

Rancocas Nature Center, *Center Focus*, Winter 2010-2011

RANCOCAS NATURE CENTER

794 Rancocas Road, Mount Holly, NJ 08060

Phone: 609.261.2495 / Fax: 609.261.9916

E-mail: rancocas@njudubon.org / Web site: www.njudubon.org/centers/rancocas

HOURS: Tuesday to Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. / Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. / Closed Mondays

CLOSURES: Center closed for Christmas on Friday, December 24 and Saturday, December 25, and for New Year's Day on Friday, December 31 and Saturday, January 1.

Staff:

Susan Buffalino, Sanctuary Director

Tony Geiger, Teacher-Naturalist

Kerri Sellers, Teacher-Naturalist

Associate Naturalists: John Courtney, Tom Bailey, Lloyd Shaw, Sandra Keller, Frank Lenik, Gary and Margie Lizzi, and Karl Anderson

Environmental Educator, Diane Rothschild

Calendar of Events

December 3	Morning Bird Walk at Rancocas
December 4	NJA Winter Bird Seed Sale Pick-up Day
December 5	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
December 11	Island Beach State Park
December 11	Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count Warm-up
December 11	Saturday Nature Explorers
January 7	Morning Bird Walk at Rancocas
January 9	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
January 15	Saturday Nature Explorers
January 22	Winter Birding at Assunpink WMA
January 23	Winter Wonderland at Rancocas
February 4	Morning Bird Walk at Rancocas
February 6	Interpretive Trail Hike at Rancocas
February 12	Saturday Nature Explorers
February 19	Barnegat Light State Park and Cedar Run Dock Road
February 20	Maple Sugaring
February 27	Salem County Winter Birding

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NJ AUDUBON WINTER BIRD SEED SALE

Pick up all orders on Saturday, December 4

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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CONNECT WITH NATURE SERIES

Register in advance for all programs.

WINTER WONDERLAND AT RANCOCAS

Sunday, January 23

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The winter season offers a unique perspective on the natural world. Explore the Rancocas State Park trails with an NJA staff person and experience views of the meandering Rancocas Creek that are obstructed by vegetation during the warmer months. Frozen ground also allows access to areas of the marsh not navigable the rest of the year. An extra treat would be to spot a Rancocas' raptors roosting in one of the forested habitats. Dress for the weather.

Cost: members, \$7/person, \$15/family; nonmembers, \$10/person, \$21/family.

MAPLE SUGARING

Sunday, February 20

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

What a tasty way to spend a winter afternoon! Bring the whole family and enjoy a program about maple sugaring, the oldest continuous industry in North America. Learn about the sugar maple tree and the history of maple sugaring, observe a tapping demonstration, and enjoy a maple syrup tasting. To ward off the chills, we'll have an old-fashioned campfire burning.

Cost: members, \$7/person, \$15/family; nonmembers, \$10/person, \$21/family.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

Register in advance for all programs.

SATURDAY NATURE EXPLORERS

Saturdays, December 11, January 15, and February 12

1 to 3 p.m.

Rancocas' Nature Explorers program was traditionally geared to elementary-aged children, but as of fall 2010 it expanded to include interested parents and guardians. The new format still allows parents to drop off their children to participate in activities as usual, but now also gives interested adults a chance to share the discovery process with their children and/or grandchildren. Each monthly program explores a different theme that includes explorations and activities at the center and on the trails. Nurture your child's awareness of the natural world and start her on the path to "growing up green."

Cost: members, \$7/person for each session; nonmembers, \$10/person for each session.

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL HIKE AT RANCOCAS

Sundays, December 5, January 9, and February 6

1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Join a NJ Audubon staff person or an 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 various scenic spots along the way. The easy pace is suitable for all ages; please use a child carrier to transport small children.

Cost: free for members; nonmembers, \$4/person, \$10/family.

ADULT PROGRAMS AT RNC

Register in advance for all programs.

MORNING BIRD WALKS AT RANCOCAS

Fridays, December 3, January 7, and February 4

8 a.m.

