

# Essex County Environmental Center ~ Public Programs

## FALL 2024



*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.*

The Essex County Environmental Center offers a variety of seasonal environmental education programming for individuals, groups, and families. Pre-registration and payment are required for all programs unless otherwise noted, and all programs require a minimum number of participants to run. Pre-registration and payment can be made either in person, by mail or online at [www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar](http://www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar).

For more information, please call the Center at 973.228.8776

### **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: \$12 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: \$12 per child and \$15 per adult**

## 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](http://www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar). THANK YOU!

### LITTLE EXPLORERS

**Mondays—September 9, 23; October 7, 21; November 4, 18; December 9, 16**

**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 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/child/session**

### FROG POND CLUB

**Wednesdays—September 18, October 16, November 6**

**4pm to 5pm**

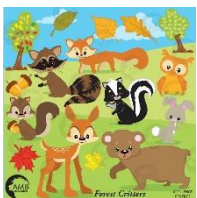
**For children ages 5 through 9.** Uncover and discover ecosystem interactions at the frog pond. Explore with nets, magnifiers, and microscopes to investigate what lives at the pond and learn from a naturalist what can be done to protect and conserve the pond inhabitants. This is a drop-off and pick-up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



### FOREST FRIENDS CLUB

**Thursdays—September 19, October 17, November 14, December 19**

**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: \$12 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](http://www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar). THANK YOU!

# RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF ESSEX COUNTY

## 4H 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 7 & 21; October 5 & 12**

**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 are 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 Sunday, September 29, 2024. 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!

## 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 [mastergardenerec@gmail.com](mailto:mastergardenerec@gmail.com).

## MONTHLY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

*Dates subject to change; call the Environmental Center prior to the meeting date to confirm the schedule.*



### HORTICULTURE FOR SENIORS

**Meets monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 the Master Gardner Helpline at 973.228.2210 or [mastergardenerec@gmail.com](mailto:mastergardenerec@gmail.com). **Free**

### NEW JERSEY WOODTURNERS

**Meets monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:bobamarant@gmail.com) and, to learn more about the organization, visit <https://www.njwoodturners.com>. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **Free**



## MONTHLY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

*Dates subject to change; call the Environmental Center prior to meeting date to confirm the schedule.*

### ESSEX COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

**Meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday**

**7pm to 9 pm**

**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](http://www.njbeekeepers.org) and [www.ecbs.squarespace.com](http://www.ecbs.squarespace.com). **Free for ECBS and NJBA members**



### GREAT SWAMP BONSAI SOCIETY

**Meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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. Meet in the main Center classroom. For more information, email [neyamadoribonsai@gmail.com](mailto:neyamadoribonsai@gmail.com) or join our Facebook page, [greatswampbonsaisociety](https://www.facebook.com/greatswampbonsaisociety). **Free and Open to the Public**

## SEPTEMBER 2024 PROGRAMS



### ESSEX COUNTY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

**Submissions are due by Wednesday, September 11**

*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.

### EVENING CANOE PADDLE ON THE PASSAIC



**Friday, September 13**

**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**

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

## SEPTEMBER 2024 PROGRAMS



### S'MORES n' MORE NIGHT HIKE

**Wednesday, September 18**

**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. **Fee: \$12 per child and \$15 per adult**

### COMMUNITY COMPOST BIN AND RAIN BARREL SALE

**Pick-up on Saturday, September 21**

**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 Thursday, September 19. Pick-up at Essex County Environmental Center main building. For more information and for purchasing options, please visit <https://essex.compostersale.com>.

### NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY FALL EVENT: SHRUB SALE, PRUNING WORKSHOP & NATURE WALKS

**Saturday, September 21**

**10am to 1pm**

**For families.** Sponsored by the Native Plant Society and the Essex County Environmental Commission. A variety of native shrubs will be on sale to attract birds and butterflies to your yard. Free pruning workshop at 11am to noon and 30-minute guided nature walks at 11am and noon. No registration necessary; walk-ins welcome. Meets at Garibaldi Hall. **Free event; plants will be for sale.**



### FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS

**Monday, September 23**

**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 26**

**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 and \$15 per adult**



### 19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL

**Sunday, September 29**

**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.**



## SEPTEMBER 2024 PROGRAMS

### ESSEX COUNTY SOUTH MOUNTAIN RESERVATION ANNUAL FAMILY CAMPOUT

Starting Saturday, September 28 at 10AM to Sunday, September 29 at 1pm (Rain Dates 10/5 & 10/6)



**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 9<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:familycampout@somocon.org). Advanced registration is required. Stay up-to-date by signing up for the South Mountain Conservancy eBulletin at [www.somocon.org](http://www.somocon.org). **Fee: \$50 per family (up to 5 family members).**

## OCTOBER 2024 PROGRAMS

### LENAPE OF THE EASTERN WOODLANDS

**Tuesday, October 1**

**For families.** Make and take a walking stick before exploring with a naturalist guide to focus on the ethnobotany of our local bioregion. The Lenape people and culture made daily use of indigenous (native) plants as food, medicine, shelter, dyes, fibers, oils, resins, gums, tannins, and more. Through the lens of the Lenape, we'll explore our trails and Lenape Learning Area to meet nettle, elderberry, spicebush, ostrich fern, spruce, cattail, dogbane and many other plants that were essential to their survival for thousands of years living here in Lenapehoking. **Fee: \$12 per child and \$15 per adult**

**5pm to 6:30pm**



### BATS OF NEW JERSEY

**Thursday, October 17**

**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: \$12 per child**

**5:30pm to**

### S'MORES n' MORE NIGHT HIKE

**Friday, October 25**

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

**6pm to 7:30pm**



### TODDLER SENSORY HIKE

**Saturday, October 26**

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

**9am to**

## NOVEMBER 2024 PROGRAMS



### FOREST FRIENDS ONE-DAY CAMP

Thursday, November 7

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: \$90 per camper**



### HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING

Saturday, November 9

11am to 12:30pm

**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 14

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



### LENAPE LIFE

Saturday, November 16

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

### OUTDOOR SKILLS FAMILY DAY

Saturday, November 23

10am to 1pm

**For families.** Come together and challenge yourselves in winter outdoor skills. We'll explore animal tracks, plants that make cordage, practice fire skills, make a winter campfire and enjoy our own campfire cooked treats! We'll also collect our perfect wood sticks and char them into a tool of art magic! Be prepared to do some walking, smell like woodsmoke, make new friends, feel confident in your outdoor skills, and get back to nature. Please dress for the weather and pack a lunch! **Fee: \$25 per person**



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

## LOOKING AHEAD



### **Forest Friends Feeder Contest** **Registration Deadline: Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>** **Project Drop-off: Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> by 5pm**



For all ages. Create an edible, festive and unique wetland wildlife feeder for our outdoor exhibit. Projects will be on display on our forested trail for as long as the forest critters allow!  
**For contest rules and to register, please contact, 973.228.8776.**

### **WINTER WILDLIFE EXPLORERS CAMP** **Monday, Dec. 23; Thursday, Dec. 26 & Friday, Dec. 27** **9:30am to 3:30pm**



**For children ages 6-10.** Campers enjoy stories, crafts, campfires, and forest adventures exploring our wooded wetland forests in wintertime. For more information, call 973.228.8776. Advanced registration and minimum number of participants required. **Fee: \$250 per child for all three days OR \$90 per child per day**

## 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 are 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 virtually on the first Monday of each month at 6pm at the Essex County Environmental Center. Some dates may change. Open slots are available, if interested, please email a letter of interest and resume to [tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org](mailto: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

### **Essex County Beekeepers Society (ECBS)**

John DeBenedett [johndebenedett@yahoo.com](mailto:johndebenedett@yahoo.com)

### **Essex County Environmental Commission**

Tara M Casella 973.228.8776

### **Great Swamp Bonsai Society**

John Michalski [huonia@aol.com](mailto: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 Essex County 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H)**

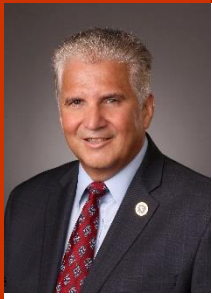
Marissa Blodnik 973.353.133

### **Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County Help Line**

973.228.2210

#### **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](mailto: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**

## **ESSEX COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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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](http://www.essexcountyparks.org)**

*Putting Essex County First*