

CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

P.O. BOX 80, CLOSTER NJ 07624 closternaturecenter.org

By the pond on Ruckman Road

MARCH, 2022

CNC MARCH ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

March After-School Programs:

Come join Nature Marc at the Closter Nature Center for some outdoor science fun! Please dress for the weather, as we will be outside for most of the sessions. We will move into the cabin for severe weather.

Masks will be required when inside the Nature Center building.

Mondays - March 14th, 21st and 28th

1st- 3rd Gr.....3:45 - 5:00pm

Tuesdays - March 15th, 22nd and 29th

Kindergarten3:45 - 5:00pm

Wednesdays - March 16th, 23rd and 30th

1st - 3rd.....3:45 - 5:00pm

Thursdays - March 17th, 24th and 31st

4th - 6th Gr.....3:45 - 5:00pm

\$75/ 3 week program for Members - \$90/ 3 week program Non-members

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 Naturalist Marc Gussen at (201) 750-2778 or email admin@closternaturecenter.org.

Cute Kids Quote

Last week, the topic with my 1st graders was deer and their antlers.

I was explaining that every year, the male deer lose their antlers in the winter and grow back new ones in the spring.

One girl asked, "what about unicorns?"

Adult class. - Thursday, March 17, 7:00 PM

Primitive Technology - Come learn about the skills of our ancestors and how technology began.

Fire making, rope making and stone tools will be some topics covered and demonstrated.

10 people max, registration required, 1 1/2 hours, \$10 members \$20 non-members

INTRODUCTION TO BIRDING: Sunday, March 20th, 9:00- 11:00 AM

Have you ever wanted to get into birding but are not sure where to start? Now is your chance to learn how to get started (just in time for spring migration)!

What: Introduction to Birding Workshop

When: Sunday, March 20th

Time: 9:00-11:00am

Cost: \$20 for members / \$35 non-members (All proceeds go to benefit the Closter Nature Center)

Pre-Registration: Required (12 person limit)

The first portion of the class will cover basic bird identification, birding etiquette, places to go, a high-level overview of tools you might need or want such as binoculars and cameras, an overview of websites, apps, and other tools.

We will also discuss binoculars, the primary tool of birders. Bring your own or we will have "loaners" available.

Once we have the basics down, in the second part of the session we will explore the pond and surrounding trails while applying and practicing what we learned.

Please note this workshop is primarily intended for adults and will be led by birding enthusiast and long-time Closter Nature Center volunteer Joel Rudin.

To register and / or to purchase membership please go

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

Adult Hike - Sunday, March 27th 2:00 PM

Experience nature through the eyes of Naturalist Marc Gussen. Take a guided leisurely hike while learning about the local flora and fauna along the way. This will be a leisurely pace, with the emphasis on learning about forest ecology and what makes the Closter Nature center so special.

10 people max, registration required, about 1 hour, \$10 members \$20 non-members

Naturalist's Notes:

March: The last glimpse of winter and the first taste of spring.

The transition starts with the sun, as the days lengthen and the sun's angle gets higher in the sky, incoming energy from the sun surges. This solar power melts snow and ice, warms the soil and air, and lets plants finally start to conduct photosynthesis once again.

Soil microorganisms begin to wake and get to work decomposing last year's leaves, releasing nutrients into the forest soil. Plant roots drink the snow melt and late winter rains, readying for a burst of new green growth. Hibernating animals wake after a long winter's nap, hungry and ready for a new year. Nature's cues can sometimes be subtle, like the greenish yellow shoots of skunk cabbage melting surrounding snow, ready to unfurl their huge leaves. Others are loud and unmistakable, like the influx of robins searching for insects stirred by the first kiss of spring warmth.

It's time for us to beat cabin fever and get outside. It may be cold; it might be muddy, but being in the forest as this shift from dormancy to rebirth occurs can be magical. Come visit the nature center and take advantage of our 3 miles of trails and endless natural wonders.

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

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And speaking of which:

Orange Trail Boardwalk Rehab Completed !

The boardwalk restoration project the Closter Nature Center had planned for four of its' trails was brought to a close on February 17th with the completion of work on the Orange Trail. Rehab of sections of the Blue, Red and Green Trails were finished several weeks ago. One more trail remains: the White, which is scheduled for next year.

The Orange trail is the wettest of all the preserve's trails, passing through a low-lying swampy area which is subject to frequent flooding when Anderson Creek overflows its banks during heavy rain events. The area frequently has standing water and especially requires the boardwalk to make it passable. The boardwalk was originally installed on the trails about 20 years ago and is composed of black locust planks, as were the milled replacements. Cracks, splitting and rot had occurred in about 15 percent of the boardwalk planks. In addition, the "sleepers", (6x6 inch boards that support the planks), had settled into the underlying muck over the years, lowering the planks into the water.

Crews from **Bradbury Landscape** and the **Closter Public Works** assisted nature center personnel in removing and replacing planks and extending the boardwalk on the Orange Trail, stabilizing sections that had become uneven, and raising sections that were at water level. The offers of assistance on the project from Closter resident **Todd Bradbury**, owner of Bradbury Landscape, and **William Dahle**, public works director, allowed the project to wrap up far in advance of the scheduled project term. The Closter Nature Center board of trustees extends great thanks to both for volunteering to assist this project and bringing it to a close so quickly!

Temporary Trail Closures

The first phase of the Closter Nature Center's project to remove dead ash trees around buildings, infrastructure and trails will occur on or about March 7th and 8th. The entire White Trail, portions of the Blue and Red Trails where they join the White, and sections of the Mayer Loop Trail near the Boy Scout cabin and fire pit will be closed to walkers. Be alert for posted signs near the specific work sites.

Crews from Ken's Tree Care will be felling approximately 20 dead ash trees killed by an infestation of the emerald ash borer that are in locations that may result in the trees falling where people gather or upon buildings or bridges. As future funding becomes available, additional trees will be dropped to reduce risks of large branches or trunks falling on or near trails.

Save the date!
Closter Cleanup Day is Saturday, April 2nd, from 10 -2
Rain Date: April 3rd