Join an associate naturalist or staff person for a Friday morning bird walk; migrants and resident species can be found at our center. Sightings are added to the RNC bird list. Meet at the picnic tables by the parking lot. Walks begin promptly at 8 a.m.

Cost: free for members; nonmembers, \$5.

FIELD TRIPS

Please call to pre-register for all field trips. You can also register by mailing a check to RNC, 794 Rancocas Road, Mount Holly, NJ 08060. To facilitate sending site directions, **please include your e-mail address when you register or request directions be mailed.** Trips take place rain or shine (within reasonable limits). Group size is limited and a minimum number of participants is necessary. Bring binoculars and/or scopes, lunch (if desired), and dress appropriately for the weather.

ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK

Saturday, December 11

Meet at 8:45 a.m.

Look for seabirds and enjoy a winter natural history field trip at Island Beach State Park. Rick Radis will share his expertise. This is a joint trip with Sandy Hook.

Leader: Rick Radis. Cost: members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY CBC WARM-UP

Saturday, December 11

Meet at 9:00 a.m.

Join associate naturalist Lloyd Shaw for a Gloucester County Christmas Bird Count warm-up and training session in advance of the upcoming winter bird counts. This is a joint trip with Sandy Hook.

Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Cost: members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20.

WINTER BIRDING AT ASSUNPINK WMA

Saturday, January 22

Meet at 9:00 a.m.

Visit Assunpink Wildlife Management Area with associate naturalist Lloyd Shaw. It's an excellent location to view an assortment of winter birds at that time of year. This is a joint trip with Sandy Hook.

Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Cost: members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20.

BARNEGAT LIGHT STATE PARK AND CEDAR RUN DOCK ROAD

Saturday, February 19

Meet at 11:00 a.m.

It's winter birding at its best—Barnegat Light State Park for seabirds, gulls, Snow Buntings, and dramatic Harlequin Ducks, followed by a visit to Cedar Run Dock Road to look for raptors. This is a joint trip with Sandy Hook.

Leader: Lloyd Shaw. Cost: members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20.

SALEM COUNTY WINTER BIRDING

Sunday, February 27

9 a.m. to mid-afternoon

Explorations begin at the Pedricktown Causeway in Salem County. The day's focus will be winter waterfowl, raptors, and passerines.

Leader: Sandra Keller. Cost: members, \$15; nonmembers, \$20.

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BURLINGTON COUNTY NATURAL SCIENCES CLUB

NJ Audubon members are invited to the monthly meetings of the Burlington County Natural Sciences Club. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month, September through May, at 7:45 p.m. For updates on meeting locations and presentation topics, visit the club's Web site at

<http://oldsquaw.tripod.com>.

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THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Rancocas' dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers contribute many hours of their time each season. Center Focus offers a venue to extend our thanks. The nature center would not be the vibrant place it is without their help. Thank you to Joey Baran, Hedy Bauer, Bob Birdsall, John and Marilyn Courtney, James Cox, Katie Dole, Laura Edwards, Blake Elkins, Peggy Esposito, Bob Hall, Jean Jordan, Dave and John Lestino, Bob Lord, Steven Maldonado, Steve Mattan, Mary Metrione, Ken Mitchell, Candy Myers, Eric, Daniel, and Zachary Rakebrand, Abe Reuther, Diane and Bobby Rothschild, George Rowland, Arline Spangler, Laura Tanedo, Louise Tompkins, Mami Umemura, David White, Barbara Wiley, Bill Wiley, Al Wiley, and the Work Group.

Each of Rancocas' volunteers deserves special recognition. This season, Rancocas would like to highlight the contributions of Bob Hall. Bob is very knowledgeable in all things mechanical, so he oversees Rancocas' equipment and makes sure the mower, brushhog, and golf cart are in working order. He also enjoys helping out in the garden and constructed two new raised-beds for the Children's Garden this past summer. Thank you, Bob, for your year-round help at the center.