

FALL NATURE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Mercer County Park Commission



PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Registration is not required for family or adult nature education programs unless noted. Public nature programs are open to 20 people and are filled in a first-come, first-serve basis. Participants must pay for the program upon arrival. Cash and checks are accepted, however, the naturalist does not carry change so please have the appropriate bills. Contact jlear@mercercounty.org for more information.

Children's Programs do require registration. To register for these programs please send an email to jlear@mercercounty.org with "program registration" as the title. In the email include the title of the program, names of participants and their age if a child. Payment in the form of check, cash or credit card must be received prior to the start of the program.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

SUNDAY STROLL SERIES

Put down the newspaper and lace up yours and your little one's sneakers. Spend time as a family and grow closer while playing in nature. Each month's relaxed, Sunday-styled program will send your family along the trail in search of new natural discoveries.



The Sunday Stroll programs are designed for families and cost \$3 per person.

Autumn Adventure

Sunday, September 27 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Mercer County Park, Tennis Center parking lot

Animal Evidence

Sunday, October 18 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Baldpate Mountain, Visitor Center

Adapt, Migrate or Hibernate?

Sunday, November 22 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Roebing Park, Spring Lake

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

BACKYARD BUDDIES: Exploring nature in a backyard habitat

Spending time in nature fuels a child's imagination. And, you need not travel far to find it. With the guidance of Mercer County's Naturalist, you and your child will search our nature center's backyard for suburban wildlife! This program will foster your child's hearty curiosity for natural discoveries, which can be continued in your own backyard! Programs include a group story or experiment, an outdoor exploration and a craft. Grow to appreciate nature with your little one.

***Please register for this program by emailing*

*jlear@mercercounty.org***

Thursdays, September 24, October 22, November 19

From 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Roebing Park, Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center

For children ages 3 to 5 and their parent

Cost: \$8 per program or \$24 for the autumn series



NEW THIS SEASON

FOREST FRIENDS

Explore and experience the magical world of nature at Baldpate Mountain! Track forest-dwelling creatures, pretend to be a tree or go on a scavenger hunt along the trails. During this program, preschoolers will join the County Naturalist for an exciting program while parents volunteer their time on the trails or in our garden. Programs include a group story or experiment, an outdoor hike and a craft.

Please register for this program by emailing jlear@mercercounty.org

Wednesdays, September 23, October 21, November 18

From 1 to 2:30 p.m.

At Baldpate Mountain, Lodge

For children ages 4 to 6

Cost: Parent/adult volunteers during the program.

NEW THIS SEASON

YOUNG NATURALISTS CLUB

This "kids-only" afternoon program is designed for young minds; curious and eager to experience the natural world. Each session will be spent exploring a different section of the mountain and the flora and fauna that call Baldpate home. Kids will focus on their observation and investigation skills, and develop their knowledge of ecology while fostering their fondness for nature. This program will be led by the Naturalist Intern.

Please register for this program by emailing jlear@mercercounty.org

Wednesdays, September 23, October 14, November 18

From 3:45 to 5 p.m.

At Baldpate Mountain, Lodge

For children ages 9 – 12

Cost: \$8 per program or \$24 for the autumn series

ADULT PROGRAMS

EARLY BIRDS

Join us for a casual hike -- with your binoculars, of course. These early a.m. walks are dedicated to spotting our fine-feathered friends. Never picked up a pair of binoculars before? No problem. All abilities of birders are welcome. Hikes are free and for adults.

Monday, September 21 from 7 to 8:30 a.m.

At Mercer County Park

Meet at the Lakeside Village pavilion at the Marina

Monday, October 19 from 7 to 8:30 a.m.

At Curlis Lake

Meet in the Equestrian Center Parking Lot

Monday, November 16 from 7 to 8:30 a.m.

At Baldpate Mountain

Meet at Visitor Center (follow driveway off of Fiddler's Creek Road)

TRAIL TREKS

Become inspired by nature; get motivated to exercise, or join us to discover new hiking trails. Mercer County is bursting with beautiful parkland and is here for your enjoyment. Take in fresh air, energize your body and enjoy the sights and sounds of nature with Mercer County's Naturalist on Tuesday morning treks. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring a water bottle. For adults, all hikes are free.

Tuesday, September 15 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

At Herrontown Woods

Bring a pair of clippers!

Tuesday, October 13 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

At Roebling Park

Meet at the Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center

Tuesday, November 17 from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

At Curlis Lake

Meet at Equestrian Center Parking Lot



EXPLORE YOUR PARKS

Get out of the house and go explore! This Sunday afternoon program will unite you and other outdoor enthusiasts for a fun, brisk hike. These hikes are a little faster paced than the Tuesday Trail Treks. For adults, all hikes are free. Feel free to bring a set of hand clippers.

Sunday, September 27 from 1 to 3 p.m.

At Rosedale Park, meet at Picnic Pavilion

Sunday, October 18 from 1 to 3 p.m.

At Baldpate Mountain, Pleasant Valley parking lot

Sunday, November 22 from 1 to 3 p.m.

At Roebling Park, Spring Lake section

PROGRAMS FOR GROUPS

These programs are appropriate for any scout group, school trip or organized group. Programs for groups can be requested by emailing jlear@mercercounty.org. Group programs run 60 – 90 minutes and are hosted at Mercer County Parks and offsite areas.

Fees for group programs are as follows: \$35 for an offsite program, \$25 for an onsite program.

OUTDOOR GROUP PROGRAMS

These walks include an introduction activity, followed by an interpretive hike.

Ahh, Arthropods!

Six legs, eight legs, fourteen and more! Explore the fields and forest for these small, over-looked organisms that are ever so important. And learn how and why we humans rely on them.

Animal Evidence

Our parks and natural areas are home to a great number of wildlife. But, we rarely see them. On this walk, we'll look for animal tracks, nests and holes, browsed plants and other animal evidence to learn about the animals and their habits.

Hooray for Habitat

You need habitat, I need habitat and animals and plants too. During this walk, learn what habitat is and what it provides while we search different habitats for the plants and animals that use it.

Stream Stomp

Get your feet wet exploring the stream habitat and search for the tiny organisms that hide under rocks and in crevices. Learn who and what each organism is and how they indicate a stream's health. To conclude, we'll participate in an activity that exemplifies the importance of clean streams.

General Nature Walk

General nature walks feature current natural events such as blooming wildflowers, or how organisms prepare for winter. During the hike the group will seek common insects and birds, and animal tracks and signs.

INDOOR GROUP PROGRAMS

Wildlife Guess Who (Pre-K to 1st)

Using different “virtual puzzles” and animal artifacts, students will learn the defining characteristics of animal families, including insect, amphibian, fish, reptile, bird and mammal.

Food Webs (3rd to 5th)

Food is essential for existence. You and I gather our food from a grocery store, but how do different organisms feed themselves? During this program, children will learn to make a food web and will gain a deeper understanding of the interdependence between organisms.

Animal Evidence (2nd – 5th)

A presentation and hands-on activities will engage students as they learn to infer the activities of wildlife. “Evidence” items include animal tracks, skulls and skins, and animal scat! Younger students will create a track stamp story.