

NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST AND NEW JERSEY AUDUBON SOCIETY TO HOST FALL BIRD HIKE, CLEAN-UP AND PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP AS PART OF “RIVER DAYS”

River Days Aims to Connect Communities with Delaware River Waterways Through Six-Week Series of Events This Fall

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and New Jersey Audubon Society will host three events this fall at the Petty’s Island Preserve in Pennsauken, New Jersey as part of **River Days**: a fall bird hike, a clean-up and a photography workshop. All three of these events are free and are open to participants ages 12 and older.

These events are part of **River Days**, a six-week celebration of the Delaware River waterways, supported by the William Penn Foundation, throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. More than 15 million people rely on Delaware River waterways for clean drinking water. The region’s waterways also provide crucial habitat for plant and animal life. To highlight these vital roles and inspire more people to become active caretakers of the waterways, a group of 23 environmental education centers, including the Petty’s Island Preserve, is hosting more than 30 interactive events to provide residents of all ages with opportunities to run, bike, paddle and enjoy being on or near their local waterways.

“**River Days** offers something for nearly every age and interest this fall and includes events from the Poconos south through Reading, Greater Philadelphia, South Jersey and Delaware,” said Michael Catania, Chair of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. “**River Days** is also meant to educate visitors about the work of environmental education centers. Thankfully our waterways are in better shape now than they had been for many years. Environmental education centers have certainly played a part in those restoration efforts, and they play a huge role in educating people on what we have to do as communities to continue to protect water quality,” he said.

For more information on how to register for the of the Petty’s Island Preserve programs go to <http://www.njaudubon.org/SectionPettyIslandPreserve/CalendarofEvents.aspx>. For a full listing of River Days events, visit <https://www.facebook.com/River-Days>.

Pledge to Care

As part of **River Days**, visitors and guests will be asked to show their support for the region’s waterways by pledging to some simple to take at home, in the community or near the water that all add up to real progress for the region’s water health. The **River Days** “We Share Our Waterways, We Pledge to Care for Our Waterways” campaign encourages visitors to sign the pledge and take home easy-to-implement water protection tips such as:

- Plant a tree
- Collect rainwater with rain barrels
- Use less water for household activities
- Limit or eliminate lawn fertilizers & pesticides
- Clean up after dogs
- Reuse, recycle, repurpose plastic items
- Volunteer at local river or trail clean-ups
- Spend 20 minutes, 3 times a week in natural areas
- Help plant a rain garden

River Days is about bringing people of all ages and backgrounds to the water and to the natural areas that surround our waterways. It's about friends and families having fun together – whether they're canoeing for the first time, cycling on one of the many Circuit Trails that run alongside the waterways, or photographing nature's wonders" said Michael Catania, Chair of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. "What we know is that when people enjoy themselves in and around our waterways, they become more open to doing things that can protect our water," he added.

About *River Days*

River Days is a six-week series of events celebrating the Delaware River Watershed, the source of clean drinking water for 15 million people in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Seeking to inspire area residents to act as environmental stewards for their local waterways, ***River Days***, through more than 30 distinct events, will provide recreational opportunities and hands-on learning activities designed to teach visitors about the simple steps they can take to protect and improve water quality at home, in the community and near the water. ***River Days***, funded in part by the William Penn Foundation, is hosted by a group of 23 environmental education centers that are located on the Circuit Trails system and near the Delaware River or its tributaries. For a complete list of events, visit <https://www.facebook.com/River-Days>.

The Delaware River Watershed spans 13,500 square miles and four states and provides crucial habitat to hundreds of plant and wildlife species. From its source in the Catskill Mountains, the Delaware waterways flow downstream past rural, suburban and urban areas representing the mid-Atlantic region, including Trenton, Philadelphia and Wilmington.

For more information about the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, visit www.njnlt.org.

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