



The Rogers Center Journal

Rogers Environmental Education Center



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Public Affairs and Education
in conjunction with the not-for-profit
Friends of Rogers Environmental Education Center, Inc.

See *Schedule of Events Inside!*

Summer 2007

www.dec.ny.gov (Search for Rogers)

June - July - August

Rogers Environmental Education Center

2721 State Highway 80
Sherburne, NY 13460-4507
607-674-4017-press 1 for Education
FAX: 607-674-2655
E-mail: rogers@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Staff:

Marsha Guzewich, Director - Ext 624
Fred von Mechow, Program Coord. - Ext 625
Laura Carey, Project WILD Coord. - Ext 626
Chris DeCesare, Educator - Ext 627
Amy Smith, Water Ed. Specialist - Ext 628
Darlene Miller, Office Manager - Ext 623

Visitor Center and Book Store Hours:

Monday-Friday
8:30 AM to 4:45 PM
Saturday 1:00 to 4:45 PM
Sunday (*June-August only*)
1:00 - 4:45 PM
Closed State Holidays

Grounds Open Daily Sunrise to Sunset

Friends of Rogers Board of Directors:

Randy Muth, President
Laurie Trotta, Vice President
Rose Cole, Treasurer
Carol Smith, Secretary
John Novak
Frank Lee
Thurston Packer
Marsha Guzewich
Byron Harrington

Friends of Rogers Store

Friends of Rogers operates a bookstore in the Visitor Center. Come in and look through the many field guides and natural history books

for all ages – all at 20 percent off retail prices!

We can also special order that hard-to-find nature title!

The Rogers Center Journal is published quarterly and produced by Darlene Miller. If you wish to subscribe, please contact Rogers Center - Ext 623.

Notes from the Director

by Marsha Guzewich

How can it be summer already? Spring is such a short-lived phenomenon in central New York, that summer comes upon us like this most every year. Our schedule of presenting programs and projects happens just as quickly. Find our complete schedule of program offerings in this newsletter. Register now for those that require you to sign up so that you don't miss your opportunity.

We are looking forward to several projects over the summer, including Visitor Center renovations including new flooring, fresh paint and general facelift. We have our usual busy schedule of programs, some on-site, some off-site, offering something for everyone with the adventure level rated at novice or beginner. We have observed that people are willing to try new things by joining a guided group. We see grandparents taking grandchildren on adventures which they did not do with their own children. We see senior citizens wanting the opportunity to get out with others and discover new places to explore.

Recently, a concern has been raised about kids spending less time outside and more time in front of a screen. This may contribute to several trends including an increase in the number of overweight children, higher blood pressure and an increase in the number of diagnoses for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Research is being conducted on the effects of "green time" – being outside, on children. So far it is looking like spending time outside is very positive on many levels. Our hope at Rogers is that we can encourage people of all ages to get outside and reap the benefits of nature. Our programs are designed to leave participants with the desire to get outside and experience more. In this rural area, there are many places where one can experience nature, but Rogers Center can help people feel safe and get started on getting outside. Once you make getting out a part of your day, you will find it something you won't want to miss.

On another note, we wish Alan Mapes best wishes for his retirement. As chief of the Bureau of Environmental Education, he has been our leader for the past 12 years and has decided it is time to do something different. We will miss his gentle style and strong support.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Eliot Spitzer, Governor
Pete Grannis, Commissioner

"Kids in Nature Daily"

The quarterly newsletter with fun and stimulating activities that teach about nature.



Be K.I.N.D. to your world!

Summer 2007

Issue #37

by naturalist interns

Andrea Porter and Anne Schlesinger

Activity: Night Hike

With a parent, enjoy creatures of the night! The ideal time to go is on a clear night with a full moon so you don't even need a flashlight. Do bring a small one to use when you are looking for objects. Suggested dates: June 1, 29 and 30, July 1, 28, 29 and 30.

While on the night hike, try our nighttime scavenger hunt. This scavenger hunt is different from others: it is about discovering objects with your eyes rather than collecting them with your hands. You can write a list of what you've seen when you return home or while on the trail. Remember to dress for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, and always go with an adult.

