

# FIVE RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

## Spring 2023 Program Schedule

Five Rivers Environmental Education Center is your gateway to the outdoors. The grounds are open every day from sunrise to sunset. The visitor center is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 AM–4:30 PM, except state holidays.

Programs listed below are free of charge unless otherwise noted. Please dress for the weather. At this time, we cannot accommodate organized groups during our public programs. We are happy to make alternate arrangements for your organization. For further information, call us at 518-475-0291.

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

**Five Rivers Listserv:** Sign up for email notifications about upcoming programs at Five Rivers at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). Look for the blue “DEC Delivers” box and follow the instructions.

**Friends of Five Rivers:** Friends of Five Rivers is the year-round community support group for Five Rivers Environmental Education Center. Members receive a discount on select items at the Friends’ store, complimentary snowshoe loans, and reduced fees for some programs. Membership levels and volunteer information are available at [FriendsofFiveRivers.org](http://FriendsofFiveRivers.org). Questions? Email [info@FriendsofFiveRivers.org](mailto:info@FriendsofFiveRivers.org) or call 518-475-0295.

**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.

Connecting people to nature one stop at a time!

### Nature Bus

Powered by CDTA

[www.mohawkudson.org/nature-bus](http://www.mohawkudson.org/nature-bus)

In partnership with the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, NYSDEC, and others, CDTA is providing **free bus service between the City of Albany and Five Rivers** on select Saturdays this spring and summer. Take part in a guided program, or explore the trails and visitor center on your own.

Service to Five Rivers will be provided on May 27, June 10 (Outdoors Day) and 24, July 8 and 22, August 5 and 19, September 2, 16, and 30, and October 14. Go to [www.cdta.org](http://www.cdta.org) for detailed information from CDTA, including the full bus route and schedule.

### I BIRD NY: EARLY BIRDERS

**Thursdays, April 20, May 4, 11, 18, and 25,  
and June 1, at 7:30 AM**

Come celebrate the dawn chorus as we monitor the progression of spring bird migration. These outdoor surveys begin at 7:30 AM. Meet outside the visitor center. After a brief introduction, we’ll head out on the trails. Beginners are always welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them. In case of inclement weather, these programs will be canceled.

### OUTDOORS AFTER SCHOOL

**Thursdays, April 6 through June 15,  
from 4:30–5:30 PM**

Join us after school to get some fresh air, stretch your legs, and have fun outdoors. We’ll meet in front of the visitor center to head out on 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. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** by the Monday prior to register.

Saturday, April 1, 2:00 PM

**Family Fun: Natural Fiber Home Making**

Five Rivers is home to a variety of small mammals and birds that use what they find here to make a warm shelter in which to rest or raise their young. Head outside with a Five Rivers educator to find and fashion your best little animal home. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** by Wednesday, March 29 to register.

Wednesday, April 12, 8:00 PM

**I BIRD NY: Woodcock Walk**

American woodcocks are among the first of the spring migrants to arrive in our area. Five Rivers is a perfect place to observe and learn about these delightful and quirky birds. Come see them perform flight displays followed by their show-stopping dance moves. Please bring a flashlight or headlamp. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Monday, April 10.

Saturday, April 15, 10:00 AM

**Family Fun: Hop into Spring**

From frogs to rabbits, we'll look for signs of hopping animals at Five Rivers on this nature walk for young children and families. Get ready to move, jump, wonder, and explore as spring emerges at Five Rivers. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 12.

Saturday, April 15, 2:00 PM

**Parenting Like a Blue Jay**

Spring brings baby animals. Successful parenting of young comes in many styles, depending on the species. We'll explore the natural history of parenting in some of New York's wild animals, from blue jays to bobcats. Indoor program followed by short walk. This program is geared toward older children (ages 8 and up) and adults, but attentive younger naturalists may attend. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 12.

Saturday April 22, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

**Earth Day, Every Day (drop-in activities)**

There are so many ways that we can live more simply while caring for the earth. Stop by the visitor center this Earth Day and get your hands messy making recycled paper, native seed balls, or a recycled bottle composter. While you're here, check out our working worm composting bin and find new ways we can make it Earth Day every day. For all ages.

Saturday April 22, 2:00 PM

**Grow Your Garden from Seeds**

Planting a garden can get expensive when you're buying all your plants from a nursery. Starting plants from seeds can be deeply satisfying, and it's not too late to get many types of plants started for spring planting. We'll review the basics of starting seeds under grow lights, including equipment needed and timelines for growing a variety of vegetables and flowers. Appropriate for adults and teens. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 19.

Wednesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 27, 5:00–7:30 PM (both evenings)

**Educator Workshop: Project WET**

Project WET (Water Education Today) is a hands-on curriculum developed specifically for teachers by teachers and experts in the field to teach students about water. During the workshop we'll participate in some of the activities and discuss how they can be used to build an understanding of water and its impact in our lives. Curriculum guides (400-plus pages) are provided to participants for free. They contain interactive simulations and demonstrations that allow

**SPRING FEVER!  
APRIL SCHOOL BREAK PROGRAMS**

Knock out spring fever with a visit to Five Rivers during the school break week. Call **518-475-0291** for more information. Drop in. Registration is not required.

**Monday, April 10, 10:00 AM**

**Wednesday, April 12, 10:00 AM**

**Friday, April 14, 10:00 AM**

Join us for **story time** and meet one of our ambassador animals. Suitable for all ages.

- Monday – Crane, the three-toed box turtle
- Wednesday – Argo, the barred owl
- Friday – Crash and Slick, aquatic turtles

**Tuesday, April 11, 10:00 AM**

**Thursday, April 13, 10:00 AM**

Make a **spring-inspired craft** and take a guided walk on one of our trails. Suitable for all ages.

**Tuesday, April 11, 2:00 PM**

**Thursday, April 13, 2:00 PM**

Try our **spring treasure hunt, woodpecker style!** What's more fun than searching for hidden treasures outdoors? We'll think like woodpeckers as we hide and seek for treasures in nature's nooks and crannies. We'll use map and pirate skills to see if X really does mark the spot. Suggested for ages 7 and up, younger siblings welcome.

students to explore everything from physical properties and resource management to cultural connections. Registration is required. Participants must attend both evenings. Call **518-475-0291** by Friday, April 21 to register or for more information.

Saturday, April 29, 9:30 AM–3:00 PM

**Educator Workshop: Early Childhood Experiences and Growing Up WILD**

Developed specifically for teachers working with children ages 3–6, and in coordination with early childhood experts and educators, *Early Childhood Experiences* (from Project Learning Tree) and *Growing Up WILD* (from Project WILD) are early childhood curricula. The books, provided to participants for free, contain interactive, hands-on activities for young learners about plants, wildlife, and nature in general. During the workshop we'll try out some of the activities and discuss how they can be used to build an understanding of plants and animals in our lives. Please bring your own lunch. Space is limited; registration required. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 26.

the sights and sounds of spring. Appropriate for adults and teens. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 17.

Saturday May 20, 2:00 PM

**Family Fun: Nature Playdate at Sunfish Pond**

Let's get together and play in nature's playground. We will use maps to navigate our way to the pond while enjoying the sights and sounds of spring. Once there, we will explore using nets and buckets to see who's living and swimming in a pond habitat. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 17.

Saturday, May 27, 10:00 AM

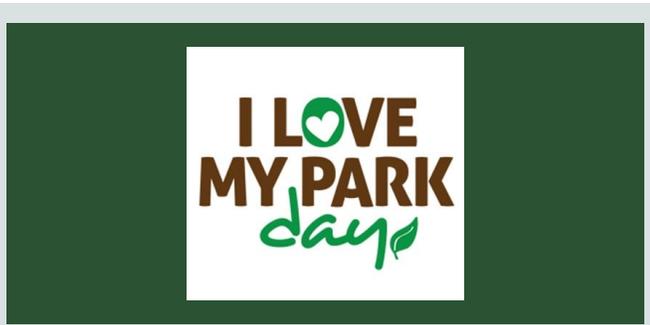
**I BIRD NY: Learn to Use Merlin Bird ID**

While outside, do you ever wonder what that bird is? Cornell's Lab of Ornithology has made finding out simple. Merlin is a free downloadable app for your smartphone that can help you identify birds, both visually and by sound! Just bring your phone and walking shoes. Space is limited. Please call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 24

Saturday, May 27, 2:00 PM

**Family Fun: Muskrats are Our Neighbors**

Five Rivers' wetlands are home to active muskrats. Take a walk and explore where the muskrats find food and shelter. See and touch the wonderful fur that keeps them warm and dry all year long. Hold a muskrat skull and see its adaptations for survival. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 24.



**Saturday, May 6, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM**

Show your favorite outdoor destination some TLC for I Love My Park Day! Gardening with native plants, invasive species removal, and much more will help us improve Five Rivers as wildlife habitat. Projects include new raised bed plantings along our Nature's Accessible Backyard Trail. Morning refreshments and a T-shirt for participants! Registration required. Scout troops are welcome! Online registration through Parks & Trails New York is scheduled to open on Saturday, April 1, at <https://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day>. Call **518-475-0291** for more information.



