



Spring 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

794 Rancocas Road, Westampton, NJ 08060 Phone: 609.261.2495 / Fax: 609-261-2495

Website: www.rancocasnaturecenter.org Email: info@rancocasnaturecenter.org

VISITORS CENTER HOURS: Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. / Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. / Closed Mondays & Sun., April 16 (Easter)

RANCOCAS TRAILS/PARKING LOT: Open 7 days a week from dawn to dusk

Sanctuary Director: Susan Buffalino, Teacher Naturalists: Mary Belko, Diane Rothschild, and Kerri Sellers

Associate Naturalists: Sandra Keller, Steve Mattan, Mark Pensiero, Patty Rehn, and Lloyd Shaw

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: *Programs are FREE unless otherwise noted.*

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Hump-Day After-Work Hikes
March 2	RNC Photography Club
March 4 & 5	RNC Members Bird Seed Discount Days
March 5	L.L. Bean Beginner's Trail Run
March 5	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
March 7	RNC Book Club
March 7, 14, 21, 28	Tuesday Preschool Story/Music Time
March 10	Nature in Art for Preschoolers – Amphibian Collage
March 11	Mannington Marsh, Salem County Field Trip
March 11	Saturday Naturalist-Led Walk
March 11	Family Nature Club
March 15	Philadelphia Flower Show Bus Trip
March 18	Native Plant Society of NJ Spring Workshop at Medford Leas
March 18	Follow the Rancocas–Ranger-led Hike
March 18	RNC Beef N Beer for Birds & Blooms
March 19	Connect With Nature – Salamander Sunday
March 23	Speaking of Nature Series – Residential Ecosystems Reconsidered
March 24	Nature Adventures for Preschoolers – “Owl Babies”
March 24, 31	Friday After-school Hikes
April 1 & 2	RNC Members Bird Seed Discount Days
April 2	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
April 4	RNC Book Club
April 4, 11, 18, 25	Tuesday Preschool Story/Music Time
April 5, 19	Little Sprouts
April 5, 12, 19, 26	Hump-Day After-Work Hikes
April 6	RNC Photography Club
April 7, 14, 21, 28	Friday After-school Hikes
April 8	L.L. Bean Planning Your Backpacking Trip
April 8	Saturday Naturalist-Led Walk
April 9	Connect With Nature – Walking Tour of the Rancocas State Park
April 14	Nature in Art for Preschoolers – Camouflage Eggs
April 15	Family Nature Club
April 17	Native Plant Society of NJ Meeting
April 27	Speaking of Nature Series – Puffin Project
April 28	Nature Adventures for Preschoolers – “Rabbits & Raindrops”
April 29	Early Migrants, Newton Lake Park Field Trip
April 30	Let's Celebrate the Earth
May 2	RNC Book Club
May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Tuesday Preschool Story/Music Time
May 3, 17	Little Sprouts
May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Hump-Day After-Work Hikes
May 4	RNC Photography Club
May 5, 12, 19, 26	Friday After-school Hikes
May 6 & 7	RNC Members Bird Seed Discount Days
May 7	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
May 11	Nature in Art for Preschoolers – Sunflower Hats
May 13	Global Big Day Bird Event
May 13	Saturday Naturalist-Led Walk
May 13	Follow the Rancocas–Ranger-led Hike
May 13	Family Nature Club
May 15	Native Plant Society of NJ Meeting
May 20	Migration at Maria Greenwald Park Field Trip
May 21	Connect With Nature– Birds on the Move
May 25	Speaking of Nature Series – History of the Rancocas Creek
May 26	Nature Adventures for Preschoolers – “I Took a Walk”

RANCOCAS MEMBERS BIRD SEED DISCOUNT DAYS

10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays & 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sundays

Saturday, March 4 & Sunday, March 5

Saturday, April 1 & Sunday, April 2

Saturday, May 6 & Sunday, May 7

RANCOCAS NATURE CENTER SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION

Weekly Sessions June 26 to August 11, 2017 for Preschool & Grades 1-7 (as of September 2017)

Early-bird Discount ends March 31, 2017

Childhood and the outdoors are a natural fit. Our summer campers have fun while learning about the world around them. A typical day at camp looks to blend environmental science with active outdoor experiences under the guidance of knowledgeable educators. Group interaction and cooperation create a positive setting where learning is hands-on and fun. Whether it's through an age-appropriate hike, a craft or project, or a themed game or activity, campers gain an awareness of the natural world and the importance of a sustainable community. Visit our website at www.rancocasnaturecenter.org for information and photos from 2016. Forms are available online and at the center.

