

FIVE RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Winter 2018 Program Schedule

Come explore outdoors this winter! The grounds are open every day from sunrise to sunset. In general, the education center is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM, except state holidays.

Programs listed below are free of charge unless otherwise noted. Dress for the weather! In the event of inclement weather, outdoor programs may be canceled. Please call to confirm. Organized youth/civic groups are asked to call ahead to ensure we can accommodate your group at these programs. If we cannot accommodate your group, we are happy to make alternate arrangements. Please check our online calendar at www.dec.ny.gov/education/1980.html. For further information, call us at 518-475-0291.

We welcome those who have any type of physical challenge to all of our programs. If you call ahead to let us know your needs, we will be happy to learn how we can accommodate you.

Five Rivers Listserve: Register at www.dec.ny.gov for e-mail notifications about upcoming programs at Five Rivers. Look for the blue "DEC Delivers" box and follow the instructions.

Dogs and other pets are not permitted at Five Rivers. If you are looking for a natural area to walk with your pet, we are happy to recommend other nearby locations. Call us at 518-475-0291.



Friends of Five Rivers: The Friends of Five Rivers (FOFR) is the year-round citizens' support group for Five Rivers Environmental Education Center. Members receive a 20% discount on purchases at the FOFR bookstore, complimentary snowshoe loans, reduced fees for selected programs, and a subscription to the newsletter *River Ramblings*. Membership levels and volunteer information are available at www.FriendsofFiveRivers.org or call 518-475-0295.

WINTER FUN: SNOWSHOE RENTALS

Snowshoes are available for rent from the Friends of Five Rivers (FOFR) for \$5 per pair; free for FOFR members (must show a current member card or be on the current members list). Rental fees apply during guided programs, except for "learn to..." programs. Snowshoes may only be used on site and must be returned by 4:00 PM on the day of rental. No snowshoes will be rented after 3:00 PM. Renters must be at least 16 years old and leave their driver's license or non-driver photo ID at the reception desk. To minimize damage to the equipment, there must be at least six inches of snow on the ground.

CITIZEN SCIENCE: WINTER RAPTOR SURVEY

Every Other Tuesday Through March

People with bird watching skills or a desire to learn are needed to help discover winter feeding areas of endangered raptor species. Volunteers will meet at Five Rivers Center every other week and spend an hour, centered around sunset, to scan for and record raptor species on Five Rivers' grasslands. Participants do not have to attend every session but will need their own binoculars. Study dates are subject to change due to weather conditions. Preregistration is required. Please help us save threatened and endangered species. Call Five Rivers at 518-475-0291 or email 5Rivers@dec.ny.gov to register.

Monday, January 1, 2018, 9:00 AM

Citizen Science and First Day Hike: NEW YEAR'S BIRD COUNT

Join local bird experts for our 37th annual New Year's Day survey. Seventy-one different species have been found at Five Rivers on Albany's "First Morning," and the birds found over the decades of this long-term study show interesting range changes for many species. Binoculars are helpful but not necessary. Dress warmly. If severe weather is forecast, call the Center at 518-475-0291 on Saturday, December 30 to confirm if the event will be held.

Saturday, January 6, 2018, 11:45 AM

AMC Hudson Mohawk Chapter: SOCIAL, MEETING AND OUTING

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) will be hosting their winter event at Five Rivers. Please arrive with a dish to share a little before 11:45 AM, to allow for setup. After lunch, we will discuss topics related to encouraging member diversity and young members. An AMC hike leader will lead a hike on snowshoes or not depending on snow cover. At least 6 inches of snow is required. The hike will start around 1:30 PM. Please dress for the weather and wear appropriate footwear, including winter-traction cleats, if needed. Snowshoe rentals are \$5 per pair; free for Friends members. The public is welcome to attend any part of this event.

Saturday, January 13, 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM

Mini-lesson: AN INTRODUCTION to SNOWSHOEING

Drop in for a 30-minute mini-lesson as we go over the basics of how to put snowshoes on (and take them off), walk and turn. We'll practice outdoors, on the Visitor Center lawn, so dress for the weather. Afterwards, you'll be ready to try out your new skills on Five Rivers' trails.

Saturday, January 20, 9:30 AM

I Bird NY: KIDS WINTER BIRD COUNT

Birds are one of the most visible winter wildlife here at Five Rivers. Come join us to learn who's here at the feeders and in the fields and woods. A few binoculars are available for loan, but are not required.

Saturday, January 27, 2:00 PM

How to Do It: WINTER TREE IDENTIFICATION

To identify a tree, we often look to their leaves for clues to their identification. But what about when there are no leaves? If you look closely, you can find all the information you need to confidently name the tree. We will use the *Winter Tree Finder* as our guide. Bring one, borrow one, or buy one at the Visitor Center.

Tuesday, January 30, 7:30 to 9:30 PM

Outdoor Fun: MOONLIT SNOWSHOE

We'll explore Five Rivers' trails at a relaxed pace, enjoying the moonlit snowy scene. Arrive by 7:15 if you need to borrow snowshoes or to quickly review snowshoeing techniques. Snowshoe rental is \$5 per pair; free for Friends members. Space is limited. Call 518-475-0291 by Saturday, January 27 to register. This program will be canceled if snow depth is insufficient. Call to confirm conditions.

Saturday, February 3, 10:00 AM

GROUNDHOG DAY: THE HISTORY, THE CELEBRATION, THE RODENT

The history of Groundhog Day goes back thousands of years and was created from many cultures. Join us for this indoor presentation and outdoor walk to learn about this fascinating history, as well as how this unofficial holiday is celebrated throughout North America today. We will also delve into the natural history of this unassuming rodent.

