

FIVE RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Spring 2024 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. 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. Look for the *Subscribe to "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. Questions? Email 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

In partnership with the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, DEC, 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 via the **Nature Bus (Route 872)**, on May 25; June 8 (Get Outdoors and Get Together Day) and 22; July 6 and 20; Aug. 3, 17, and 31; and Sept. 14 (Fall Festival) and 28. Visit www.cdt.org for detailed information from CDTA, including the full bus route and schedule.

I BIRD NY: EARLY BIRDERS

**Thursdays, April 18; May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30;
and June 6, 7:30 AM each day**

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 18 through June 13,
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.

Monday, April 1, 6:30–8:00 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 birds and their upside-down brains and whistling feathers. See these delightful and quirky birds 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 Thursday, March 28.

Monday, April 1, 7:30–9:00 PM

HMBC: Malaysian Borneo—a tropical dream

This is one of a series of monthly indoor presentations from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club (HMBC). Details about this and other club presentations and excursions at Five Rivers are at www.hmhc.net.

**SPRING FEVER!
APRIL SCHOOL BREAK PROGRAMS**

Monday–Friday, April 1–5, 11:00 AM

Knock out spring fever with a visit to Five Rivers during the school break. Join us for an hour each morning. We'll start with a children's story at the visitor center, then go out for a short, guided walk. Call **518-475-0291** for more information. Drop in; registration is not required. Appropriate for all ages.

Saturday, April 6, 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM

Family Fun: Pinhole Eclipse Viewers

On Monday, April 8, we have a unique opportunity to view a solar eclipse on our own doorstep. While the Capital District is not in the path of totality, it will still be a sight to recall for a lifetime. Drop in at 10:00 AM or 2:00 PM to make your own pinhole eclipse viewer and learn some other fun ways you can safely view the eclipse. Bring an empty cereal box if you have one. We'll have some available. No registration required. Eclipse viewing glasses will be handed out, while they last.

MINDFULNESS MONDAYS

Mondays, April 8, May 6, and June 3, 10:00 AM

Slow down and engage with nature, experiencing it through all your senses during a guided 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 the sights and sounds of the forest. Appropriate for adults and teens. Call **518-475-0291** to register.

Saturday, April 13, 2:00 PM

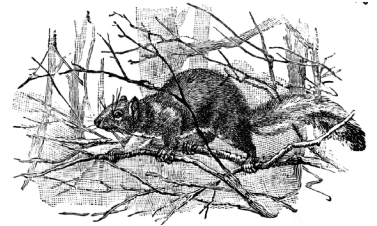
Family Fun: Journey of a Raindrop

Every raindrop is in the midst of an endless adventure. We'll become raindrops and see where we flow to at Five Rivers. From trails to streams, trees to coyotes, who knows where our raindrop will go? This family program will include a short interactive story followed by a nature walk. Remember to wear boots so you can jump in puddles! Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 10.

Saturday, April 20, 10:00 AM

Family Fun: Squirrels in Our Neighborhood

Did you know there are six species of squirrels living around our neighborhood? Did you know half of them live in burrows in the ground?



Take part in a hands-on program about squirrels followed by a walk to look for our furry neighbors. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, April 24.

Saturday, April 20, 2:00 PM

I BIRD NY: Learn to Use the Merlin Bird ID app

While outside, do you ever wonder what a particular bird is? Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology has made finding out simple. Merlin is a free downloadable app for your smartphone that can help you identify birds visually and by sound! Just bring your phone and walking shoes.

Monday, April 22, 7:30–8:30 PM

Earth Day and a Full Moon!

Take a guided walk through Five Rivers' fields and forests as we reflect upon the beauty of our home planet, bathed in the light of our nearest celestial neighbor. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register.

Wednesday, April 24, 6:00 PM

Learn how-to: Selecting Your Best Binoculars

Are you thinking about getting a new pair of binoculars? Join local experts to learn what all those knobs, numbers, and whatchamacallits are there for. We'll explain the pros and cons, as well as the major improvements in binocular design and function. There will be a variety of binoculars to try out.

Saturday, April 27, 10:00–11:15 AM

Family Fun: Wildlife Tales

Join us for story time at the visitor center. After the story, we'll take a walk on the trails and look for signs of wildlife. For ages 2–6, with an adult. Call **518-475-0291** to register.

Saturday, April 27, 2:00–3:30 PM

Junior Naturalists: Who's That Bird?