RANCOCAS NATURE CENTER EVENTS

PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW BUS TRIP

Wednesday, March 15, 12:30 to 8:00 p.m.

This year's theme for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Spring Flower Show is "Holland: Flowering the World." The trip is sponsored by RNC and includes bus transportation and entry ticket. Visit www.rancocasnaturecenter.org for details or call the Center at 609-261-2495. Cost: \$60/per person.

RNC BEEF N BEER FOR BIRDS & BLOOMS FUNDRAISER

Saturday, March 18, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Join Rancocas Nature Center supporters for an evening of informal socializing and entertainment. The spring fundraiser will be held at the Mount Holly Moose Lodge on Woodlane Road in Westampton. The event features the traditional beef and beer fare plus other food and drink. To insure its success and your fun, live music, a 50/50 raffle and Chinese auction baskets are included. The fundraiser is sponsored by the Friends of the Rancocas Nature Center. Visit www.rancocasnaturecenter.org for additional information.

LET'S CELEBRATE THE EARTH

Sunday, April 30, 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Rancocas Nature Center and state park offer a wonderful respite from the surrounding suburban area. The afternoon will include multiple hikes and environmental activities that celebrate the preserve's diverse habitats and wildlife. A schedule of the day's offerings will be posted on the Rancocas website, www.rancocasnaturecenter.org, closer to the date. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

GLOBAL BIG DAY BIRD EVENT

Sunday, May 13, 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Friends of Rancocas Nature Center and its Development Committee are sponsoring a "Big Day" to celebrate the bird migration season. Look for exciting details coming soon on the Rancocas website at www.rancocasnaturecenter.org.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS (Pre-registration required)

PRESCHOOL STORY/MUSIC TIME

Tuesdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25; & May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This approximately hour-long preschool program features a different theme each week. Children will enjoy hearing 3 short stories read aloud, separated by 3 songs that are played along to with rhythm instruments. Each session also includes an age-appropriate craft. The Tuesday program is repeated on Thursday in the same week at Smithville Park. This program is geared toward 2 to 5 year-olds, but is designed for families--older and younger children are welcome. Cost: free. Please call 609-265-5858 to register. www.co.burlington.nj.us/parks.

NATURE IN ART FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Fridays, March 10, April 14, & Thursday, May 11 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Nature is all around us. For the very young, their interactions with the natural world are learning experiences that can translate into art projects. This program is designed for preschoolers ages 3-5 accompanied by a parent or guardian. Each session will include an introduction to a nature theme and an art project. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

March 10 – Amphibian Collage

April 14 – Camouflage Eggs

May 11 – Sunflower Hats

NATURE ADVENTURES FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Fridays, March 24, April 28 & May 26 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Nature is all around us. For the very young, their interactions with the natural world are engaging learning experiences. Each session will include the reading of a nature-themed picture book and a short weather-dependant hike. This program is designed for preschoolers ages 3-5 accompanied by a parent or guardian. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

March 24– “Owl Babies”

April 28 – “Rabbits & Raindrops”

May 26 – “I Took a Walk”

LITTLE SPROUTS

Wednesdays, April 5, 19 & May 3, 17 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

This program for preschoolers and an accompanying adult focuses on gardens and plants, worms, mud, seeds, and work in the garden throughout the spring. Each meeting will focus on a different aspect of gardening. Please dress accordingly. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES (Pre-registration required)

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL HIKE AT RANCOCAS

Sundays, March 5, April 2, and May 7 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Join a Rancocas staff person or associate naturalist for an interpretive hike through our varied habitats. It’s a great way to become familiar with our well-maintained trails. Bring a camera and/or binoculars; we’ll stop at scenic spots along the way. The easy pace is suitable for all ages; please use a child carrier to transport small children. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

FAMILY NATURE CLUB

Saturdays, March 11, April 15, & May 13 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Families are invited to join us for these once a month outdoor activities. The focus is on getting outside, enjoying some quality family time, and exploring nature. Meet like-minded families and build friendships. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. Friends of Rancocas Nature Center membership is suggested.

