



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!

Fall 2007

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

September - October - November

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

Summer is so busy and so short! I am always astonished at the way visitation to Rogers drops in the fall. To my way of thinking, there is nothing more beautiful or comfortable than central New York in autumn. So put a visit to Rogers on your to-do list.

Our summer Headwaters Youth Conservation Corps (HYCC) crew has been busy under the leadership of Alex Metzger. They have reworked the bridge on the river trail at Adams Farm so that it is safe to cross whether or not the water is flowing. There are a couple of other bridges along this trail which have been improved by making the ramps less steep, and an area where a tree came down has been cleared out. They have also repaired the boardwalk along the wet areas of the woods trail. This boardwalk was installed at least 15 years ago by another summer work crew and has lasted all these years. Walk the full trail loop at Adams Farm and enjoy the habitats and improvements.

Other major project work this summer involves taking plants out. Now termed an invasive species, but once encouraged as wildlife habitat and food supply, the shrub tartarian honeysuckle is being removed. Early on in Rogers Center history, a staff person said "plant honeysuckle wherever you want to keep people out." Honeysuckle was planted in a number of areas and has spread on its own, resulting in a forest understory full of this plant. It does seem to provide good cover for rabbits and other small mammals, but the berries are always found on the plants in the dead of winter. It is not a preferred food for many of the creatures living here. We try to control this plant by pulling, cutting and removing it by the roots. Volunteers, community service workers and HYCC crew are all put on this seemingly never-ending task. We are making slow progress.

The other plant being removed is garlic mustard. This plant has also taken over the understory but is a soft-stemmed plant, not a shrub. Just this past growing season, I began to notice it occupying habitats where I had not noticed it before. I have been reading about this invasive but had not felt that it was a problem at Rogers until this year, when there seems to have been an explosion of the plant. The problem with this is that it could crowd out other plants which are considered more desirable, including many of the protected spring wildflowers. We are working to remove garlic mustard from the seed orchard and the Cush Hill hillside woods. Garlic mustard is best pulled when the ground is moist so the roots will all come out. Removing honeysuckle and mustard are both daunting tasks, but we need to start and just keep working at this to hold them both at bay and let the native plants thrive.

We are at the planning stages of a renovation of the Visitor Center. I will keep you posted as things progress.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Eliot Spitzer, Governor
Alexander B. 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!
Fall 2007
Issue #38
by naturalist interns
Katherine Kontio and Rebecca Oyer

Scat Skills

Test your scat identification skills with this mammal scat matching quiz! Match each mammal name with its scat picture. (*Answers at the bottom of this page*)

1. Coyote _____

2. Bear _____

3. Squirrel _____

4. Deer _____

5. Skunk _____



A.



B.



C.



D.



E.

CRAFT CORNER

Plant Press:

What you Need:

- Corrugated cardboard
- Scissors
- Newspaper or construction paper
- 2 straps or belts that you can tighten
- Plants or flowers to press *

What to do:

1. Cut cardboard to paper size.
2. Place papers in between cardboard.
3. Place straps around the cardboard at either end.
4. To dry plants or flowers, place plants between papers with cardboard on either side. Tighten straps and leave to dry for a few weeks.
5. Start a plant binder and see how many different plants you can collect.

*** Avoid collecting plants that are not abundant. Make sure you can recognize poisonous plants and avoid them.**

For more information, check a field guide.

Which Friend Am I?

I am tiny and green when I am a nymph (a baby). As a nymph, I can be found on plant stems, but I am hard to see! I cover myself in a mass of bubbles. I make these bubbles by eating plant juices and then excreting it from my rear end! The bubbles provide a moist environment for me and give me protection from predators because the bubbles taste bad to them. I emerge from the bubbles as a winged adult.