- 1-Flying or gliding mammal. Ex: brown bat or flying squirrel
- 2-Constellations. Ex: Big Dipper, Cassiopeia
- 1-Sign of an animal. Ex: scat, bite marks on a stick
- 2-Fireflies
- 1-Night bird call. Ex: great horned owl or barred owl
- 1 Frog call
- 1 Insect call
- 1-Rock in the shape of New York State

CRAFT CORNER

Sand Candles:

Light up your summer nights with these beautiful candles

What you Need:

- Sand from a beach, your yard, or from most garden centers
- Broken candles and candle stubs
- Old crayons
- Bowls, cups, shoes, or any shapes you want to try for molds
- A dishpan, or a large bowl, or a cardboard box lined with a plastic bag
- A spray bottle of water
- An old pan you don't need (or get one from a secondhand store or garage sale)
- An old fork
- A pencil
- A sharp knife
- Newspaper

What to do:

1) Pour the sand into the dishpan and spray it with water. Then make hollows in the sand with your molds, or dig a hole any shape you want to. Leave at least an inch of sand between each mold. Set aside one candle stub for each sand candle—these will provide your wicks.

2)With an adult, melt your broken candles and candle stubs in an old pan over medium heat. As the candles melt, carefully lift out the wicks with a fork and lay them on newspaper. If you don't have enough extra stubs for wicks, you can reuse these wicks. Add a crayon stub to dye your candle the color you want.

3) Pour the hot wax into your sand holes.

4) When the wax starts to get hard (in about 5 minutes), put a candle stub in the center for the wick. If it's too tall, cut it to the right size with a knife. For wide candles, use more than one wick. If you don't have a candle stub, tie one of your used wicks on a pencil and lay the pencil across the top of your hole, so the wick sinks into the center of the candle.

5) Don't try to take your candle out of the sand too soon! When your candle is completely cool and hard, gently lift it out of the sand and brush the extra sand off.

Which Friend Am I?

In the summertime, I love to live in buildings with thousands of my friends somewhere near a lake, pond or river. At sunset, we all head out to feast on insects. I can eat over 500 insects per night, but I don't actually see insects very well. Instead, I use something called echo-location: I send out sound waves, and the sound waves bounce off of a nearby insect and back to me, letting me know where the insect is. Then, I swoop down and take my prey. If you build a house for me, I will come and eat some of those pesky biting insects that bother humans on summer nights.

Which Friend Am I? – Entry Form

To learn what the described animal is, visit your local library or the library and other resources at Rogers Center. Mail your answer to Rogers Center, 2721 SH 80, Sherburne, NY 13460, by July 15, 2007. One name will be drawn from all the correct responses received, and the winner will receive a Friends of Rogers t-shirt.



Which Friend Am I? _____

Your Name: _____

Address and Phone Number: _____

Silk Moths and Caterpillars

by Chris DeCesare

Whoever said that moths are all dull-colored and boring has not seen the giant silk moths. These moths are pretty exciting to find as both caterpillars and adults. As a group, the silk moths are stout-bodied and have wing spans of four to six inches, featuring rich colors and eye spots or crescent-shaped patterns. When you see one at your back porch light, you know it! The caterpillars grow to be quite large, too. Most are bright green and have various spines, hairs, and colorful knobs protruding from their bodies. Each is a little different, depending upon the species. Common silk moths in central New York include the luna, promethea, cecropia, and polyphemus.



luna moth

The luna moth is probably the most recognizable of the silk moths and definitely a treat to behold. Its emerald green wings are edged with brown and pink and the hindwings have two long tails. The first time I saw one, I was camping. It flew to the glass of my table lantern. It bumped into the glass repeatedly and I worried it would beat its beautiful wings into ragged strips. It was the most beautiful insect I've ever seen. The bright green luna caterpillar has pink spots, vertical yellow stripes between the segments and a horizontal yellow stripe across the body. It can be found munching on the leaves of walnut, hickory, oak, and birch trees.