Learn more about the fascinating feathered friends that are all around us. Through games and hands-on investigations, we will learn what makes these winged creatures so special. For ages 7–12, with an adult. Call **518-475-0291** to register.

Saturday, May 25, 10:00–11:15 AM

Family Fun: Wildlife Tales

Join us for story time at the visitor center. After the story, we'll take a walk on the trails and look for signs of wildlife. For ages 2–6, with an adult. Call **518-475-0291** to register. **Coming from the City of Albany? Ride the Nature Bus (Rt. 872) today!**

Saturday, May 25, 1:00–2:30 PM

Stream Adventure

Roll up your pants and get ready to dip your rain boots in the cool Vlomankill. We will use maps to navigate our way to the stream before turning over rocks and learning about the creatures that live in a stream habitat. For all ages. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, June 19. **Coming from the City of Albany? Ride the Nature Bus (Rt. 872) today!**



Saturday, June 1, 10:00 AM

Saturday Stewards

Join us for a morning of stewardship, improving Five Rivers' wildlife habitat. Work will vary depending on needs for late spring, but please come prepared to get mud on your shoes and use some muscle. Likely projects include managing invasive plants or working in our native gardens. Adults or children ages 12 and up with an accompanying adult are welcome to join us! Registration is required. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 29.

Saturday, June 1, 2:00 PM

Family Fun: Snake Stories with Maizie

As the weather warms, do you feel like basking in the sun? So does our corn snake, Maizie! Come learn about her amazing adaptations as a cold-blooded (but very friendly) reptile. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, May 29.

Monday, June 3, 6:30–8:00 PM

HMBC: How You Can Help New York's Breeding Birds

This is one of a series of monthly indoor presentations from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. Details about this and other club presentations and excursions at Five Rivers are on the club's website at www.hmbc.net.

A logo for "I Love My Park Day" featuring the text "I LOVE MY PARK" in brown and "day" in green script, with a green leaf icon. The logo is set against a white background within a dark green rectangular frame.

Saturday, May 4, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM

Show Five Rivers some love during this morning of service! Check in at 9:00 AM for some refreshments and conversations with other volunteers, get your T-shirt, then head out onto the land for trail cleanup, invasive species removal, and gardening projects. We will have projects for a variety of ages. Starting in early April, registration opens through Parks and Trails NY at <https://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day>. Questions? Call Five Rivers at 518-475-0291.

Monday, May 6, 6:30–8:00 PM

HMBC: Birding Northern Belize

This is one of a series of monthly indoor presentations from the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. Details about this and other club presentations and excursions at Five Rivers are on the club's website at www.hmbc.net.

Tuesday, May 7, 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Let's Get Batty

Many bats will soon be migrating back to their maternal roosting sites. Come learn more about these curiously cute flying mammals. There will be a fun, interactive presentation indoors about bats in New York State, followed by a walk to see where we monitor Five Rivers' maternal roosting colony of bats. This program is best suited for adults and older children, ages 10 and up. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register.



Saturday, June 8, 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 birding, and more. We'll have a special focus on making the outdoors accessible to all, whether with adaptive equipment or specialized facilities and programs. **Coming from the City of Albany? Ride the Nature Bus (Rt. 872) today!**

Saturday, June 22, 10:00–11:15 AM

Family Fun: Wildlife Tales

Join us for story time at the visitor center. After the story, we'll take a walk on the trails and look for signs of wildlife. For ages 2–6, with an adult. Call **518-475-0291** to register. **Coming from the City of Albany? Ride the Nature Bus (Rt. 872) today!**

Saturday, June 22, 1:00–2:30 PM

Pond Adventure

We will use maps to navigate our way to the pond while enjoying the sights and sounds of summer. Once there, we will break out the nets and buckets to explore the animals and plants that call a pond home. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, June 19. **Coming from the City of Albany? Ride the Nature Bus (Rt. 872) today!**

Saturday, June 29, 10:00 AM

Our Brilliant Roadside Flowers

While walking or driving, do you ever wonder what those flowers you see are? Go for a stroll around Five Rivers and learn to identify some commonly seen flowers.

Saturday, June 29, 1:00 to 3:45 PM

Educator Workshop: Early Childhood Environmental Experiences—a Project Learning Tree Curriculum

Developed specifically for teachers working with young children (ages 3–6), and in coordination with early childhood experts and educators, *Early Childhood Experiences* is Project Learning Tree's

early childhood curriculum. The book, provided to participants for free, contains interactive, hands-on activities for young learners about plants, wildlife, and nature in general. During the workshop we will try out some of the activities and discuss how they can be used to build an understanding of plants in our lives. Space is limited. Call **518-475-0291** to register by Wednesday, June 26.

