



5 RIVERS

# TRIBUTARY

Summer 2008

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Five Rivers Environmental Education Center  
518-475-0291

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[www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) (search for Five Rivers)

5rivers@gw.dec.state.ny.us

## What Makes a Building Green?

It's not just the color! Green building, or sustainable architecture, refers to constructing or designing facilities to minimize their environmental impacts. Buildings use a lot of resources like water, oil, trees and natural gas, and are responsible for almost 40% of total carbon dioxide emissions – the main contributor to climate change in the U.S. Development is also the main cause of species loss and reduced biodiversity.

There are many ways to lower the effects of a building on the environment.

**Water Efficiency** – developing a system that uses water more effectively and efficiently. Flush-free urinals and reusing 'gray' water are examples.

**Sustainable Site** – building the facility in a spot where it can use the landscape most effectively (such as using natural tree shade) and will cause the least disturbance to the natural environment (don't build in a wetland).

**Energy Efficiency and Atmosphere** – reducing the amount of energy needed to run the facility or using sources of energy that cause little to no pollution (like solar, wind or geothermal power).

**Materials and Resources** – sustainable wood products, recycled materials or non-toxic products have minimal environmental impacts in their production and use.

**Indoor Environmental Quality** – properly ventilated, non-toxic indoor environments promote a healthy indoor environment. Employees have been found to be more productive in buildings with improved indoor air quality.

The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) has developed a rating system that judges the greenness of a building. The new visitors' center at Five Rivers is proposed to be designed and built as a "LEED" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building. Such a building would use less energy and water, receive some energy from renewable sources (possibly geothermal), be constructed using local and sustainable resources--and save money in the long run!

For more information on green buildings, visit: [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

–Jeff Smith, SCA

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
David A. Paterson, Governor      Pete Grannis, Commissioner

# Five Rivers Environmental Education Center

## Summer Program Schedule 2008

Programs are free of charge unless otherwise noted. Participants should dress for the weather! We regret that we cannot accommodate organized youth groups at these programs. In the event of severe weather, programs may be cancelled. **We welcome people with disabilities to all of our programs; call ahead to let us know your needs.** For further information, contact Five Rivers at 518-475-0291 or 5rivers@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

Tuesday, July 1                      NATURE JOURNALING                      7:00 PM

What better way to start the summer than to hone your journaling skills? Keeping a journal can enhance your observations and make your nature memories come alive at the turn of a page. Bring your own journal or purchase one of ours for \$4.

Saturday, July 5                      *Family Fun:* 11th ANNUAL BUTTERFLY COUNT                      2:00 PM

What's red, white and blue and flutters in the wind? Whatever it is, they're flying all over the grounds. Join us for a close-up look at common butterflies of the Capital District as we continue our annual catch-and-release census. Nets or binoculars are welcome. Pre-register by June 27.

Tuesday July 8                      BUG EATERS                      7:00 PM

Come on an evening walk to learn about the amazing creatures that help keep our insects under control. We will listen and look for signs of birds, frogs, bats and their prey.

Friday, July 11                      FROGWATCH                      7:00 PM

Come listen for the deep-throated calls of the granddaddy of all the frogs. We'll listen for green frogs and other wetland wildlife, as we monitor amphibian populations as part of the National Wildlife Federation's *Frogwatch* program.

Saturday, July 12                      FRUITS OF SUMMER                      10:00 AM

What do juniper, poison ivy and partridgeberry have in common? They are three kinds of plants that produce berries that are great wildlife food. On this walk we will seek out fruit-producing plants and talk about the animals that enjoy them.

Tuesday, July 15                      BATS IN FLIGHT                      7:00 PM

Join us for a talk on bats, followed by a walk to watch bats emerge from the "bat barn" and begin their evening mosquito hunts.

Thursday, July 17                      *Family Fun:* STREAM WALK                      2:00 PM

Come get wet and explore! We'll search for small stream wildlife, catch them, learn about them and release them back into their home. Wear footgear that can get wet.

Saturday July 19                      BEGINNING BIRDING                      10:00 AM

With a pair of binoculars and a bird book, anyone can get started on this interesting and fun hobby. Learn the basics of bird watching using your own binoculars, or borrow a pair of ours.