The polyphemus moth can range in color from golden brown to reddish brown. Both the small eyespots on the forewings and the large blue eyespots on its hindwings have small "windows" through them. This moth is common at Rogers Center. Predators apparently find them quite palatable as I have often found wings discarded along the Channels Trail on morning walks in summer. The polyphemus caterpillar resembles the luna caterpillar, being bright green with pink spots, but its vertical yellow stripes run through the pink spots and it has no horizontal stripe. It prefers maple, oak, birch, and basswood leaves for food.

The other two moths, cecropia and promethea, have wings that are mostly reddish-brown with beige accents. Differences in eyespots and crescent patterns help to distinguish them from each other. I have not seen these moths at Rogers, but have had visitors bring in the caterpillars to be identified. The cecropia caterpillar is sea green with yellow knobs down its back, orange knobs toward the head, and blue knobs on its sides. It prefers to eat maple, cherry, and lilac leaves. The promethea caterpillar is chalky green with paired red knobs on the head and a single yellow knob toward the tail. Sides of the body have black spots rimmed in blue.

You can look for moths by night and caterpillars by day late-May through July. Individual moths live only a couple of weeks before dying, but more emerge as weeks pass. They often have a tendency to be drawn to lights and this can be a good place to look for them. Since the caterpillars feed on common tree leaves, it makes sense to check these plants around your yard for them. You just may get lucky! There isn't a field guide to moths currently in print, but *Golden's Guide to Butterflies and Moths* is still a good basic resource for caterpillar and adult identification. It is available in the Rogers Center store (for 20 % off retail) and most other bookstores. Check out these moths. You will be glad that you did.



Friends of Rogers Update

By Randy Muth

We have just helped bring Earth Fest to Rogers. Our major roles are to solicit sponsors so that the event is free to participants and provide some volunteers to help make the day run smoothly. Tree seedlings are given away each year thanks to Procter and Gamble; and Golden Artist Colors, Inc. sponsored Compost Theater. Promotion and other costs are picked up by Friends of Rogers.

This is the role of Friends of Rogers, to support programs and activities in a way that would be difficult for DEC to do. We are one link between Rogers Center and the community. We bring a community perspective to Rogers staff. If you are interested in becoming part of this group, contact Rogers Center. Meetings are held every other month on the second Tuesday.

Donations

Friends of Rogers appreciates the following individuals and organizations for their generous contributions in the form of much-needed items, services and money:

Sidney LEAH
 William and Alice Bowman
 David Bouton
 Golden Artist Colors, Inc.
 Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
 Westmoreland Elementary School

In Memory of Anne Willcox:

John Borst	Emily Sanford
Roger and Gloria Fowler	D. Larry Thorne
Margaret Reese	Ford Seymour
Carol Smith	Marjorie Wheeler
Marjorie Craine	Thirza Wales
Phil and Jane Clement	Susan Connelly
Sandy and Rudy Poglitch	Helen Angel
Bonnie and Thomas Tomchik	
Pete and Phyllis Pleger	



NYSOEA

New York State Outdoor Education Association

by Laura Carey

Since 1968, this association has been the leading professional group supporting outdoor education, environmental education and interpretive services in New York State. Its mission is to promote interdisciplinary lifelong learning in, for, and about the outdoors and to inspire an appreciation of the environment for all people.

Benefits of membership include an annual conference, regional events, publications, awards, scholarships and networking and consulting services.

This year's conference will be at Hunter Mountain Resort, November 1-4, 2007. It is the 40th Anniversary Conference with the theme – ***Preserving the Past, Forging the Future.***

Next year's conference will be at the Hilton Lake Placid, October 23-26, 2008 with the theme – ***Thinking Like a Mountain.***

For more information about the association or the 40th anniversary conference, go to: www.nysoea.org

Exciting Sightings

by Fred von Mechow

Seems odd to be talking about sightings that occurred over the winter in the summer issue of the newsletter, but since many of these missed the spring deadline, here they are.

