

# CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

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

By the pond on Ruckman Road

## OCTOBER 2020

### Fall Outdoor Science Programs

Come join Nature Marc at the Closter Nature Center for some outdoor science fun! Our fall afternoon programs are designed to accent school system's half-days and online curricula. We will be keeping our class sizes small and will be adhering to CDC standards. Please dress for the weather, as we will be outside in our outdoor classroom.

#### 1st - 3rd Grade (Chose One 4-week session)

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

Session	Time	
<b>Mondays</b>	1:30 - 3:00 pm	5th, 12th, 19th and 26th
<b>Tuesdays</b>	1:30 - 3:00 pm	6th, 13th, 20th and 27th
<b>Wednesdays (FULL)</b>	1:30 - 3:00 pm	7th, 14th, 21st and 28th
<b>Wednesdays</b>	3:30 - 5:00 pm	7th, 14th, 21st and 28th
<b>Thursdays</b>	3:30 - 5:00 pm	8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th

#### 4th - 7th Grade (Chose One 4-week session)

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

Session	Time	
<b>Mondays</b>	3:30 - 5:00 pm	5th, 12th, 19th and 26th
<b>Tuesdays</b>	3:30 - 5:00 pm	6th, 13th, 20th and 27th
<b>Thursdays</b>	1:30 - 3:00 pm	8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th

To register online please go to:

<https://register.communitypass.net/Closter>

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

# TRAIL RENOVATION PROJECT!

The Closter Nature Center has begun a multi-year **Trail Renovation Project**. The existing boardwalk trail system, made of black locust boards, has been in place for up to 16 years. Although this wood is extremely durable, and almost 90% of the planks have continued to resist the wetland swamp waters, approximately 10% of these boards have developed splits or holes and require replacement. By the end of 2021 all the damaged boards will be replaced by new Black Locust planks. The lumber will be milled by the **McCaffery family at the Sutter Mill Farm in Alpine**. These logs were secured through the efforts of **Todd Bradbury and Ken's Tree Care** to recycle the wood. New boards will be cut to the needed sizes and then transported for installation next spring at the Nature Center. We welcome volunteers interested in helping to move the new planks to the sites where they will be installed. Please contact Tom Golodik ([t.golodik@verizon.net](mailto:t.golodik@verizon.net)), Mary Mayer ([marym812@aol.com](mailto:marym812@aol.com)) or Beth Ravit ([bravit@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:bravit@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)) if you would like to join us in repairing the trails!

## Naturalist's Notes:

Every fall something very special happens in our forests, fields, and even suburban yards - mushrooms make a big showing!

Mushrooms come in many shapes and sizes and pop up in a variety of habitats- but they all have something in common: they are the fruits of a fungus. Just like an apple is the fruit of an apple tree, a mushroom is the fruit of a fungus.

Apples and mushrooms serve the same purpose: reproduction. Although we cannot see them with the naked eye, mushrooms produce spores, which are the fungal version of seeds. Those spores are released by the mushroom and are typically carried by the wind until they land in some random spot. The vast majority of fungal spores don't end up in just the right spot, but some- by mere chance- will land where they can germinate and grow into a new fungus.

The fungus itself is nothing really special, just chains of microscopic strands called **mycelium**. These fungal strands grow through the soil or dead trees, digesting as they go, until they are ready to complete their life cycle and produce mushrooms.

The importance of fungi in the natural world, and especially in forests, is tremendous. They are the decomposers that help to keep the cycle of nutrients moving. While most fungi are decomposers, some are tree parasites, and others have an amazing symbiotic relationship with trees where they work together to the benefit of both fungus and tree.

October is probably the best time of the year to find these incredible examples of the variety and complexity of nature. There are quite a few great resources with information about fungi and mushrooms, and all are always welcome to stop by or send me an email with any questions you might have!

See you on the trails....Marc Gussen, Naturalist