

LEARN ABOUT GARDENING, NATURE, BIRDS, BUGS, FROGS AND MORE AT THE ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Essex County Executive DiVincenzo Invites Children and Families to Expand their Understanding and Appreciation of the Environment

Essex County, NJ – A variety of programs are being offered at the Essex County Environmental Center during the month of December that will teach children and adults about nature and help them gain a greater appreciation and understanding of our environment. Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. invites children and adults to visit the Environmental Center where they can enjoy an enriching recreational experience through nature and conservation activities.

“Our Environmental Center has become the premiere location for environmental education and nature appreciation. With the help of our partner groups, our dynamic schedule of events and activities will captivate all ages,” DiVincenzo said. “Walk in our woods, discover habitats, get pointers on gardening, learn about nature photography and much more. It’s all about nature and it’s all at our Environmental Center,” he added.

Events scheduled for December are as follows:

The ***“14th Annual Sustainable Homes & Habitats Gingerbread Contest & Exhibit”*** is an opportunity to create a unique gingerbread house with natural accents and green building design features. Sustainable Gingerbread Homes will be on display from Wednesday, December 5 through Saturday, December 15. Prizes will be awarded in various categories. Call the Environmental Center at 973-228-8776 to register or for more information. **All entries must be registered by Saturday, December 1 and submitted by Monday, December 3rd.**

“Little Explorers Winter Nature Program” is for children ages 2 to 5. This child-caregiver class uses stories, walks and crafts to develop an awareness and appreciation for science and nature for the child as well as the caregiver. Each week, a different nature or science topic is covered. **Cost is \$12 per child/session.** Advance registration and payment are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Little Explorers Winter Nature Program* will be held as follows:

Age: 2 year olds
Dates and Time: Tuesdays, December 4 & 11 at 10 a.m.

Age: 3 year olds
Dates and Time: Thursdays, December 6 & 20 at 1 p.m.

Ages: 4 and 5 year olds
Dates and Time: Tuesdays, December 4 & 11 at 3:30 p.m.
Thursdays, December 6 & 20 at 9:30 a.m.

Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Chair Yoga” is for adults. If you are new to yoga or feel that most yoga classes might be too strenuous, chair yoga can provide a more easy-going supported style. Come experience how gentle yogic breath decreases stress and increases comfort and fluidity of movement, not only through yoga practice, but potentially throughout life, as well. All poses are enjoyed at each participant’s own pace, seated or standing

next to a chair and using it for support whenever needed. The class will end in a peaceful restorative pose and optional gentle shoulder massage. All levels are welcome. Dress comfortably and bring a mat. **Cost is \$15 class and \$10 per class for those 65 years and older.** No refunds for missed classes. Advance registration, monthly prepayment and a minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Chair Yoga* will be held as follows:

Dates: Tuesdays, December 4, 11 & 18, 2018
Time: 3 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Essential Oils” is for adults. In this one-hour class, wellness advocate Stacy McCormack teaches what essential oils are and how they can benefit your life. Each week a new topic will be explored and different oils will be sampled. Learn how essential oils can be powerful allies on your journey to health and happiness and an important ingredient in the recipe of a healthy lifestyle. Participant interest guides this class. **Cost is \$15 per class.** Advance registration and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Essential Oils* will be held as follows:

Dates: Tuesdays, December 4, 11 & 18, 2018
Time: 7 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Troy Meadows Birding Field Trip” is presented by New Jersey Audubon. Search the edges of the swamp for wintering birds. Be prepared for muddy or icy conditions. Hikers will meet at the Essex County Environmental Center and carpool to the trail head. **Cost is \$6 for NJA members and \$8 for non-members.** To register, call 908-396-6386. *Troy Meadows Birding Field Trip* will be held as follows:

Date: Thursday, December 6, 2018
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Meeting Site: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Thursday Evening Yoga” is for adults. In this “all levels” yoga series, each student is invited to explore and play through the breath and asanas/poses, flowing at their own pace with self-compassion and joy; followed by an optional gentle shoulder massage and restorative pose or Savasana of transformation and peace. All levels are welcome. Dress comfortably and bring a mat. **Cost is \$15 per class and \$10 for those 65 years and older.** No refunds for missed classes. Advance registration, monthly payment and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Thursday Evening Yoga* will be held as follows:

Dates: Thursdays, December 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2018
Time: 6:15 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Reclaim Your Time” is a four-part series for adults. In this time-management course, wellness advocate Stacy McCormack teaches how to become more focused and fully present in your life. Ditch a lifestyle of

being crammed, overwhelmed, and scattered every day. Arrive at your engagements gracefully prepared and polished. This class addresses daily routines, calendars, and personal and professional schedules. Learn how to be prepared for events, manage stress and get a good night's sleep – the turnkeys to opening the door for long-term productivity. This course has a baseline in wellness; at the core of productivity is well-being. Workbook and supplemental materials provided for at home practice and integration. **Cost is \$75 per person.** Advance registration and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Reclaim Your Time* will be held as follows:

Dates: Thursdays, December 6, 13, 20 & 27, 2018
Time: 7 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Essex County South Mountain Reservation Birding Field Trip” is presented by New Jersey Audubon. Visit several key locations within Essex County's largest park. Discover how easy it is to find wildlife in winter when there is plenty of food, water and shelter. Meet at Essex County Turtle Back Zoo and carpool to various locations within the park. **Cost is \$6 for NJA members and \$8 for non-members.** To register, call 908-396-6386. *Essex County South Mountain Reservation Birding Field Trip* will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, December 8, 2018
Time: 8 a.m.
Meeting Site: Essex County Turtle Back Zoo
560 Northfield Avenue
West Orange, NJ

