



# Weis Ecology Center

150 Snake Den Road, Ringwood, NJ 07456  
Phone: 973.835.2160 / Fax: 973.835.8986  
E-mail: weis@njudubon.org / Web site: www.njudubon.org/centers/weis

HOURS: Wednesday to Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.  
CLOSINGS: Thursday & Friday, December 24 & 25, for Christmas;  
Friday, January 1, New Year's Day.

**Staff:**  
Karla Risdon, Sanctuary Director  
Phaedra Demers, Teacher-Naturalist  
Nancy Morton, Office Assistant  
Mike Gaeckle, Maintenance Supervisor  
Environmental Educators to be announced

*Associate Naturalists:*  
Chuck & Margaret Blewett, Dr. Barbara Brummer,  
Debi Davidson, Philip De Rea, Ray Fowlie,  
Madonna Hayes, Tom Heerema, Dave Heerema,  
Steven Heerema, David Hulmes, Jerry & Sue Kerns,  
George Petty, Rick Radis, Wendy Rhoads, Dr. Lance Risley,  
JJ Rusher, Suzanne Serafini, Mary Jo Sichak,  
Ellie Sroczynski, Eve Tomczak, Rick Weiman, Don Weise,  
Bob Weismantel, and Ken Witkowski

## Winter 2009-10 Programs

December 2009, January and February 2010

### EVERY DAY AT THE WEIS ECOLOGY CENTER

Wednesday to Sunday 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.  
**Nature store:** Your nearby natural resource for field guides, bird feeders and accessories, children's gift items, regional trail maps, and more. Come see what's new!

**Aviary:** Built by a crew of volunteers, our aviary is home to Weis's Red-tailed Hawk and Screech Owls.

**Bird feeding station:** Visit our observation deck to view our feeders, which attract a wide variety of birds including hummingbirds during the summer.

**Butterfly Garden/Model Backyard Habitat:** May through September, stop by to watch the butterflies and hunt for caterpillars in our garden or pick up ideas to improve your own yard.

**Exhibits:** Stop by our Visitor Center to see our snakes, turtle, and seasonal displays.

**Sugarbush demonstration** (February through March): Stop by to watch the sap run (weather-dependent) or help us collect sap. Then come back for our Maple Sugaring Festival to see how the process turns sap from the tree into syrup for your table, or for our

Pancake Brunch featuring our signature syrup!

**\*Hiking trails:** Over 24 miles of trails depart from Weis's private grounds and explore adjacent Norvin Green State Forest and the surrounding Highlands.

#### Program Registration

Unless otherwise noted, all programs require preregistration and payment in order to reserve your place. Stop in, mail a check (with name and date of program), or call 973.835.2160 to register by credit card. Programs are held rain or shine. Directions (if applicable) will be sent upon registration. Refunds are available only if we cancel the event or another participant can fill the place reserved for you. Weis Ecology Center also reserves the right to limit participation in a program where a participant poses a safety risk to either themselves or other participants.

Become a New Jersey Audubon member and enjoy discounts on tours, events, and field trips at all NJ Audubon centers. Members also get a 10% discount at our nature stores (greater discount on optics).

### Weis 'Quality Time' Programs for Kids and Families

#### OPEN HOUSE: HOLIDAY NATURE FESTIVAL Saturday, December 5

10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.  
Crisp mountain air, free nature walks, free live animal programs, free crafts for kids, fresh-baked goodies for sale, friendly faces, and fun for the whole family kick off our annual fresh-cut Christmas Tree Sale fundraiser. We'll see you there! Admission: FREE (no preregistration necessary).

#### THE NATURE PROGRAM COOPERATIVE PRESENTS: AN OWL PROWL AT TENAFLY NATURE CENTER

Thursday, December 10  
7:00 to 8:30 P.M.

Hosted by Weis and presented at, and in cooperation with, Tenafly Nature Center. Join Weis's teacher-naturalist Phaedra Demers, and Tenafly education director Debi Davidson for a hoot of a good time! After an introduction inside, participants will meet some live nocturnal hunters. We will then journey out to

listen for the stylish vocalizations of our local inhabitants. This program is intended for adults and families with children thirteen years or older. Cost: FREE for Nature Program Cooperative members, \$5 for nonmembers.

### **FESTIVAL OF THE WOODS**

**Friday, December 18**

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

**Saturdays, December 12, 19**

7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Come to Weis's winter workshop, where families mix and mingle and jingle and snack – all while the little elves make holiday nature crafts and decorations! After the crafting is complete, we take a winter wonderland walk to the fire ring for caroling around the campfire. A visit from St. Nick himself completes the night. Space is limited – register early. Cost: \$7 members, \$11 nonmembers; family rates (family = parents & children): \$21 members, \$33 nonmembers.

