

Essex County Environmental Center

A New Jersey Audubon Partner Site

621 B Eagle Rock Avenue, Roseland, NJ 07068

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Building hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. / Saturday, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. / Closed Sundays
Trails: Open dawn to dusk seven days a week.

The center will be closed on Monday, December 26, 2011, and Monday, January 2, 2012



Staff: Kelly Wenzel, Environmental Educator

Associate Naturalist: Dave Hall

Winter 2011-12 Programs

December through February

FAMILY PROGRAMS AT THE ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Programs are designed for children ages 4 to 12 and their families. Preregistration is required. Please call 973.226.6082 or e-mail kelly.wenzel@njudubon.org to register.

ANIMAL SIGNS AND TRACKS Saturday, December 10

10:30 A.M. to noon
Discover who stays in the swamp all winter long. We will look for signs and tracks of New Jersey's year-round residents, and make plaster track casts to take home. Dress for cold weather. For children ages 4 to 12 and their families.
Cost: \$5 members, \$7 nonmembers.

OWLS OF ESSEX Saturday, January 14

10:30 A.M. to noon
Investigate where these mysterious birds fit into the food web by dissecting owl pellets (the indigestible bones and fur of the animals owls eat). We will also discover how owls build their nests and communicate, and we will make "owl pellet" candy

Become a New Jersey Audubon member and enjoy discounts on tours, events, and field trips at all NJ Audubon centers. Members also get a 10% discount at our Nature Stores (greater discount on optics).

to take home. YUM! For children ages 4 to 12 and their families.
Cost: \$5 members, \$7 nonmembers.

MAPLE SUGARING Saturday, February 11

10:30 A.M. to noon
Our walk today will find us searching for sugar maple trees. We will "tap" a maple tree, collect sap, and make maple syrup. We'll return to the center for hot chocolate and sugar snacks. For children ages 4 to 12 and their families.
Cost: \$5 members, \$7 nonmembers.

HOLIDAY HIKES

**Led by Kelly Wenzel,
Environmental Educator**

Don't just sit around on your day off from school – enjoy the great outdoors! Come hike with us and learn about your local parks and wildlife. These hikes have no agenda, so just come prepared to have fun! Pro-

grams are designed for children in kindergarten to 5th grade. Please e-mail kelly.wenzel@njudubon.org or call 973.226.6082 to register.

HILLTOP RESERVATION Monday, January 16

9:30 to 11:00 A.M.
Take a hike on the hilltop and discover field and forest birds that spend the winter in New Jersey. Meet at the parking area near Mountain Avenue in North Caldwell. For children in grades K to 5.
Cost: \$5 members, \$7 nonmembers.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN RESERVATION Monday, February 20

9:30 to 11:00 A.M.
Essex County's largest developed park has many good hiking trails leading into different habitats. In midwinter the park becomes a wonderland of snowy hemlocks and wondrous frozen waterfalls. Meet at the Tulip

Continued

COUNT YOUR LOCAL BIRDS! PARTICIPATE IN THE BOONTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT Monday, December 26

This important winter bird count – conducted annually for more than 75 years under the auspices of the National Audubon Society – includes areas in the Caldwell, Roseland, Livingston, and Verona. Count the species and numbers of birds at your feeders and in your neighborhood; or join a group censusing the birds in your area. Help contribute bird data that is a vital resource to scientists, birders, and planners nationwide. For details, call David Alexander at the Essex County Environmental Center (973.228.8776, dalexander@parks.essexcountynj.org); or the Boonton count compilers, Rick Radis, 973.586.0845, isotria@verizon.net; and Tim Vogel, 973.586.9210.

Essex County Environmental Center Winter 2011-12 Events at a Glance

Saturday, December 3	Riker Hill and Becker Tract
Thursday, December 8	Hatfield Swamp
Saturday, December 10	Animal Signs and Tracks
Thursday, December 15	Hilltop Reservation
Monday, December 26	Christmas Bird Count
Monday, December 26	Center Closed
Monday, January 2	Center Closed
Thursday, January 12	Weequahic Park
Saturday, January 14	Owls of Essex
Monday, January 16	Hilltop Reservation
Saturday, January 21	South Mountain Reservation
Thursday, January 26	Becker Park
Thursday, February 9	Weequahic Park
Saturday, February 11	Maple Sugaring
Saturday, February 18	Hatfield Swamp
Monday, February 20	South Mountain Reservation
Thursday, February 23	Troy Meadows

Springs parking area off of Cherry Lane. For children in grades K to 5. Cost: \$5 members, \$7 nonmembers.

BIRDING FIELD TRIPS IN ESSEX COUNTY

Led by Dave Hall

At this time of year we will be looking for resident and overwintering birds as well as scenic vistas. Many of these trips are to Essex County parks, the oldest county park system in the United States. Dave will set an easy pace, and most of the trails are level and wide. Hikes take place unless trails are impassable due to snow or ice; heavy rain or snow cancels. Registrants will receive a confirmation call/e-mail. Please call 973.226.6082 or e-mail kelly.wenzel@njudubon.org to register.

RIKER HILL AND BECKER TRACT Saturday, December 3

8:00 to 11:00 A.M.
Walk through old farm fields to discover overwintering field birds. Hike along the ridge at Riker Hill for great views and a look at woodland birds. Meet at the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland and we will carpool to the hiking site. Cost: \$6 members, \$8 nonmembers.

HATFIELD SWAMP Thursday, December 8

8:30 to 11:00 A.M.
Search for winter visitors and lingering fall migrants who call the heart of western Essex County home. Meet at the parking lot of Stop and Shop in West Caldwell, near the corner of Bloomfield and Passaic Avenues. Cost: Free.

HILLTOP RESERVATION Thursday, December 15

8:30 to 11:00 A.M.
Take a leisurely winter hike while looking for winter wildlife, especially field and forest birds. Meet at the parking area near Mountain Avenue in North Caldwell. Cost: Free.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN RESERVATION Saturday, January 21

8:00 to 11:00 A.M.
Take a stroll in one of Essex County's largest parks and discover how easy it is to find wildlife in winter. Meet at the Turtle Back Zoo parking area. We will carpool to various locations within the park. Cost: \$6 members, \$8 nonmembers.

BECKER PARK Thursday, January 26

9:00 to 11:00 A.M.
This is one of the best places for birdlife in the county, with a mixture of meadow and woodland habitats! Meet in the parking lot of the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland where we will carpool to the hike location. Cost: Free.

WEEQUAHIC PARK Thursday, February 9

8:00 to 11:00 A.M.
Visit an Essex County oasis while searching for wintering ducks, gulls and passerine birds. All can be viewed along an easy trail around the lake. Meet at the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland and we will carpool to the park. Cost: Free.

HATFIELD SWAMP Saturday, February 18

8:00 to 11:00 A.M.
We will spend the morning searching for birds and other animals of winter. Meet at the parking lot of Stop and Shop in West Caldwell, near the corner of Bloomfield and Passaic Avenues. Cost: \$6 members, \$8 nonmembers.

TROY MEADOWS Thursday, February 23

8:30 to 11:00 A.M.
Search the edges of the frozen swamp for wintering birds and animals. Be prepared for icy conditions. Meet at the Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland; and we will carpool to the hike location. Cost: Free. 