Saturday, February 3, 2:00 PM

Family Fun: GROUNDHOG DAY FOR KIDS

Join us indoors to learn more about the legendary groundhog through interactive games, activities and crafts. Then, if weather permits, we will venture outside for an easy stroll to look for signs of this amazing rodent and its relatives. This program is most suitable for children ages 6-10. Please call the Center at 518-475-0291 by February 1 to register.

Saturday, February 10, 9:30 AM

Family Fun: FUR, FLUFF AND FUN!

How do animals keep warm in the cold winter? Where is the bear? How about the hare? And the Blue Jay, does she go away? Beaver, coyote, rabbit or deer, what is the warmest pelt you've ever felt? Come check out some of the furs we have at Five Rivers and see who's at the bird feeders too!

Saturday, February 10, 1:00 PM

GOT A QUESTION?

Did you find, see or hear something cool outside and want to know more about it? Ask a Naturalist! A Five Rivers educator will be on hand in the Visitor Center's Exhibit Hall to answer, or help find answers to questions you may have.

Saturday, February 17, 10:00 AM

Citizen Science: THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

This project is sponsored by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society for four days in February. If you would like to help scientists track the mid-winter distribution and abundance of birds, or just sip coffee and learn about common backyard birds, please join us. Bring binoculars if you have them, or we have a few to loan.

Saturday, February 24, 9:00 AM

BIRDING-BY-SNOWSHOE

Join Five Rivers, the Audubon Society of the Capital Region and the Hudson Mohawk Bird Club for a special birding-by-snowshoe outing. Meet at the Visitor Center at 9:00 AM for a brief introduction to snowshoeing. Then, strap on the waffle stompers and go over the meadow and through the woods in search of winter species. The program is geared for birding/snowshoeing novices. Space is limited. Snowshoe rentals are provided by Friends of Five Rivers at \$5 per pair; free to Friends members. Please call the Center at 518-475-0291 by Wednesday, February 21 to register. At least 6 inches of snow cover is required. If there is insufficient snow, we will go on foot. If the weather is severe, this program may be canceled.

Saturday, February 24, 1:00 PM

Audubon Society of the Capital Region: ANNUAL MEETING AND OPEN HOUSE

This family-friendly, open to the public event will start with announcements and election of officers, followed by a presentation. Tom Lake, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation naturalist, educator and editor, will present "Changing Ecology of the Hudson River Flyway." His program will illustrate how the flyway has been critical to migratory birds for at least 12,000 years and how birds have adapted to the changing environment. During the presentation, there will be activities for younger folks. Light refreshments will be available and exhibits will show what your local Audubon chapter is doing and how you can participate.

Wednesday, February 28, 7:30 to 9:00 PM

Outdoor Fun: MOONLIT GUIDED WALK

Experience Five Rivers' trails by moonlight. Dress for the weather, and meet at the visitor center for this winter adventure. Space is limited. Call Five Rivers at 518-475-0291 by Monday, February 26 to register. This program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.

Saturday, March 3, 10:00 AM

Family Fun: DR. SEUSS READ-A-THON

It's time again for our annual celebration of all creatures strange and silly! Join us as we mark Read Across America Day with selections from favorite books by Dr. Seuss. Follow along as we read about Yertle the Turtle, The Lorax, Sneetches and more. Be inspired to draw your own animal in the style of Dr. Seuss, and watch for an appearance by The Cat in the Hat himself.

Saturdays, March 10, 17 & 24, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Family Fun: MAPLE SUGAR OPEN HOUSES

Join us for an introduction to maple sugaring, from tap and sap to syrup. You'll get to twirl a brace and bit drill, pound a spile, inspect the sap flow in our sugarbush, enjoy the aroma of sap boiling down in our evaporator and take the maple taste test. A local maple producer will be on site to answer questions and offer a variety of maple products for sale. Organized groups are welcome but are asked to call the Center at 518-475-0291 to register.

Saturday, March 31, 10:00 AM

AMPHIBIANS

Come discover the unique lives of amphibians, spent in the water and on land. The Northeast is rich in these unique creatures. Learn more about some of the interesting amphibians around the world and in your own backyard. We will begin indoors and then venture outside to discuss the different places these creatures inhabit if weather permits.

Saturday March 31, 2:00 PM

SIGNS OF SPRING

Plants and animals are preparing for the season of rebirth. It may seem as though it is too early to sense these signs but, they are all around us. Join us for this mile-long walk on relatively flat terrain to look and listen for these early indicators of life returning to the landscape.

FRIENDS OF FIVE RIVERS FAMILY FUN PROGRAMS

Outdoor Programs for Preschoolers and Their Caregivers

The Friends of Five Rivers is offering programs at the Center for pre-schoolers. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Adult and child will explore the natural world together for one 90-minute period each week during the five-week session. Each visit features a story book on a nature topic, followed by an outdoor activity suggested by the book. Go to www.friendsoffiverivers.org/node/174 for complete information, including fees and how to register.

SAVE THE DATE: OUTDOORS AFTER SCHOOL AT FIVE RIVERS

Thursdays, April 12 through June 14, from 4:30 to 5:30 PM

***Family Fun:* OUTDOORS AFTER SCHOOL**

Join us after school to get some fresh air, stretch your legs, and have fun outdoors. We'll meet briefly indoors, then head outside for an adventure. Each week will have a different theme and will include time to explore. Come for as many sessions as you'd like, and dress for outdoor activity. For children in grades K-5 and their caregivers.