We had white-throated sparrows at the feeders throughout February and March. We occasionally see one over the winter, but this was the first time they were numerous throughout.

There was a saw whet owl calling at my house on March 2. They sound like an old carpenter's hand saw being sharpened with a whetstone, hence the bird's name. I've heard about 10 saw whet owls in my life and have never seen one!

A snowy owl was spotted along Chenango County Route 16 at the Pigeon Hill State Forest on March 4.

Right outside our windows at the Visitor Center, a red-tailed hawk caught a rabbit and flew away with it on March 23. Several of our maintenance staff witnessed the exciting event.

Laura watched a sharp-shinned hawk catch a red-bellied woodpecker on March 24 at her feeders at home. Certainly an exciting sighting, but why couldn't the sharpie have gone after something a little more common?

The first goose nesting activity we witnessed occurred on March 26. The eggs were oiled to prevent hatching. We did have one successful nest, right in front of the Visitor Center! Despite her eggs being oiled, the hen managed to bring off a clutch of six goslings. Those are the only ones we've seen here as of this writing.

The goose population is being managed at Rogers to ensure that the carrying capacity is not exceeded. With the size of the population, they are ever present and leave lots of droppings behind.

A BIG "Thank You" to Facilitators!

A huge "Thank You" to Project WET and Project WILD teacher workshop facilitators who are committed to protecting our natural resources. They enable other educators to incorporate even more environmental education into their teaching and are an essential part of the program's success:

Nancy Coddington
 Mary Anna Russo
 Donna Dvorcek

Liz McCheyne
 Diane Chodan
 Maggie Vescio

*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 best serve you.
Call 607-674-4017 to register. In the event of severe weather, modified programs still will be held.
Please call the center for more information. All programs are free and meet at Visitor Center unless stated otherwise.*

JUNE

- June 2**
Saturday
7:00 PM
- CAMPFIRE WITH GEORGE STEELE**
Bring the whole family for a one-of-a-kind evening of entertainment hosted by storyteller and environmental educator George Steele. Be prepared to sing along - or not! Meet at the amphitheater. *Sponsored by the Chenango County Council of the Arts*
- June 9**
Saturday
9:00 AM to Noon
- FINGER LAKES TRAIL HIKE**
Join us on a morning hike along a segment of the Finger Lakes Trail. Enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds of summer in scenic Bowman Lake State Park. We will meet at the Rogers Center main parking lot to caravan to the trailhead. **Please call to register and for trip details.**
- June 16**
Saturday
8:30 AM to Noon
- CANOE/KAYAK BEAVER CREEK**
Cool off from the summer heat on relaxing Beaver Creek. You're sure to observe plenty of wildlife doing the same! Canoers and kayakers of all skill levels welcome. We can provide equipment or you may bring your own. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 fee per paddler. Meet in the Rogers Center main parking lot.**
- June 20**
Wednesday
7:00 PM
- SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL!**
Kick off summer by high-stepping out onto the Finger Lakes Trail for a hike! Don't know where the best places are? Mr. Finger Lakes Trail, Ed Sidote, will show us all with a video, maps, exhibits and information about various Finger Lakes Trail programs. *FLT maps are available at Rogers Center.*
- June 23**
Saturday
10:00 AM to Noon
- FAMILY FISHING DAY**
Learn the basics of fishing and fish identification at the Rogers Center ponds, even create your own lure! Catch-and-release only; we'll provide poles or bring your own. All ages welcome.
- June 27**
Wednesday
7:00 PM
- EDIBLE AND MEDICINAL PLANTS WITH JANE SWINGLE AND BARB COLLINS**
Have you ever wondered if you could eat a plant or use it to ease some pain? Join Barb Collins and Jane Swingle as they describe some local edible and medicinal plants.
- June 30**
Saturday
9:00 AM to Noon
- RETREAT: CONNECT WITH THE EARTH**
It's long been known that nature has a healing affect on the body and the spirit. Being outdoors is calming, invigorating and inspiring. Through a variety of sensory exercises, journaling, time for reflection and sharing we will reconnect with the natural world. Join us for a morning of restful immersion in nature. **Please call to register and for details.**

JULY

- July 7**
Saturday
8:30 PM
- FLICKERING FIREFLIES**
Ever wonder what makes fireflies glow? Join us to discover the answer, as well as learn other interesting aspects of firefly behavior.

