

CLOSTER NATURE CENTER NEWS

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

By the pond on Ruckman Road

February 2025 Programs and Activities:

CNC Open House for Hillside Elementary School Students

Sunday, Feb 9th, 1-3 pm, at the CNC Cabin

Discover the wonders of Closter Nature Center! Join us for an open house featuring animal encounters and a guided hike. Learn about our programs and experience the magic of the outdoors. Led by Francesca Costa

FREE, Snacks and Refreshments Provided
Children must be accompanied by an adult

Music by the Pond

February 16th, 2 - 4 PM



Musicians: professionals and amateurs,
and friends and family come together to share music.

FOLK ROCK BLUES

ACOUSTIC INSTRUMENTS, VOCALS, PERCUSSION

Join us for an afternoon of music and community

Professionals and amateurs alike perform to bring music to quiet Ruckman Pond. End the week on a relaxing note with your family, friends, and others. Stop in, slow down, and enjoy the tunes.

Music by the Pond repeats every third Sunday of each month. Always free!

Recovering from the “Big Ones”

a Palisades Interstate Park Presentation

February 27th, 7 pm at the CNC Cabin

Climate change is making storms stronger and less predictable. Look back at historic storms with Public Historian **Francesca Costa** and learn how climate impacts our natural areas today.

Free Program!

Donations gladly accepted to support future programs like this!

Thank you to the Sponsors of the Closter Nature Center Reforestation Initiative!

Since developing our Forest Stewardship Plan in 2017, Closter Nature Center has been actively working to sustainably reforest our reserve. To address growing threats like invasive species, insect pathogens and deer overpopulation, we must proactively safeguard a healthy forest ecosystem.

Thanks to our generous sponsors, we've made significant progress. In the Orange Trail area, we've established a one-acre deer-proof enclosure, successfully planting 200 native wetland plants to restore the canopy and understory. The construction of a second enclosure is nearly complete, with plans to introduce a similar number of native plants in spring of 2025. We are also planning to expand our reforestation efforts to the eastern section of the reserve encompassing the Red, White, and Blue trail areas.

With support from the Borough of Closter's Open Space funds, planks have been purchased to replace damaged portions of the long bridge on the Orange Trail. Volunteers will do the carpentry work of replacement.

We are incredibly grateful for the generous support of the below project sponsors and the entire community. Their contributions are vital to Closter Nature Center's mission, enabling us to address the threat of deforestation through impactful and promising projects like these.

The Mayer Family Foundation



Naturalist's Notes:

The muskrat is one of many animals that reside at the Closter Nature Center. These interesting rodents, like their cousin the beaver, are aquatic and have adaptations that help them survive and thrive in winter. Our nature center's ponds and streams are the perfect habitat for the muskrat, which has fur that stays dry and warm even underwater, and webbed hind feet for locomotion. They get to be about two feet long, with their long scaly tails, and have blackish-brown glossy hair.

Although muskrats are mostly nocturnal. They can be seen year-round swimming in the water, leaping into the pond when alarmed, and munching vegetation at the waters' edge. Muskrats make pond and streamside burrows that are only about 6 inches in diameter, but can be as long as 50 feet!

A while back, out with some kids, we watched a muskrat at the edge of the pond carefully digging up a small clump of grass. Once his future meal was secured in his mouth, he darted to the pond and quickly submerged. Since muskrats can hold their breath for as long as 15 minutes, a short swim to his underwater burrow was amazing to the kids and me, but just another moment in the life of a muskrat. See you on the trails, Marc Gussen, Naturalist



Closter Nature Center
154 Ruckman Road, Closter NJ



Winter Break Nature Program



Unleash your child's inner explorer this Winter School Break! Closter Nature Center offers four days of exciting programs filled with nature adventures and hands-on learning.

February 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th

1st - 3rd grade: 9:00 am - 10:30 am
PreK 4- Kindergarten: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
4th - 6th grade: 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
1st - 3rd grade: 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

PreK 4- Kindergarten \$96 for Members / \$120 Non-members

1st to 6th Grade \$120 Members / \$144 Non-members

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

Can't make all four days? Email our Naturalist to make accommodations for 1, 2, or 3 day attendance:
naturalist@closternaturecenter.org



Closter Nature Center

154 Ruckman Road, Closter NJ

After-School Nature Program Winter Session II



Shake off winter and embrace the start of spring with us! This after-school program is a wild ride with animal encounters, thrilling hikes, and endless opportunities for discovery. Join the fun!

Member fee: \$150 for 5 weeks
Non-Member fee: \$180 for 5 weeks

Tuesdays- Pre-K4 and Kindergarten - 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm
Feb 25, Mar 4, 11, 18, 25

Wednesdays- 1st- 3rd grades - 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm
Feb 26, Mar 5, 12, 19, 26

Thursdays- 4th-6th grades -3:45 pm to 5:00 pm
Feb 27, Mar 6, 13, 20, 27

Register on Community Pass:
<https://register.communitypass.net/Closter>

Questions email info@closternaturecenter.org or call 201-800-2008.