HELP FIVE RIVERS MONITOR MONARCHS

Community Science: Monarch Monitoring
Thursdays, June 27–Sept. 19,
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. Visit www.mlmp.org to learn about the project. Call **518-475-0291** by the Saturday prior to register.

ATTENTION TEACHERS!
LIVING ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTE

Foraging, Farming, and Fishing:
Eating Ecologically

Tuesday–Thursday, July 9–11,
9:00 AM–4:00 PM each day

Work with and learn from scientists and other professionals exploring landscapes. Join experts from DEC, school staff and administrators with successful interdisciplinary programs, and local people working in the field of ecologically sustainable harvesting. Interact with people focused on providing valuable information for your classroom on a topic all students can relate to: the land we live on, right here in New York State. Get ideas, get resources, and get excited!

CTLE credits equal 22 hours.

Cost: \$75 (for materials, supplies, refreshments)

Register at:

<https://forms.gle/pGoWXZUKU6yVhR2N7>

Co-hosted by Five Rivers Environmental Education Center and the Hudson River Estuary Program. Email 5Rivers@dec.ny.gov or drew.hopkins@dec.ny.gov for more information.



Programs and News from Friends of Five Rivers

Member Appreciation Earth Day Walks

Immerse yourself in the outdoors on Earth Day, April 22! Trade an hour of your typical day for an hour of mindful connection with nature at Five Rivers. Two levels of this program will be offered throughout the day: one for adults only and another for families. These walks are a Friends of Five Rivers member favorite. Not a member? Then consider joining Friends of Five Rivers. Find more information on membership and how to register (required) for these walks at the time of your choosing by visiting www.friendsorfiveivers.org.

HONEYBEES AND BEEKEEPING

Buzz on over to investigate the fascinating lives of honeybees and beekeepers! Explore honeybee anatomy, life in the hive, and the honey-making process. Dismantle a life-sized Langstroth teaching hive to uncover the frames within. Handle the equipment of modern beekeepers and suit up to participate in a hive inspection with one of Friends of Five Rivers' beekeepers. All programs are capped at five participants. Email education@friendsoffiverivers.org for registration form and waiver.

Bee Program for Children and Adult Partners

For students entering grades 3–5 in September, accompanied by an adult age 18 or older.

Date: Thursday, June 27, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM
(rain date June 28)

Material Fee: \$10 per participant

Program Fee: Friends' members, \$30 per child/adult partnership; non-members, \$50 per child/adult partnership. Each additional child is \$20.

Bee Program for Adults

For adults aged 18 and older.

Date: Tuesday, June 25, 9:00 AM–1:00 PM
(rain date June 26)

Material Fee: \$5 per participant

Program Fee: Friends' members, \$40 per person; non-members, \$60 per person

Summer Nature Weeks

Space is still available but filling up quickly for our popular Summer Nature Weeks. The program is for children ages 2–8 with their adult companions.

Four identical sessions will run July 8–12, July 22–26, July 29–Aug. 2, and Aug. 5–9, from 10:00–11:30 AM each day. Each 90-minute session includes a nature-themed story, hands-on activities, exploration, discovery, and games. The aim of this program is to help parents and children grow in their understanding and appreciation of the natural world through shared activities. Information and registration forms are available at www.friendsorfiveivers.org.

SAVE THE DATE—Five Rivers Fall Festival

It's not too early to plan for this family-friendly community event at Five Rivers! Our 42nd annual Fall Festival will take place on Saturday, Sept. 14, 10:00 AM–4:00 PM. Enjoy exhibitors, nature activities, food vendors, live music, and more! Free parking and admission.

Scholarship Opportunity

The Wendy Repass Suozzo Memorial Award Scholarship application is now available. Graduating seniors from the City School District of Albany, Bethlehem Central High School (BCHS), Guilderland Central High School (GCHS), Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk High School (RCS), Voorheesville Central High School (VCHS), Green Tech High School, and Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls who will be attending college for environmental studies or a closely related field including, but not limited to, biology, chemistry, geology, or environmental law are encouraged to apply. Visit the Friends of Five Rivers website at www.friendsorfiveivers.org for an application.

