

# CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

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

By the pond on Ruckman Road

JUNE 2021

## JUNE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:

### **Mrs. Wonderwhy's Nature Fun for Little Ones Presents: "Nature Science Theater"**

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#### **Puppets and Costumes and Science...Oh My!!**

For our spring pre-school program finale, we're donning our hand-made animal costumes and role-playing our way to Environmental Awareness at The Closter Nature Center. All the world's a stage, and nature-themed games, experiments and exploration are sure to earn a standing ovation from children and caregivers alike!

Enrollment is for **two** one-hour classes:

**Toddlers** (ages 2 & 3): Fridays, June 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 AM - 12 PM

**Preschoolers** (ages 3 & 4): Fridays, June 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

**\*Classes are held outdoors.\***

*Rain date: June 18th for both groups.*

Please understand that this is not a drop-off program, and adult caregivers will be asked to join in on the fun while helping Mrs. Wonderwhy (aka long-time preschool instructor Maria Costa) keep children safe. All participants must abide by changing Covid-19 CDC guidelines.

**Cost is \$40 for Members, \$50 for Non-Members  
Become a member, and save!**

**To register and/or to become a member, 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 email [admin@closternaturecenter.org](mailto:admin@closternaturecenter.org).

## **June After-School Programs:**

Come join Nature Marc at the Closter Nature Center for some outdoor science fun! Our afternoon programs are designed to accent our local school system's half-days and online curricula. We will be adhering to most recent CDC standards.  
Masks required for children. Please dress for the weather, as we will be outside for the entire program.

**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.

\$50/session for Members - \$60/session Non-members

### **Mondays, June 7th and 14th**

4th - 6th Gr. 3:00 - 4:15pm

1st - 3rd Gr. 4:30 - 5:45pm

### **Tuesdays, June 8th, and 15th**

1st - 3rd Gr. 3:00 - 4:15pm

Kindergarten 4:30 - 5:45pm

### **Wednesdays, June 9th, and 16th**

4th - 6th Gr. 3:00 - 4:15pm

1st - 3rd 4:30 - 5:45pm

**Thursdays, June 10th, and 17th**  
Kindergarten 3:00 - 4:15pm  
1st- 3rd Gr. 4:30 - 5:45pm

## Naturalist's Notes:

With all of the amazing birds that call the Nature Center home, the fish-eaters have a special place in my heart. Ruckman Pond and its side kick the hockey pond, host quite a few herons, cormorants and the occasional osprey. Throughout the entire animal kingdom we see a plethora of adaptations and hunting techniques that help animals catch their prey- and the fish-eating birds are no different.

The long neck and legs of the **Great Blue Heron** seem awkward at first but are perfect for their unique hunting habit of stalking fish in the shallows while wading. Watching them slowly tiptoeing through ten inches of water while scanning below them for a bluegill sunfish can almost put you to sleep until....Wham! They shoot out their long pointed beaks with their powerful necks, and then quickly swallow their prey whole.

The **Double-crested Cormorant** has a different approach. They actually enter the fishes' realm by swimming on the surface until they dive below and swim after their prey. Once they catch a fish in their beak, they quickly surface- and like most animals that eat fish whole, they reposition their dinner in order to swallow them head first.

Lastly, the **Osprey** starts his hunt in the air. They can often be seen circling over the pond fifty feet up until they spot a fish lazily swimming near the surface. They then tilt in flight, in a show of commitment and hyper-aware readiness, right before they swoop down, talons first, into the water and grab their prey. Since swallowing a 2 pound largemouth bass whole is not possible for them they take to the trees to put their curved beak to use, paring the fish into bite-sized morsels.

It is one thing to see all of these incredible birds; it's quite another to see them all in action. The best way to witness these aquatic hunting scenes is also the best way to shake off the stress of everyday life: come to the pond, sit on a bench and watch!

See you on the trails, Marc Gussen, Naturalist

## **Cute Kids Quote:**

A couple of kids were drumming on a log with sticks when a stickless girl walked up and asked "Can I have one?".

A boy quickly responded by looking around- and not seeing a suitable branch, he took his stick in both hands and broke it in two over his knee. He then handed half to the girl, and all the kids got to work drumming away. (I know he didn't say anything, but this was too cute to pass up!)

## **SPRING MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL, AND THANK YOU!**

### **To our members, donors, and volunteers:**

Like every non-profit organization, the Closter Nature Center could not exist without its dedicated members, donors and volunteers who remain committed and dependable through good times and bad. A big SHOUT OUT! to ALL whose generosity of time and funds are helping to keep the Nature Center in good order during difficult times for all of us. During the past year, more people than ever have found interest, comfort and fun exploring all our Nature Center has to offer.

Our Board members (all volunteers) have given many extra hours to steer a course forward

A hard-working crew is maintaining and upgrading trails and fences, while Marc maintains the cabin, grounds, and our live exhibits.

**So, THANK YOU!** to members thoughtfully renewing their memberships promptly and generously. If it's now time to renew your membership, the Closter Nature Center thanks you ...in advance!