSEY
AUDUBON
www.njaudubon.org

FALL 2023 URBAN OASIS FIELD TRIPS

Led by Dave Hall, Associate Naturalist

Field trips are designed for ages 12 and up. Have you ever wanted to "bird watch" but didn't know where to begin? Would you like to find some of the hidden gems in Essex County? Let New Jersey Audubon be your guide. Walks encourage beginners and challenge experts. The trips also offer a chance to learn the territorial songs and behavior of birds that are residents all year long. Registrants will receive a confirmation call/e-mail in the event of a cancellation. **Pre-registration is required.** Payment may be made via credit card. Walk-ins are not permitted. To register, please call 908-396-6386 or visit <https://njaudubon.org/calendar/urban-oasis/>.

THURSDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS

Essex County Becker Farm

Thursday, September 28

8:30am to 11am

Explore both field and forest at this former dairy farm. This is the right time to discover late fall migrants. Meet at the Essex County Environmental Center. **Fee: \$10 NJA members, \$15 non-members**

NJ AUDUBON BIRDING FIELD TRIPS IN ESSEX COUNTY

THURSDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS

Essex County Branch Brook Park

Thursday, October 26

8:30am to 11:30am

This park can work as a “migrant trap” in fall migration, with chances to see warblers up close, and a variety of other passerines and waterfowl. Meet at the Cherry Blossom Welcome Center parking lot.

Fee: \$10 NJA members, \$15 non-members

Essex County Hilltop Reservation

Thursday, November 2

8:30am to 11am

Explore edge and meadow habitats for fall migrants with an easy walk through the reservation. Meet in the parking area next to the ball field at Mountain Avenue and Courter Lane, North Caldwell. **Fee:**

\$10 NJA members/\$15 non-members

Essex County South Mountain Reservation

Thursday, November 16

8:30am to 11:30am

We will hike several trails in search of late fall migrants. Target species include both woodland passerines and possible herons and ducks on the Reservoir. Meet at Oakdale parking lot. **Fee: \$10**

NJA members, \$15 non-members

SATURDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS

Essex County Hilltop Reservation

Saturday, September 9

8:30am to 11am

Explore edge and meadow habitats for fall migrants with an easy walk through the reservation. Meet at Mountain Avenue and Courter Lane, North Caldwell. **Fee: \$10 NJA members/\$15 non-**

members

Hatfield Swamp

Saturday, September 30

8:30am to 11:30am

Exploring varied habitats for fall migrants such as warblers and raptors will make for an exciting trip! Footing may be wet. Meet at Stop & Shop, 875 Bloomfield Avenue, West Caldwell, and carpool from there to different parts of this large reservation. **Fee: \$10 NJA members, \$15 non-members**

Troy Meadows Birding Walk

Saturday, October 28

8:30am to 11:30am

Troy Meadows in an excellent place to encounter ducks, herons, and marsh birds plus migrating passerines. We hope to find breeding birds in the wetland meadows and forests of this largely intact Morris County hotspot. Footing may be wet. Meet at the small parking area along Troy Meadow Road, close to the gas pipeline crossing. **Fee: \$10 NJA members, \$15 non-members**

LOOKING AHEAD



Forest Friends Feeder Contest
Registration Deadline: Friday, December 8th
Project Drop-off: Friday, December 15th by 5pm



For all ages. Create an edible, festive and unique wetland wildlife feeder for our outdoor exhibit. Projects will be on display in on our forested trail for as long as the forest critters allow!

For contest rules and to register, please contact, 973-228-8776.

OTHER OFFERINGS

EXTRA! EXTRA!



Calling all Nature Enthusiasts....

Grades Pre-K through 7. Youth Eco-Activity Boxes are Available for Purchase! Looking for enrichment ideas? The Environmental Center educational staff has custom made boxes designed to excite and engage youth in nature exploration and active learning. The boxes are intended to keep children in pre-K through seventh grades excited and engaged in environmental science related outdoor activities. Box themes include Autumn Discovery, Butterfly Safari, Buzz Box (Bees), Flying Friends (Birds), Hop, Walk & Slither, Junior Naturalist, Wilderness Skills and more! **Fee: \$40/Box**

The boxes include crafts, projects, activities, and outdoor fun opportunities!
Boxes available for pick-up only at the Essex County Environmental Center.

Limited Availability!

For more information, please call 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>.

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER PARTNER AGENCIES

New Jersey Audubon Society (NJAS) – 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, 973-353-1337

Essex County Environmental Commission- Tara M Casella, 973-228-8776

Great Swamp Bonsai Society – John Michalski, huonia@aol.com



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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COUNTY OF ESSEX

Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

621-B Eagle Rock Avenue, Roseland, NJ 07068

973.228.8776 / www.essexcountyparks.org

Putting Essex County First