Tuesday, July 22                      *Creature Feature:* BEAVER                      7:00 PM

In summer, there's no such thing as an eager beaver. There are no seasonal floods to require dam repair, the kits are being weaned, and there's plenty of succulent new growth to enjoy. Join us on an outdoor foray to monitor summer activity of beaver and other pond inhabitants.

Saturday, July 26                      POISON IVY: A GOOD THING?                      2:00 PM

Could there possibly be anything good about poison ivy? It's a native plant with berries that are fantastic food for songbirds. We'll learn how to identify it, avoid it, eradicate it from your yard, and how to prevent the dreaded rash.

Tuesday, July 29                      MEADOW FLOWERS                      7:00 PM

Summer is the time for colorful flowers! On this walk, we'll identify some common wildflowers and discuss their natural history, as well as myths and folklore.

Saturday, August 2                      *Nature Craft*: MAKE A SPY SCOPE                      10:00 AM

Make your own working monocular (like binoculars for one eye). Then we will look for our feathered, furred and scaly residents up close. Friends of Five Rivers members \$2, non-members \$3.

Tuesday, August 5                      STREAM STROLL                      7:00 PM

Join us for an evening walk along the Vlomankill trail to enjoy the beauty of the forest evening and look for stream life. Bring old shoes that can get wet.

Fri-Sat, August 8-9                      FAMILY CAMP OUT                      6:00 PM until 10:00 AM

Our annual camp out here at the Center is a gentle and safe way to introduce your family to tent camping. You provide Friday supper, we provide Saturday breakfast and lots of experiences, including a nature walk and a campfire. We have a few tents and sleeping bags to loan. Pre-register by August 1. Friends of Five Rivers members \$10 per family, non-members \$15 per family.

Saturday, August 9                      FREE FISHING DAY                      10:00 AM

This will be strictly catch-and-release fishing for beginners. Bring your own tackle if you like, but we will provide the barbless hooks. We have a limited number of poles and can make "soda can" poles if necessary. All ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by a parent.

Tuesday, August 12                      WILD TURKEY TRAIL WALK                      7:00 PM

Join us as we explore one of our wildest trails, the two-mile long Wild Turkey Trail. We'll look for evening wildlife and enjoy the forested areas in Five Rivers' remote corners.

Thursday, August 14                      *Family Fun*: POND EXPLORATION                      2:00 PM

We'll investigate ponds and wetlands and use nets to see what dwells within. We'll also look for frogs, turtles and other pond inhabitants.

Saturday, August 16                      *Watchable Wildlife*: WATERFOWL                      10:00 AM

In addition to raising upland game birds, the old Delmar Experimental Game Farm dabbled in waterfowl propagation. The mallard was unheard of in the eastern flyway until Delmar's program got underway. Join us on a survey of our ponds as we take a gander at common ducks and geese.

Tuesday, August 19                      GOLDFINCHES                      7:00 PM

We'll search for these colorful birds as they sing and soar overhead in their courtship flights and look for other types of wildlife as well. Bring binoculars; we have a few to lend.

Saturday, August 23                      BLUEBIRD TRAIL                      10:00 AM

Bluebird boxes have helped to save the eastern bluebird. We will discuss bluebirds and other cavity nesters that inhabit bluebird boxes and take a walk on our bluebird trail to learn where you should and shouldn't put up a bluebird box.

Tuesday, August 26                      *Family Program*: INSECTS                      7:00PM

Field insects are in full chorus, big enough to be easily seen and caught. We will capture insects with nets, observe and identify, and finally release them all. Join us!

Saturday, August 30                      *Family Fun: BIRDING WITH CRAYONS*                      10:00 AM

Join us on an outdoor foray in celebration of the late Roger Tory Peterson's 100th birthday, as we draw and/or color birds as the young Peterson did. Materials provided. Pre-register by August 26.

**New Online Family Newsletter: DEC Outdoor Discovery**

Visit [www.dec.ny.gov/public/43355.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/43355.html) to read DEC's new biweekly online outdoor newsletter for families. Each issue introduces readers to a seasonal environmental or nature topic, suggests a related activity, and lists family-friendly events at DEC's environmental education centers. Subscribe for free and have the newsletter e-mailed directly to you! Also, check out DEC's website to read the TRIB on-line!

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