March 11 – Spring’s Awakening

April 15 – Creating Stories & Make-Believe

May 13 – Using Binoculars & Bird ID

FOLLOW THE RANCOCAS— RANGER-LED HIKES

Saturdays, March 18 & May 13 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Hike to the Rancocas Creek with a Park Ranger. On these “talks and tours” (approximately two miles), you’ll hear about the history of the creek and its adjacent preserved park. Be sure to bring a camera or binoculars. Hikes occur rain or shine. No pets or strollers, please. Hike on 3/18 meets in the Rancocas Nature Center parking lot. Hike on 5/20 meets at the Rancocas State Park entrance near the Irick Road traffic light.

CONNECT WITH NATURE SERIES

Sunday, March 19, Salamander 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Every spring like clockwork, these elusive amphibians emerge from hibernation as the days warm and the daylight extends. Females of the species migrate to a vernal pool or wetland to deposit their eggs, and the fascinating cycle of the next generation begins to unfold. The afternoon’s activity will include a hike to search for the three species of salamanders that make Rancocas their home. Waterproof footwear is suggested. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

Sunday, April 9, Walking Tour of the Rancocas State Park 1:30 to 3:00 p.m..

Celebrate the 46th anniversary of Earth Day by savoring the sights and smells on a spring afternoon. Join RNC Sanctuary Director Susan Buffalino on an interpretive hike utilizing trails in the western section of the park—a local gem. Bring binoculars, or borrow a loaner pair, for a detailed view of the diverse habitats in the area. This program is not recommended for children under 8 years of age. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

Sunday, May 21, Birds on the Move 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

May is an exciting time to be a bird and to watch birds. New Jersey and its waterways are east coast flyways that offer the chance to view birds we don't see at other times of the year. Learn easy ways to ID the different species, what they eat, their habitats, and their calls. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

FRIDAY AFTERSCHOOL HIKES

Fridays, March 24, 31; April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12, 19, 26 4:00 to 5:00 p.m

This is a great time of year to get outside and see the seasons progress. Get your school-aged kids (no preschoolers, please) out afterschool or just bring yourself for a quick –paced fitness hike. Of course we may stop once in a while to observe nature at its best, but the goal will be to get outside and get active. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

ADULT & TEEN PROGRAMS (Pre-registration required)
(Programs are suitable for interested teens)

HUMP-DAY AFTER-WORK HIKES

Wednesdays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; April 5, 12, 19, 26 & May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Still trying to take off those pounds you imagined as your New Year's resolution? Like to hike, but don't like doing it alone? Come on out for a brisk hike in nature at the perfect time to enjoy spring's awakening. We will enjoy the views week to week as the natural world comes alive again. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

L.L. BEAN BEGINNER'S TRAIL RUN

Sunday, March 5 9:00 a.m.

Interested in getting into trail running? Come out to the Rancocas Nature center for a beginner's run with small breaks. Be sure to dress in layers of synthetic clothing and bring plenty of water. Call the L.L. Bean Marlton store at [856-810-5560](tel:856-810-5560) to register.

SATURDAY NATURALIST-LED WALKS

Saturdays, March 11, April 8, & May 13, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Studies show that taking a nature walk is good for your physical and mental health. Adults and interested teenagers will join an RNC naturalist for a themed hike around the preserve. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

SPEAKING OF NATURE SERIES.

Thursday, March 23– Residential Ecosystems: Outdoor Living Spaces Reconsidered 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

A lecture/PPT presentation on environmentally enriching alternatives to the common use of turf-grass in today's landscape. This talk explores practical ways that property owners can realize the highest potential of their outdoor spaces in a way that benefits their own needs as well as supporting ecological functions. Presenters: Nate & Emily Reuther, are graduates of Longwood's Professional Gardener Program. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

Thursday, April 27 – Puffin Project 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Naturalist and photographer Patty Rehn will share her summer experience in Maine volunteering with the Puffin Project. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

Thursday, May 25 – The History of the Rancocas Creek 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The Rancocas Creek and adjoining land with its geology and unique geographic location played an important part in the history of the region. Presenter: Marissa Bozart, Burlington County Staff. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

L.L. BEAN PLANNING YOUR BACKPACKING TRIP

Sunday, April 8 10:00 a.m.