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 October 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: _____

Answers: 1-C, 2-A, 3-E, 4-B, 5-D

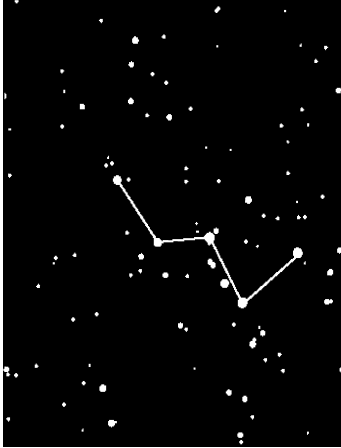
Fall Constellations

by Chris DeCesare

Have you spent some time outdoors during the summer and noticed the stars? Did you hear about the August meteor showers but missed them? The nice thing about stars and meteors is that there are always some to see. Sure, the constellations and meteor showers we see change with the seasons, but you can count on seeing different ones throughout the year.

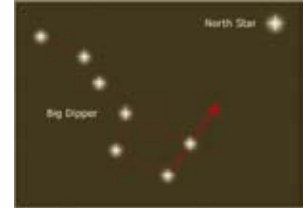
Constellations are really star clusters that humans have designated to depict certain things like animals and people. Seeing these constellations was a way for early people to time planting and harvesting crops and to navigate at night. Of course, each constellation had a story to go along with it as a way to remember it and a way to pass the time.

The best time to view stars is on clear nights with no moon. The nice thing about fall, and even winter, is that there are a lot of crisp, clear nights to see stars if you can tolerate the cooler temperatures. Here are a few things to look for this fall:



Cassiopeia

Looking north: In mid-September, the Big Dipper will be low on the horizon. Its handle points west (to your left). Above the Big Dipper will be the Little Dipper, positioned upside down as if pouring into the Big Dipper. These two are pretty easy to locate. So, you can use them to guide you to other constellations. To the right of the Little Dipper is the constellation Cassiopeia. It is composed of five stars in the shape of a "W." In November Cassiopeia looks like a flattened "W." Between Cassiopeia and the Little Dipper is a constellation that appears to be an upside down house. It is called Cepheus. In Greek mythology, Cepheus and Cassiopeia were king and queen of Ethiopia.



Big Dipper

Looking south: In October there are constellations to be seen, but many are hard to describe. I suggest looking for a large square in the middle of the southern sky between the horizon and directly overhead. This square is called the "Great Square" and is part of the constellation of Pegasus, the winged horse. Looking closely at the top right of the square, you may notice stars coming off in almost straight lines to the right. These are supposed to be the legs of Pegasus. The stars extending from the bottom right of the square are his neck. Thus, the constellation is upside down to us now.

In November, take a look at the constellations you have seen in September and October. Have they changed position at all? The constellations to the north should be shifting position and appear to have rotated counter-clockwise. Around November 15 to 17, the Leonid meteor showers peak. Meteor showers are the result of sand-sized particles vaporizing in the earth's atmosphere. The Leonid showers come from particles associated with the comet Tempel-Tuttle. Although you can see some shooting stars on any clear night, the best time to view them is usually after midnight and before dawn.



Image Credit: Donald K. Yeomans, Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Keep watching how the stars change with time. Look up other constellations and try to find them. For more information on stars and constellations, check out these books:

- *The Night Sky Book: An Every Day Guide to Every Night* by Jamie Jobb
- *365 Starry Nights: An Introduction to Astronomy for Every Night of the Year* by Chet Raymo.



Friends of Rogers Update

By Randy Muth

We have been combining the Friends annual meeting with a recognition of volunteers, and this year we are hosting an Ice Cream Social as an informal way for people to be recognized and meet others who help at Rogers.

Working with Rogers' staff, we have a power point presentation to run at exhibits and fairs. It is a visual overview of what happens at Rogers.

Interested in becoming more active at Rogers? Consider becoming a board member. We meet every other month at Rogers Visitor Center on a Tuesday evening.

Donations

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

Barbara Meeks
Morrisville Men's Garden Club
Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals
Golden Artist Colors, Inc.

In Memory of Anne Willcox:

Tim, Susan, Courtney and Laura Trueworthy



NYSOEA

New York State Outdoor Education Association

by Laura Carey

Attend the 40th anniversary conference of the New York State Outdoor Education Association at Hunter Mountain, November 1-4, 2007. With the theme **Preserving the Past, Forging the Future**, the event will include many fun and educational workshop opportunities, including Rivers as a Classroom, Geology of the Catskills, NYC Water Supply System, Wild Edibles, Geocaching/GPS and Narrative Writing.

