

# CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

P.O. BOX 80, CLOSTER NJ 07624 [closternaturecenter.org](http://closternaturecenter.org)

By the pond on Ruckman Road

NOVEMBER, 2020

## **Popular Pond Trail Will Be Upgraded!**

(with a little help from our friends)

**The Closter Nature Center** will undertake a trail stabilization project along the Mayer Loop, one of the most used trails in our preserve. A section of the trail runs along the southwest edge of Ruckman Pond, and is a favorite among our visitors for walking, birdwatching, and fishing.

Unfortunately, this portion of the trail has seen some serious erosion over the past five years, much of it due to the dredging of the pond. Because it was necessary to drain the pond to remove silt to deepen and re-contour the bottom, a band of Red Osier Dogwood bushes that separated the trail from the pond and served to retain the bank, was lost. The trail has narrowed as a result, with some places limited in width to a single person.

**As a result of the generosity of Gary Wiggers Construction Company of Old Tappan**, who obtained and delivered 17 cubic yards of sandstone, basalt and consolidated rock to the CNC, we are planning to line one side of the trail with the various sized stones and cut back brush on the other, gradually re-establishing a broad, flat and stable trail surface.

**Work on the project will begin in the next month** and initially occur between the Scout cabin and the first footbridge. Other sections of the trail will also need attention once this portion is completed.

Once planning is complete, we will be looking for volunteers to assist in moving the stone from the parking lot behind the Scout cabin to the trail. While some of the stone will require small gasoline-powered equipment to place, the bulk of the material is easily handled with wheelbarrows and hand trucks. **If you would like to contribute some time and be alerted when this project gets underway, please indicate your interest on the Closter Nature Center website's Volunteers page.**

## \*\*\* Charitable Giving \*\*\*

**Did you know...** that the Closter Nature Center is a registered 501(c)(3) organization? We are also a registered nonprofit on **Benevity**, an online platform used by corporations including Apple, Google and Microsoft to give its employees access to worthy recipients around the world.

If your company uses Benevity, please look for the “**Closter Nature Center**” and become a supporter today! And Thank You!

## Come join Nature Marc at the Closter Nature Center for some outdoor science fun!

Our fall afternoon programs are designed to enhance school system's half-days and online curricula.

We will be keeping our class sizes small and adhering to CDC guidelines.

Please note: **No classes week of Thanksgiving.**

Classes will be held outdoors rain or shine. Please dress for the weather!

To register please go to: <https://register.communitypass.net/Closter>, and you will be taken to Community Pass, our online registration and payment system.

If you have any questions please call Marc at (201) 750-2778.

## Teachers Convention Science Classes November 5th and 6<sup>th</sup>

Come to the nature center for some outdoor science fun!

**1st - 3rd Grade 9:00 - 10:30**

**4th - 7th Grade 11:00 - 12:30**

Sign up for one or both days.  
\$25/session for Members - \$35/session Non-members

**November After-School 1st - 3rd Grade:  
(Chose One 4-week session)**

\$100/session for Members - \$125/session Non-members

**Mondays, 1:30 - 3:00** 2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th

**Tuesdays, 3:30 - 5:00** 3rd, 10th, 17th and **Dec. 1st**

**Wednesdays, 1:30 - 3:00** 4th, 11th, 18th and **Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> (FULL)**

**Wednesdays, 3:30 - 5:00** 4th, 11th, 18th and **Dec. 2nd**

**Thursdays, 3:30 - 5:00** 5th, 12th, 19th and **Dec. 3rd**

**November After-School 4th - 7th Grade:  
(Chose One 4-week session)**

\$100/session for Members - \$125/session Non-members

**Mondays, 3:30 - 5:00** 2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th

**Tuesdays, 1:30 - 3:00** 3rd, 10th, 17th and **Dec. 1st**

**Thursdays, 1:30 - 3:00** 5th, 12th, 19th and **Dec. 3rd**

**Naturalist's Notes:**

Each month brings a host of amazing natural occurrences. From the first robins in March, to the fall colors of October, the year can easily be broken down into its own nature calendar.

November instantly brings to mind the coming of a relatively inconspicuous, but special mushroom, the **Blewit**. These can pop up anytime between mid-summer and the end of the year.

Cooling fall temperatures and frequent rains mean that conditions are good for a healthy crop of these delicious mushrooms. Their caps can be up to 6 inches across, and they often stand over 3 inches high. Their bluish - lilac cap and perfumed, sweet scent make them stand out from the multitude of brown, earthy scented fall mushrooms. Blewits are the quintessential decomposer: feasting on the bounty of fallen leaves is how this fungus gets its nourishment and is able to produce its reproductive structures, the blewit mushroom.

Many years ago on Thanksgiving eve, while working for the county parks department as a naturalist, I spotted a clump of violet little beauties in a pile of oak leaves. Their stature, color and finally their characteristic scent gave them away as my beloved blewits. They ended up on the Thanksgiving table the next night, inconspicuous compared with the plethora of festive foods, but if you ask me, the tastiest of all.

Over the next few weeks I will be keeping my eyes out for these wonderful gems. If I am lucky, there will be a bowl of Nature's bounty on my Thanksgiving dinner table.

See you on the trails,  
Marc Gussen, Naturalist