**Saturday, June 10, 10:00 AM–2:00 PM**

The outdoors is for everyone. Join us as we highlight ways to explore and enjoy the outdoors. Take a hike, try out bird watching, and more. We'll have a special focus on making the outdoors accessible to all, whether with adaptive equipment or specialized facilities and programs. The Nature Bus will provide service from Albany to Five Rivers on this day.

Saturday May 20, 10:00 AM

**May Mindfulness Walk**

You are invited to slow down and engage with nature, experiencing it through all your senses during a guided trail walk. Inspired by the Japanese practice of Forest Bathing, the goal of this walk is to tune in to the present moment while immersing our senses in

## HELP FIVE RIVERS MONITOR MONARCHS

### Community Science:

#### Monarch Larva Monitoring

Thursdays, June 15 to October 5; 1:00–2:00 PM

For more than 15 years, data collected at Five Rivers has been contributed to this continent-wide community science project conducted through the University of Minnesota. Join volunteers in the United States, Canada, and Mexico in conserving monarchs and advancing the understanding of butterfly ecology and migration in general. Wear long pants and bring a sun hat and water. We will meet at the visitor center. Go to [www.mlmp.org](http://www.mlmp.org) to learn about the project. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** by the Saturday prior to register.

Saturday, June 24, 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM

#### **I FISH NY: Beginner's Fishing Class**

Celebrate New York State's annual free fishing weekend by joining us for an adult and child catch-and-release fishing clinic. We'll teach you about some of our local freshwater fish and how to use beginner fishing equipment. Bring gear if you have it, but Five Rivers also has a limited number of rods and reels available for loan. Adults and children must accompany each other. Please call **518-475-0291** by Wednesday, June 21 to register.

## ATTENTION TEACHERS, SAVE THE DATE!

### Living Environment Institute

Wednesday, June 28–Friday, June 30,  
8:45 AM–4:00 PM daily

Get ready to explore the best of what nature has to offer as we find ways to address preparing students for the new NYSED-required science investigations. Nature provides great access to phenomenon, investigation, and experimental design. We'll tap into numerous NY-based resources during this hands-on workshop. CTLE credits equal 21 hours.

Co-hosted by Five Rivers Environmental Education Center and the Hudson River Estuary Program.

For more information or to register, visit [www.dec.ny.gov/education/1905.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/1905.html) or email [drew.hopkins@dec.ny.gov](mailto:drew.hopkins@dec.ny.gov).



### Sponsor a Bluebird Nest Box

Sponsor a bluebird nest box through Friends of Five Rivers for an annual contribution of \$35. This new project will help maintain the Five Rivers Bluebird Nest Box Monitoring Program. To learn more, go to <https://friendsoffiverivers.org/sponsor-a-bluebird-nest-box/>.

### Member Appreciation Walks

Members of the Friends of Five Rivers are invited to join a Friends naturalist for a one-hour guided nature walk, free of charge. April is a wonderful time to head afield to discover all that is springing up. Walks are offered on April 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13, at 10:00 AM, 2:00 PM, and 4:00 PM each day, and on April 21 at 6:00 PM. Preregistration is required. Visit <https://friendsoffiverivers.org/membership-walks/> for further information or to register.

### Creative Nature Expressions

Friends of Five Rivers will once again offer Creative Nature Expressions. The program begins in May with a photography exhibit. This two-month-long themed exhibit will feature nature photos taken at Five Rivers and around the Capital District. To participate, you must apply by April 15. In July and August, we will showcase children's art. Visit <https://friendsoffiverivers.org/creative-expression-exhibits-2/> to learn more about these planned exhibits and to download an application.

### Summer Nature Weeks for Children

Registration is now open for Friends of Five Rivers' three weeks of summer family programs. The program is for children ages 2–8 along with their adult companions. Three identical sessions will run July 10–14, July 24–28, and July 31–August 4, from 10:00–11:30 AM each day. Information and registration forms are available at <https://friendsoffiverivers.org/summer-nature-weeks/> or at the visitor center.

### Gifts with a Five Rivers Flair

Stop by the visitor center and browse the Friends of Five Rivers gift shop, or purchase a leaf to adorn the Friends of Five Rivers Giving Tree in the visitor center. Go to <https://friendsoffiverivers.org/giving-tree/> to learn more about the Giving Tree.