- July 14**
Saturday
11:00 AM **DRAGONFLY DISCOVERY**
Experience the magic of dragonflies. Discover these unique creatures by catching and observing them in their natural habitat. We will release the dragonflies after we've studied them.
- July 21**
Saturday
7:30 PM **BATTY BOXES**
Would you enjoy making a home for our mosquito-eating friends? Come and make a bat box of your own. Then join us for an exciting night walk in search of these friendly creatures. **Bring a hammer, and \$8.00 for each box you wish to take home.**
- July 28**
Saturday
8:30 AM to Noon **CANOE OR KAYAK LELAND POND**
Join us for a leisurely paddle and exploration of the sights, sounds and other treasures of this beautiful marsh. Bring your own boat or use one of ours. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 fee per paddler. Meet in the Rogers Center main parking lot.**

AUGUST

- August 4**
Saturday
9:00 AM to Noon **STATE FOREST HIKE WITH A FORESTER**
Join us to visit Earlville State Forest and concentrate on some of the land use and cultural history. We'll look at an old homesite, an old cemetery, and explore the CCC-planted conifer forest. **Please call to register and for trip details.**
- August 11**
Saturday
11:00 AM **GOING BUGGY!**
Go buggy for insects! Come with a Rogers staff member to discover what cool insects you can find in the grassy fields around the Center. Collection jars and nets will be provided.
- August 18**
Saturday
8:30 AM to Noon **CANOE OR KAYAK NINEMILE SWAMP**
Explore the Loomis gang's old hideout by canoe or kayak with a Rogers staff member. Look for herons, signs of beavers and wildflowers, as you drift along this northern leg of the Sangerfield River. Bring your own boat or use one of ours. **Registration is required. There is a \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler. Meet in the Rogers Center main parking lot.**
- August 25**
Saturday
10:00 AM **SUMMER AND FALL WILDFLOWERS AT CUSH HILL**
Brighten your morning with the colors of fall wildflowers. Peruse the field and forest floor on Cush Hill with a Rogers staff member and learn all about fall wildflowers, their adaptations and lore.

Summer Children's Series

The summer children's series will focus on flying things! Birds fly, bugs fly, even some fish fly! Let's explore, through fun games, the things that fly one way or another. Programs for 4- to 6-year-olds are at 10:30 AM, and programs for 7- to 10-year-olds are at 12:30 PM.

<p>July 6 Friday</p> <p>SUMMER FLYING FEATHERS Kids, get your binoculars! Join us at Rogers Center to see how many birds you can identify. The center has some binoculars to share if you do not have your own.</p>	<p>July 20 Friday</p> <p>MAMMALS Come learn about the furry four-legged creatures flying about your backyard.</p>
<p>July 13 Friday</p> <p>FIELD SAFARI Go buggy for insects with Rogers Center! Come and discover what cool insects you can find in the grassy fields around the center. Nets and collection jars will be provided.</p>	<p>July 27 Friday</p> <p>MYSTERY FLIERS Explore more flying animals and plants in nature from fish to spiders! Join Rogers in finding these awesome creatures.</p>

**Programs for 4- to 6-year-olds are at 10:30 AM, and programs for 7- to 10-year-olds are at 12:30 PM.
Please call to register as supplies may be limited: 607-674-4017 Ext. 623.**

Volunteer Recognition

We are very grateful for the many hours of service contributed by the following volunteers at Rogers Center:

