

THE CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

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

By the pond on Ruckman Road

JUNE 2022

Our Thanks go out to the many generous people who contributed more than 25 homemade soups to our delightful **Soup Supper!** In addition, **Closter One, Madeline's Petit Paris, Isabella's, La Promenade and Zendiggi** all donated soups! **Balthazar Bakery** and **Buon Gusto** contributed bread. All were delicious! By the end of the lovely, sunny afternoon we'd had our most successful **Soup Supper** ever...Our first since 2019! Welcome back!

UPCOMING CLASSES and EVENTS:

POND CELEBRATION RETURNS TO RUCKMAN POND!

SATURDAY, JUNE 4th from 1-4 PM

Please join us for the grand return of the CNC's annual celebration of Ruckman Pond!

We've missed this for the past two years, and now it's time to celebrate once again!

Come to Ruckman Pond for an afternoon of science and fun! Enjoy the pleasures

of our Nature Center and pond on a lovely early June afternoon that will feature:

Canoe rides. Pond Hikes

Live animals Live music!

Tie-dying tee-shirts Arts and Crafts

Fun Games Educational Science Exhibits
...And more!

Bring your family and friends, grandparents, aunts, cousins and uncles!

Admission is FREE

**Volunteers needed for the "Pond Celebration"! Come on down and
dive in!**

Email programdirector@closternaturecenter.org, or call Marc at (201) 750-
2778

June After-School Programs: "Pond Life"

Explore our Nature Center's ponds, and learn about the creatures that live there!
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.

Tuesdays - June 7th, 14th and 21st

PK 4-Kindergarten....3:45 - 5:00pm

Wednesdays - June 8th, 15th and 22nd

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

Thursdays - June 9th, 16th and 23rd

4th - 6th Grades.... 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 KID'S QUOTE:

I visited a Pre-K class at Hillside school, and was talking to the little ones
about animals. I asked them if they knew of any animals that come out at
night, and one precious 4 year old replied with "Teddy Bears".

-Marc Gussen

MRS. WONDERWHY

In June

Spring has Sprung and Mrs. Wonderwhy's Nature Fun Fridays are back with all new age-appropriate nature classes! Toddlers 2 and up, and preschoolers and their caregivers are invited to join Mrs. Wonderwhy at our outdoor classroom in April for three fun and wonder-filled Fridays. Wee ones will learn about the miracles of the season through sensory play, nature hikes, songs, games, arts and crafts including "mud prints," scavenger hunts and live animal introductions.

June 3, 10 and 17th (severe weather date 24th)

2 - 3 yr. olds. 2:00 - 3:00

3 - 4 yr. olds. 3:45 - 4:45

We'll be outside for the entire hour, so please dress children appropriately including boots for possible muddy trails. In case of rain, we'll have fun in the classroom but will postpone class in case of severe weather.

Caregivers are required to remain with children and are encouraged to join in on the fun! **Cost: \$60 members / \$75 non-members**

Naturalist's Notes:

For the longest time predators were made out to be bad or even evil. People in many cultures are taught to kill snakes on sight. Killing of sharks and wolves was thought to be virtuous and "good" for us and our interests. The U.S. government paid bounties to coyote hunters and encouraged their eradication. We've come a long way since that archaic mentality dictated our relationship with predators, and have found, over and over again, that when predators are removed from a habitat a whole host of negative ecological consequences follow.

We face one of those consequences right now as we take a look at the population of the white-tailed deer. In many areas of the northeast deer populations are up 10-fold. This is partly due to the fact that we've

improved the habitat for deer by creating more "edges". Ball fields, strips of forest, golf courses, school yards and suburbia in general all lend themselves to an increased deer population. At the same time, we have taken away thousands of acres of forest, using it for our own habitat.

But when we take a deeper look we see that not only those factors are important, but a key part of the problem is that the predators of deer are gone. Up until the early 1800s Bergen County had a thriving population of both wolves and mountain lions. In an attempt to protect their livestock, European farmers had eradicated these potent forms of deer control by the middle of the 19th century. Deer populations have been on an exponential rise ever since.

The health of our forests is at stake as we see booming deer populations reduce our forests to a mix of just a handful of native plants that deer don't find palatable and an ever-growing list of invasive plant species. For us to move forward with an improved environmental ethic that puts diversity and ecosystem health high on our list of priorities, we must come to terms with the fact that predators are far from evil and actually a crucial aspect to the sustainability of life on earth.

The Closter Nature Center is committed to studying and learning about all aspects of this knotty dilemma. Please join us in our efforts as we try to discern how to balance the welfare of plants, animals and humans in the habitat we all share.

Marc Gussen, Naturalist

Pollinator Garden Installation is Ongoing! **Pictures will be posted on our website.**

Heartfelt thanks go out to: **Bergen County Audubon** – for their funding, pollinator plant list and garden design recommendations; **Rohsler's Nursery (Allendale)**—who gave native pollinator plants and funding support; **Hometown Hardware** - garden equipment and funding support. **And thanks to our wonderful volunteers**, who continue to contribute their time, labor and expertise as the pollinator garden develops!

VOLUNTEERS: NEEDED AND WELCOMED!

The CNC is asking those interested in planting and weekly maintenance to volunteer help in the pollinator garden.

This is highly rewarding work, and a delightful way to spend some time outdoors this spring!

Please contact us at: programdirector@closternaturecenter.org

EXTRA—LOOKING AHEAD:

CNC MONTH BY MONTH:

JUNE 4...POND CELEBRATION... 1-4 PM

JUNE 7 to 23...CNC AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

JUNE 3, 10 AND 17...MRS WONDERWHY

JUNE 27 to AUGUST 25...CNC SUMMER PROGRAM!

CLOSTER NATURE CENTER SUMMER PROGRAM 2022

**Ready to join friends outdoors this summer? Register now.
JUNE 27 THROUGH AUGUST 25TH**

Our **136 acres** of ponds, streams, meadows, and forest are waiting to be explored by young people in small groups led by our naturalist, Marc Gussen and his assistant. Children will hike, dig, wade in the water, examine nature, discuss the environment and above all, have fun!! For over 45 years, our goal has been to help every child become active and at ease outdoors, to see him/herself as a part of nature and to appreciate the natural world as a source of learning and adventure.

We offer 2-hour classes for children ages 4-6. And 3-hour classes for ages 7-11 and 12-15. Both morning and afternoon programs are offered each week.

****REGISTER ONLINE at <https://register.communitypass.net/Closter>****

FEES for the two hour program (Ages 4- 6):

\$80.00 per session (Monday – Thursday) for students whose families are members of the Closter Nature Center.

\$100.00 per session (Monday – Thursday) for non-members.

FEES for the three hour program (Ages 7- 11 and 12- 15):

\$120.00 per session (Monday – Thursday) for students whose families are members of the Closter Nature Center.

\$150.00 per session (Monday – Thursday) for non-members.

Annual Family Membership dues are \$50 and can be purchased on Community Pass BEFORE you register. We depend on the support of our membership!

**** Join now and save! ****

Paying by check? You can still register online and mail a check to:
Closter Nature Center, PO Box 80, Closter, NJ 07624.

If you need a scholarship, please contact: CNCsummer@closternaturecenter.com

We are an independent, non-profit association dependent upon memberships and donations to maintain our facilities and programs. Please consider joining us.
Visit our website for more information: www.closternaturecenter.org