The featured speaker is Jerome Ringo, the immediate past chair of the National Wildlife Federation and the current president of the Apollo Alliance—a coalition that works toward supporting clean energy and reinvesting in American industry. Mr. Ringo will speak on curtailing environmental problems by means of a more diverse coalition. Pre-conference workshops include:

- ❖ Catskill Watershed Bus Tour
- ❖ Hudson River School Artists Driving Tour
- ❖ Easy Ropes Course Building

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 and a registration form, go to www.nysoea.org

You don't need to be an environmental educator to attend the conference. Teachers, youth leaders, college students and anyone interested in the outdoors are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Exciting Sightings

by Fred von Mechow

The spring newsletter's Exciting Sightings report mentioned that we had only one successful goose nest of six goslings as of the issue deadline. Well...that was a little off. Since then, we've had about 30 goslings show up at Rogers. I think many wander in from remote areas of the property. But it's still exciting to think that we have a reasonable number of geese instead of the hundreds we used to have every year.

On June 11, I was paddling Ninemile Swamp in Hubbardville with my wife. We were just about finished with the trip when she heard an interesting noise and asked me what it was. Turned out to be a screech owl. We spent a few seconds looking for it in the woods before she realized it was right in front of us on a branch right at the edge of the water! I guess it must have been looking for frogs. I have found frog parts in boxes where owls roost.

Seems like a banner year for a couple of familiar wildlife species. I've seen more fawns this year than ever before and also more monarch butterflies. For the first time, I've seen monarch eggs on milkweed leaves. I've seen caterpillars and adults all over the place, and as many as 20 butterflies in one small field!



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
Gail Tooker
Karen Wallace
Patty Lent
Dara Dorsey
Maggie Vescio
Annie Schlesinger
John Lancos
Patricia Westlake

Liz McCheyne
Mike Jabot
Brendan Herlihy
Christina Taylor
Robin Harris
Annie O'Reilly
Chanda Vincent
Eileen Jones

*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 the Visitor Center unless stated otherwise.*

SEPTEMBER

- Sept. 1**
Saturday
9:00 AM to Noon
- JAM POND BOG TRIP**
Bogs are special environments. These acidic wetlands have unique plants and animals that are associated with them. Come take a look at carnivorous plants, fuzzy heaths and the creatures that call the bog home. **Please call to register and for trip details.**
- Sept. 8 and 9**
- COLORSCAPE ARTS FESTIVAL IN DOWNTOWN NORWICH. See you at the Rogers Center table!**
Saturday: 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Sunday: 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Sept. 8**
Saturday
10:00 AM
- GOLDENROD JUNGLE WALK AT ADAMS FARM**
By late summer, it seems that all the fields become a goldenrod jungle, but these habitats play an important role for insects and other creatures. Learn about late summer flowers with us.
- Sept. 15**
Saturday
8:30 AM to Noon
- CANOE/KAYAK AT LAKE MORaine**
This very large lake in Hamilton has many edges and areas to explore for signs of plants and animals. Paddle away the morning with us. **Registration is required. \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler is due at registration. Meet in the Rogers Center's main parking lot to carpool.**
- Sept. 18**
Tuesday
10:00 AM to 1:30 PM
- Active Seniors Series: CANOE/KAYAK AT NINEMILE SWAMP**
The Sangerfield River meanders gently through the lush greenery of the swamp, providing a perfect place to paddle and explore. Participants should be able to get in and out of a boat unassisted. No restroom facilities. **Registration is required. \$5.00 non-refundable fee per paddler is due at registration. Meet in the Rogers Center's main parking lot to carpool.**
- Sept. 22**
Saturday
11:00 AM
- WOODPECKERS**
You may have seen a woodpecker at your suet feeder or heard one pecking at a tree but not known the variety of species that are here. We will help you learn to identify them and give you a rundown of their calls and habits.
- Sept. 29**
Saturday
11:00 AM
- Children's Program: LEAF ART**
Leaves are changing color and falling. These leaves provide a great opportunity for kids to easily create artwork. We will learn a little about leaves and then collect some to make creatures on paper. **Please call to register.** (Ages 4 to 12)