### **OPEN HOUSE: MAPLE SUGARING FESTIVAL**

**Sunday, February 21**

Noon to 4:00 P.M.

*\* Note: Last tour leaves at 4:00 P.M.*

One-hour sugaring tours leave the visitor center every 20 minutes. Experience the maple sugaring process from tree to tabletop, learn

how REAL maple syrup is made, and taste maple products available for purchase at our Maple Bake Sale. Before or after tours, visitors can head off into Norvin Green State Forest for a midwinter ramble, watch the winter bird activity from our Observation Deck, visit the Red-tailed Hawk or Screech Owls in the aviary, or browse Weis's Nature Store. Dress for the weather. It's a tree-tapping good time! No preregistration is necessary; purchase tour tickets the day of the festival on a first-come, first-served basis.

Cost: \$6 per person, \$18 per family (parent/child). A real sweet deal: Free admission for individuals who join or renew an NJ Audubon individual membership or for families who join or renew an NJ Audubon family membership. Applicable to new and renewed memberships made at Weis on Sunday, February 21.

### **PANCAKE BRUNCH FUNDRAISER**

**Sunday, March 21**

Seatings at: 9:30, 10:30, and 11:30 A.M., 12:30 and 1:30 P.M.

Celebrate the end of the maple sugaring season and the beginning of spring by joining us for a stack of fresh-made, tasty pancakes smothered in real Weis-made pure maple syrup. The menu also includes sausage, juice, and hot beverages.

Brunch proceeds support Weis's educational efforts. Preregistration is a must, as space is limited and each seating fills. Limit: 40.

Cost: \$6.50 members, \$9.50 nonmembers; family (parents + children): \$24 members, \$36 nonmembers.

### **GROUP PROGRAMS**

The Weis Ecology Center offers year-round day and residential learning opportunities for schools, scouts, and other groups. Stop by, visit us online, or call for our program listing. **FEATURED PROGRAM FOR WINTER (Feb./Mar.):** Maple Sugaring. Participants explore the concepts of winter tree identification and physiology, maple sugaring history, and the actual production of maple syrup. Hands-on demonstrations and the "maple challenge" taste test are included.

Call today for more information and available dates!

## **Programs for Adults and Teens**

### *NATURE STUDY*

### **Sowing the Seeds for Open Space: BIRD SEED SALE**

**Saturday, December 5, and**

**Saturday, February 6**

(pickup dates)

10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Help preserve open space in New Jersey! When you purchase your bird seed in support of this fundraising effort by NJ Audubon, you are providing food for wildlife and supporting locally grown produce. Order forms are online (extra forms can be picked up at WEC, or call and we'll mail you one). To order seed, simply return the completed form and payment to Weis two weeks before the pickup date. The order form is now available online at:

[www.njaudubon.org/Calendar/BirdSeed.aspx](http://www.njaudubon.org/Calendar/BirdSeed.aspx)

### **BIRDERS WITHOUT BORDERS I: EAGLE WATCHING ON THE HUDSON RIVER**

**Sunday, January 24**

9:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Meet associate naturalists Philip (Flip) De Rea and Ray Fowlie, Weis's teacher-naturalist Phaedra Demers, and Debi Davidson, education



## **CHRISTMAS TREE SALE/YEAR-END FUNDRAISER**

**Saturdays and Sundays, December 5 & 6; 12 & 13; 19 & 20**

**10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.**

**Our customers come back year after year because of the quality of our trees! You will too, once you pick the perfect-shaped, farm-raised, fresh-cut tree from Weis for your home this holiday season. Choose from Fraser, Douglas or white firs, blue spruce, and more. Trees range from 6' to 10' (not all species available at taller heights). Our Tree Yard is open 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on sale days. Prices range from \$32 to approximately \$81.**

director at the Tenaflly Nature Center, to begin a full day of Bald Eagle-watching. The search will take us up the Hudson and across the New York border, with possible stops at Bear Mountain, Croton Point, and George's Point. Dress for the weather and bring your best optics. Last year's highlights included many eagles of varying ages and Peregrine Falcons. Meet off-site; directions sent upon registration. Limit: 15. Cost (includes handouts): \$15 members, \$19 nonmembers.