“Winter Wonderland Club” is for children ages 4-8. Children can enjoy the winter landscape and outdoor activity on Saturday mornings. This is an exploratory club with open focused exploration that highlights areas of participant interest. Warm mint tea and a book reading after outdoor activities may be occasionally held indoors. Dress warmly and in layers. Good boots are a must. If extreme weather prohibits going outdoors, the class will be cancelled. **Cost is \$10 per child per session.** Limited space available. Advance registration, pre-payment and a minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Winter Wonderland Club* will be held as follows:

Dates: Saturdays, December 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2018
Time: 9 a.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Cookies with Santa” is for families. Bring your pets and come join Essex County 4-H for a family picture with Santa. Hot cocoa and cookies galore. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **Cost is \$10 per family.** For information, contact Chrystine Gaffney at cg709@njaes.rutgers.edu. To register, visit tinyurl.com/4hcookieswsanta. *Cookies with Santa* will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, December 8, 2018
Time: 1:30 to 3 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
Garibaldi Hall
621A Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Bug Club” is for children ages 6 to 10. The Bug Club is devoted to children who want to explore the wonders of insects through field walks, games, stories and crafts. **Cost is \$10 per child per session.** Advance registration, payment and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Bug Club* meets as follows:

Date: Tuesday, December 11, 2018
Time: 4 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Essex County Hatfield Swamp Birding Field Trip” is presented by New Jersey Audubon. Take a journey into the frozen swamp to search for winter visitors and lingering fall migrants that call the heart of western Essex County home. Meet at Stop & Shop in West Caldwell. **Cost is \$6 for NJA members and \$8 for non-members.** To register, call 908-396-6386. *Essex County Hatfield Swamp Birding Field Trip* will be held as follows:

Date: Thursday, December 13, 2018
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Meeting Site: Stop & Shop
875 Bloomfield Avenue
West Caldwell, NJ

“Holiday Giftmaking with Health Benefits” is for adults. Jenn Forino, founder of plusoils.com, will show participants how to make holiday gifts of infused bath salts and floral sprays with therapeutic grade essential oils. This workshop will start with a mini-lesson about how to use therapeutic essential oils for overall health and well-being. **Cost is \$25 per adult.** For more information, call 973-228-8776. Pre-registration and minimum number of participants are required. *Holiday Giftmaking with Health Benefits* will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, December 15, 2018
Time: 11 a.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Horticulture for Seniors” is for senior citizens. Join the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Essex County for this horticulture class especially designed for senior citizens. The topic for December is *Greens for the Holiday Season*. Meet in Garibaldi Hall. **This is a free program.** Advance registration is required one week prior to program. For registration or more information, call Helen at 973-731-0717 or the Master Gardner Helpline at 973-228-2210. *Horticulture for Seniors* will be held as follows:

Date: Monday, December 17, 2018
Time: 1 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
Garibaldi Hall
621A Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Bird Club” is for children ages 5 through 10. Come explore the wooded wetland and see what birds live here. Use binoculars, field guides, and a keen sense of observation to discover and identify all sorts of birds.

Cost is \$10 per child per session. Advance registration, payment and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Bird Club* will be held as follows:

Date: Thursday, December 20, 2018
Time: 4 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Green Gifts, Holiday Papermaking and Gift Tag Creation” is for all ages. Learn how to make recycled paper and gift tags from colored construction paper scraps, scented herbs and old holiday cards. The whole family can join in on making these colorful additions to their holiday gifts. Also, make a gift from nature of your choice – beeswax candle, multi-purpose body scrub, herb sachet, picture frame or recycled bird feeder. Participants may make more than one “green gift,” but additional fees apply. By reducing waste and recycling materials, the availability of resources can be extended and environmental stewardship can be promoted. **Cost is \$15 per adult, \$12 per child and \$5 per additional gift.** For more information, call 973-228-8776. Pre-registration and a minimum number of participants are required. *Green Gifts* will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, December 22, 2018
Time: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Winter Wildlife Explorers Camp” is for children in kindergarten to 3rd grade. Campers enjoy stories, crafts, campfires and forest adventures exploring the wooded wetland forests in winter time. **Cost is \$180 per child for all three days or \$70 per child per day.** Pre-registration, payment and minimum number of participants required. For more information, call 973-228-8776. *Winter Wildlife Explorers Camp* will be held as follows:

Dates: Wednesday, Dec. 26; Thursday, Dec. 27; Friday, Dec. 28
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

“Family Yoga” is for ages 5 and up. At this Family Yoga Class, participants will share and enjoy an adventure of calming breath, fun asanas/poses, and gentle stretches with their nearest and dearest in a friendly, go-with-the-flow atmosphere. **Cost is \$10 per child and \$12 per adult.** Advance registration and minimum number of participants are required. For information, call 973-228-8776. *Family Yoga* will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, December 29, 2018
Time: 11 a.m.
Place: Essex County Environmental Center
621B Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ

Registration is required for all programs at the Essex County Environmental Center, unless otherwise noted. For more information or to register, please call 973-228-8776.

The Essex County Park System was created in 1895 and is the first county park system established in the United States. The Park System consists of more than 6,000 acres and has 23 parks, five reservations, an environmental center, a zoo, Treetop Adventure Course, ice skating rink, roller skating rink, three public golf courses, golf driving range, two miniature golf courses, four off-leash dog facilities, a castle and the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens.

###