OCTOBER

- Oct. 6**
Saturday
10:00 AM
- MUSHROOM WALK WITH SALLY REYMERS**
Spines, gills, tubes or teeth—what type of animal has all of these traits? Not an animal at all, but nature's recyclers—fungi. Sally Reymers will lead the walk at Adams Farm. **Meet in the Rogers Center's main parking lot. Please call to register.**
- Oct. 13**
Saturday
9:00 AM to Noon
- U-PICK SUNFLOWERS**
On Saturday mornings in October (13, 20 and 27), there will be a Friends of Rogers member on hand to help you gather sunflowers to feed the birds. Prices are only \$2.00 per bag of sunflower heads, \$3.00 for a bundle of eight sunflower stalks or \$.50 per stalk. We have clippers for you to use and instructions on how to hang heads up and ensure that they dry out properly.

- Oct. 13**
Saturday
9:00 AM to
Noon
- FINGER LAKES TRAIL FALL FOLIAGE HIKE AT BERRY HILL**
As the daylight and temperatures begin to decrease in fall, an array of colors dance over the plants. Find out how and why this happens, as we enjoy the sights at Berry Hill. **Registration is required. Please call for details.**
- Oct. 16**
Tuesday
10:00 AM to
Noon
- Active Seniors Series: POND PROBE**
Take a look at the creatures living beneath the water. Discover dragonfly nymphs, scuds, bloodworms and many others. **Registration is required. Please call for details.**
- Oct. 20**
Saturday
9:00 AM to
Noon
- U-PICK SUNFLOWERS**
See October 13
- Oct. 20**
Saturday
9:00 AM to
Noon
- SURVIVAL SKILLS**
Join guest speaker Josh Teeter to learn basic skills such as shelter- and fire-building and acquiring water and food. Find out what a basic survival kit should include and how to use it. We'll discuss how to make stone tools, cooking pots, cordage and what to do if you don't have a survival kit. Meet at the Visitor Center. **Please call to register.**
- Oct. 26**
Friday
6:30 PM
- ANIMALS OF HALLOWEEN**
Celebrate Halloween with us at Rogers Center! Meet some unique animals along our special trail, and learn a little something about each creature. Meet at the amphitheater just outside the Visitor Center. **Please call to register.**
- Oct. 27**
Saturday
9:00 AM to
Noon
- U-PICK SUNFLOWERS**
See October 13
- Oct. 27**
Saturday
11:00 AM
- REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS UP CLOSE**
Rod Sutton will bring a variety of reptiles to help us understand these fascinating creatures and learn about their important place in the world.

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 3**
Saturday
10:00 AM
- Children's Program: GO NUTS AT CUSH HILL**
Explore our Cush Hill property to learn about some forest nuts and the creatures that depend on them. **Please call to register. Meet in Rogers Center's main parking lot.**
- Nov. 10**
Saturday
6:30 PM
- CONSTELLATIONS**
Behold beautiful fall and winter constellations, and make your own planisphere. The program includes both indoor and outdoor activities and is not dependent on clear skies.
- Nov. 14**
Wednesday
10:00 to
11:30 AM
- Active Seniors Series: PREPARING FOR WINTER**
Join us at Rogers Center for a trail walk to see how the plants and animals of NY prepare themselves for the arrival of Old Man Winter. Young folks welcome as well. **Please call to register.**
- Nov. 17**
Saturday
11:00 AM
- GOURD ART WITH JANE HOUGH**
Join local artist and grower Jane Hough to learn the techniques for turning gourds into creative works of art. **Registration is required; \$5.00 for each gourd used.**
- Nov. 24**
Saturday
11:00 AM
- BLUEBIRD NEST-BOX BUILDING**
Build a bluebird nest box, and reap rewards. See bluebirds, house wrens, chickadees, swallows and even mice, depending on the time of year, and box placement. **There is an \$8.00 fee for every box you take home. Please bring a hammer.**

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
- Marjorie Bates (RSVP Program) – office reception
- Wells Horton – event photography

11th Annual Chenango County River Cleanup

by Laura Carey

You can do something to protect your community's watershed by volunteering to take part in this year's clean-up efforts on September 22, 2007.

