

Burlington County Times

Garden Day Open House at Rancocas Nature Center
Dorann Weber, Sunday, July 31, 2016



(File) Camillia Hughes and brother Danny Meisner enjoy the koi pond at last year's Friends of Rancocas Nature Center (FRNC) Annual Garden Day Open House in Westampton last year.

Two new demonstrations will highlight the Friends of Rancocas Nature Center (FRNC) Annual Garden Day Open House on Sunday, they are flax spinning and theorem painting.

Barb Jones, a weaver who colors fibers with dyes made from plants, will demonstrate spinning the flax that was grown in the nature center's Historical Garden into linen fiber.

Loretta Kelly, from the Society of Colonial Dames and Peachfield Plantation will show how to do "theorem painting" a historical art form tied to plants.

Visitors can tour the Historical Garden, as well as the Wildlife Pollinator Garden with Master Gardener Candy Myers, and the Dragonfly Pond with Barb Wiley, and the new Butterfly Enclosure with Mary Belko, and also a new Native Plant Enclosure, designed to exclude deer, with Master Gardener Merri Bogart.

Learn about honeybees and pollinators in the meadow with Steve Price and join Rancocas Nature Center Sanctuary director Susan Buffalino on a guided hike for foraged food.

"Our nature center gardens serve as wildlife-friendly habitats and educational sites and offer an exciting blend of venues that visitors can easily adapt to their own backyards," said FRNC Co-Chair Toni Price.

Activities will also include children's crafts, displays, refreshments and a fundraising raffle.

Garden Day is free but FRNC accepts and appreciates donations. Visitors should wear comfortable hiking shoes and outdoor clothing.

As part of its mission to promote stewardship of the land and provide environmental education for the Rancocas State Park and surrounding communities through the operation of the Rancocas Nature Center, FRNC continues its quarterly events to expand public participation and enrichment.

The Rancocas Nature Center, 794 Rancocas Road, Westampton, is supported through the partnership of the Burlington County Board of Freeholders, NJ State Park Service Division of Parks & Forestry, Westampton Township, Friends of Rancocas Nature Center, and Rancocas Conservancy. For more information, go to RancocasNatureCenter.org or call 609-261-2495.

The Rancocas Nature Center is situated on a 210-acre piece of the Rancocas State Park and features three miles of hiking trails through varied habitats including meadows, forest, and wetlands, plus access to Rancocas Creek. It has been operating for 38 years, providing environmental education for the surrounding community with programs both on- and off-site for groups including schools, scouts, libraries, senior citizens, as well as the general public. The nature center building includes a nature gift shop, high quality bird seed for sale, live animals, natural history displays, and restrooms.

The grounds include a picnic area carry in-carry out, dragonfly pond, frog pond, beehives and Rutgers Master Gardeners of Burlington County children's, pollinator and display gardens. The land has important environmental, historical and cultural significance dating to the American Revolution.