Backpacking gives you the opportunity to spend time in beautiful places and get away from the crowds. Learn tips and techniques from L.L. Bean staff on how to plan and prepare for your next trip to ensure that you and your group have a great time. Call the L.L. Bean Marlton store at [856-810-5560](tel:856-810-5560) to register.

ADULT OFF-SITE FIELD TRIPS

MANNINGTON MARSH, SALEM COUNTY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, March 11 9:30 a.m. to early afternoon

Join Audubon Wildlife Society Naturalist Jean Gutmuth for a day of birding and nature observations at the Mannington Marsh during the early spring season. The day's focus will be waterfowl, raptors, and cranes. Meet at the Super WAWA at Routes 40 & 45 in Salem County. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

EARLY MIGRANTS, NEWTON LAKE PARK FIELD TRIP

Saturday, April 29 8:00 a.m. to early afternoon

This field trip focuses on Newton Lake Park which borders the Cooper River in an urban residential setting. Experience a variety of early spring migrants, during this active season. Leader: Sandra Keller. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

MARIA GREENWALD PARK in the COOPER RIVER PARK SYSTEM FIELD TRIP

Saturday, May 20, 7 a.m. to noon

Explore the Cooper River Park system. Possible sightings may include early spring migrants, waterfowl, nesting Canada Geese, herons, and a good sampling of backyard birds. Leader: Sandra Keller. Preregister by calling RNC at 609-261-2495. There is no charge for this program, but donations are encouraged.

RNC AFFILIATED CLUB MEETINGS

RNC OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

Thursdays, March 2, April 6, & May 4, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

All are welcome. Club meets the first Thursday of every month in the RNC classroom or at a designated alternative outdoor location. Contact rnccphotoclub@gmail.com for details.

RANCOCAS NATURE CENTER BOOK CLUB – All Are Welcome

Tuesdays, March 7, April 4, & May 2, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

On the first Tuesday of each month, Rancocas hosts a Book Club for those interested in nature and natural history topics. To learn which title is the focus of the month, contact Toni Price at lavender.toni@gmail.com.

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY, RNC CHAPTER

Saturday, March 18; Mondays, April 17 & May 15**

****NPSNJ Spring Workshop—Visit NPSNJ.org website for details and registration.**

Once a month, NPSNJ Chapters sponsor lectures and presentations with featured speakers on topics ranging from introductions to native plants, gardening with natives, identification and appreciation of the beautiful flora and ecosystems of New Jersey, ecological landscaping, and much more. Call the center for additional information.

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Rancocas' dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers contribute many hours of their time each season. *The Calendar of Events* offers a venue to extend our thanks. The nature center would not be the vibrant place it is without their help. Thank you to Carol Bishop, Harold Buchanan (FRNC), Rich Chichester (FRNC), Deborah Ciabattini, Marilyn Courtney, Jeffrey DiFrancesco, Katie Dole, Ben & Louise Dwyer, Laura Edwards, Michel Gehin, Gil Gehin-Scott, Bob Hall, Al Hagovsky, Casey Hibbs, Bill Holloway (FRNC), Jane, Lavonne Beebler Johnson (FRNC), Jean Jordan, Sandra Keller, John Lestino, Steve Mattan, Mary and Bob Metrione, Ken Mitchell, Candy Myers, Mark Pensiero, Toni Price (FRNC), Patty Rehn, Hara Rola, Diane Rothschild, Robert Rothschild, Dan Ruotolo (FRNC), Kenneth Schwartz, Lloyd Shaw, Wolf & Barb Skacel (FRNC), Arline Spangler, Louise Tompkins, Barbara Wiley, Bill Wiley, Al Wiley, Scott Williams (FRNC), and Stephanie.Zarus.

FRIENDS OF THE RANCOCAS NATURE CENTER (FRNC) is a non-profit organization that provides direct financial and programmatic support to the center and its staff through the efforts of its all-volunteer Board of Trustees and Development Committee.