- Barbara Meeks – press release mailings, roller of quarters and library assistance
- Audrey Wakefield – Animals of Halloween costumes and library cataloging
- Hamilton UCP – trail maintenance
- Morrisville UCP – trail maintenance
- Marjorie Bates (RSVP Program) – office reception
- Earth Fest – Marni, Max and Wells Horton, Randy Muth, Barb and Jack Meeks, Sean Ryberg, Aaron Black, Matt Satterlee, Josh Reyes, Elizabeth Black, Annie Schlesinger, Cathy Martin, Bronwen and Ceridwen Mahardy, Sally Pardee, Chris Rossi, Debbie Zahn, Hayden Zahn, Carol Smith, Molly Ogden, Samantha Wise, Jean Smith, Mike Webster, Kate Reynolds, Brianne Baldwin, Derf Smith, Jean Dewey, David Benenati, Bob McNitt, Sandy Powell
- Envirothon – Don Windsor, Bill Betts, Al Marsters, Wes Stiles, Les Wedge, Anne Altshuler, Earl Callahan, Gary Sweet, Josh Teeter, Frank Lee, Lee Schwarting



Earth Fest 2007 - Nice crowd, nice weather, plenty of activities and seeing and hearing about compost! We had a variety of exhibitors to help people learn about earth-friendly practices. Free tree seedlings were given away, we danced around the maypole, learned about spring "weeds," learned about composting and recycling from Compost Theater and built fairy houses. A great day was had by all.



Envirothon 2007 – We recently hosted the Regional Envirothon at Rogers. This is a competition for high school students, involving answering questions in several conservation areas, including aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and current issues. Teams of up to five students come from schools in Cayuga, Chenango, Madison, Onondaga and Wayne counties. They take written tests for each area and make a presentation on the current issue. The high-scoring team from each county goes on to compete in the statewide event in Cobleskill this year. Rogers Center was the host site this year and last year and developed the test for the aquatics area.

Teacher Institute on the Environment

We invite you to join us for our 6th Annual Summer Teacher Institute on the Environment August 13 to August 17, 2007, from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM daily. The week focuses on teaching about forests, rivers, lakes, gorges and geology, and the schoolyard. Activities are interdisciplinary and designed to provide teachers with background knowledge in basic natural history and ecology through visits to several habitat types of New York. Participants will explore each site, learn about its inhabitants and experience supporting activities designed to address multiple NYS Learning Standards.

At each site we will discuss geology, soils, topography and micro-climate to understand why plant and animal species occur where they do. There will also be a session on climate change, Project Learning Tree Workshop and River of Words Workshop. **Fee: \$50.00.**

Benefits: In-service Credit
Great Classroom Resources
Fun Outdoor Experiences
PLT Guide
Conserve Water Guide

For more information, please email Rogers Center at rogers@gw.dec.state.ny.us or call 607-674-4017 ext. 626 (Laura Carey) or ext. 628 (Amy Smith). We look forward to learning and having fun with you this summer!

Teacher Ecology Workshop in the Adirondacks

July 15 to 20, 2007

sponsored by DEC and NYSOEA

Hello teachers and youth leaders! Are you looking for some really great training to energize you for the next school year or season of kids? Are you anxious to connect with others for new ideas on old topics? Located on Raquette Lake, this new Teacher Ecology Workshop, jointly sponsored by DEC and the New York State Outdoor Education Association, combines the talents of environmental educators around the state, a beautiful, historic facility owned by SUNY Cortland and all the wonders of the Adirondacks. The cost is \$300 and includes all meals, lodging and programming.



From Sunday evening to Friday morning, you will be immersed in learning about natural habitats, cultural history, environmental issues, literature and curriculum and how to bring it back to the kids you teach. You will actively engage in hands-on lessons in the field, observing, experimenting and sharing ideas. Curriculum training offers the opportunity to learn activities from award-winning guides such as Project WILD, Project WET, Project Learning Tree and Below Zero. Optional morning and evening programs allow additional time for field study or quiet reflection, to satisfy the need to stay busy or have some personal time. Meals are served family-style and each person helps set up and clear tables. Learn and make lasting connections in an enjoyable atmosphere.

Sign up now! In-service and graduate credits available. For more information email Rogers Center at rogers@gw.dec.state.ny.us or call 607-674-4017 ext. 625 (Fred von Mechow) or 607-674-4017 ext. 626 (Laura Carey).