The Chenango County Environmental Management Council and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Rogers Environmental Education Center partner to coordinate a county-wide cleanup of the rivers, streams, lakes and ponds in our area.

Each year, hundreds of pounds of plastic, glass, metal and litter are removed from our water. This not only beautifies our communities but improves the water quality from here to the Chesapeake Bay.

Be part of this year's cleanup. Call Laura Carey at 607-674-4017 ext. 626 or Bob McNitt at 607-334-6087 to sign up.

Green Alternative

by Laura Carey

Would you like to know how energy efficient your home is? Do you know whether you are leaking energy out of your home or wasting energy with an old furnace?

You can get a home assessment by a Building Performance Institute (BPI)-accredited home performance contractor. The assessment includes checking insulation, air leaks and ineffective moisture control. After the assessment, the contractor will provide an estimate of cost, an outline of energy savings and options for financing work to improve energy efficiency.

There are often tax incentives for home improvements, and the improvements often pay for themselves in energy savings. Having an energy efficient home is good for your family, your pocket book and the environment.

Check the website below for details on home performance and many other energy- and money- saving programs:

<http://www.getenergysmart.org/whereyoulive/homeperformance/overview.asp>

Recreational Snowshoeing Opportunities

It's never too soon to be thinking about your winter recreation opportunities!

As long as there are at least eight inches of snow and we are open, stop by and rent a pair of snowshoes to use on the Rogers Center trails. We have more than six miles of trails on three different parcels, so there are many choices to explore. Maps are available for each site and may be picked up in the Visitor Center along with your snowshoes.

- ✳ The Visitor Center parcel has about three miles of trails. On the Visitor Center side of Route 80, trails are mostly flat and perfect for children and beginners. On the other side of Route 80, the trail winds to the top of a small hill that affords a beautiful view of the valley.
- ✳ The Cush Hill parcel has about 3½ miles of trails. The Conifer Trail loop is short and flat and wanders through several different species of tree plantations. The Summit Trail loop climbs up a hill through a northern hardwood forest, interspersed with some large old hemlocks. The Hillside Trail traverses a nice hardwood forest, and the Connecting Trail does just that—connects the Hillside and Summit trails.
- ✳ The Adams Farm Parcel has about 2½ miles of trails and about one mile of dirt road. The trails have a "wild" feel and wind through bottomland forest.

We have both aluminum and wooden snowshoes, in both adult and kid sizes, to rent for \$2.00 per pair. Please call ahead to make sure there are enough snowshoes available; then stop by between 1:00 and 4:00 PM on Saturdays or 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM weekdays.



Winter Living Celebration

by Chris DeCesare

We don't want to spoil your fall by having you think about winter so soon, but there is something for you to look forward to...it's time for the 30th annual Winter Living Celebration! As always, we gather to celebrate whatever Mother Nature brings us: snow, rain, cold or warm temperatures. We've seen it all and always have fun. There are horse-drawn sleighs or wagons, exhibits highlighting local resources, demonstrations, food and entertainment. It is a family-oriented day with activities occurring both indoors and outdoors. There is something for everyone to see or do. Snowshoes and cross-country skis are welcome, but please leave your ice skates at home. Bring your Christmas tree to our drop-off spot, and we'll chip them for use on our trails. Join us on Saturday, January 12, 2008 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. You'll be glad that you did!



U-pick Sunflowers at Rogers



U-pick sunflowers will be available for harvest again this fall. Tell your bird-feeding friends about this great fun way to provide for the birds. On Saturday mornings in October (13, 20 and 27 from 9:00 AM to noon), there will be a Friends of Rogers member on hand to help you gather sunflowers to feed the birds. Prices are only \$2.00 per bag of sunflower heads, \$3.00 for a bundle of eight sunflower stalks or \$.50 per stalk. We have clippers for you to use and instructions on how to hang heads up to ensure that they dry out properly.