### **BIRDERS WITHOUT BORDERS II: EAGLE WATCHING ON THE DELAWARE RIVER**

**Sunday, February (date TBA)**  
9:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

According to Henry Hudson, one "...cannot fly like an eagle with the wings of a wren...", as anyone who has seen an eagle in flight would agree. It is an experience to which nothing can compare. Meet associ-

ate naturalists Suzanne Serafini, Philip (Flip) De Rea, and Ray Fowlie at Milford Beach where the Delaware River defines the boundary between New Jersey and Pennsylvania for a full morning of eagle watching. Dress for the weather and bring your best optics. Directions sent upon registration. Limit: 15. Cost: \$8 members, \$12 nonmembers.

### **WALLKILL RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

**Sunday, February 21**

2:00 P.M. to dusk

Associate naturalist and Wallkill River NWR volunteer and expert Ken Witkowski will visit the refuge in hopes of finding wintering raptors, including Rough-legged Hawks and Short-eared Owls, as well as sparrows and other wintering passerines. Joint program with the Sandy Hook Bird Observatory. Caravan with SHBO's associate naturalists. Mail registration fees to SHBO seven days

in advance; volunteer leaders do not accept trip registration fees on the day of the field trip. Cost: \$15 members, \$20 nonmembers, and \$10 for SHBO volunteers; no cancellations or refunds. To facilitate sending directions, please include your e-mail address with your check or when you register, otherwise include your mailing address. This trip goes in any weather. Bring lunch, weather-appropriate clothing, and binoculars. Upon receipt of check, directions will be mailed from SHBO.

### *NATURE ADVENTURE*

#### **WEIS WOMEN'S HIKES**

**Saturday, January 9**

**Saturday, February 13**

8:00 to 10:00 A.M.

Moderately strenuous 2- to 3-mile hikes. Join Wendy Rhoads, Linda DiDonato, and Weis sanctuary director Karla Risdon (and maybe Laura Hoogstrate and/or Penny Galvany too) for these early morning hikes to some of their favorite scenic spots! A great way to enjoy some time outdoors, get some exercise, and get home early enough to spend the rest of the day with family and friends! Hikes meet at Weis (may carpool to the trailhead if necessary). Wear appropriate hiking footwear, dress in layers appropriate for the weather, and bring plenty of water. Hazardous driving conditions will cancel. Cost: \$5.

#### **BEGINNER'S CROSS-COUNTRY SKI CLINICS**

**Saturdays and Sundays:**

**January 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17**

9:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M.\*, or 2:00 P.M.\*\*

Three identical one-and-a-half-hour sessions are offered on each date depending upon registration. Learn the basics of cross-country skiing on flat and sloping terrain from our personable and patient instructors; then refine your technique and hone new skills on our field. When registering, include alternate time and date choices as well as shoe size. Limit: 20. Cost (includes equipment rental): \$15 members, \$20 nonmembers. Instruction only: Learn how to use the equipment you already own! Cost: \$10 members, \$15 nonmembers. No-snow conditions: If there's

### **Weis Wyanokie Wanderers (WWW) Club Hikes \***

**Strenuous hikes led by Don Weise.**

The terrain is steep and the pace is fast, good cardiovascular fitness required. Participants must wear appropriate hiking footwear, dress in layers and appropriately for weather conditions; bring lunch and plenty of fluids. Cost: \$5 members, \$8 nonmembers\*. Limit 25.

#### **HIKE HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

**Saturday, December 5** 9:30 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Celebrate the holiday season with a fun, challenging local loop hike. Afterward, enjoy the Weis Holiday Nature Festival complete with food, crafts, gift ideas, and Christmas trees. Hike meets at Weis. Nine miles.

#### **STERLING LAKE, FURNACE & TOWER**

**Sunday, January 3** 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Explore frozen Sterling Lake and the new mine trail. Climb through mature evergreen forests to Sterling Ridge and enjoy a beautiful view. Loop hike; distance depends on snow conditions. Meets off-site.

#### **DENS, LAKES, & LEDGES**

**Sunday, February 21** 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Try out the new Lakes and Ledges Loop from upcoming *Circuit Hikes in Harriman and Bear Mountain* book! Claudius Smith's Den, Lake Sebago, Lake Skenonto, Black Ash Mountain.

#### **PANCAKE BRUNCH HIKE**

**Sunday, March 21** 9:30 A.M. to ??? (TBA)

This challenging hike through Norvin Green State Forest features steep climbs, great views, and a short bushwhack. Join us afterward for a pancake brunch with homemade maple syrup (additional fee for brunch). Eight to nine miles.

\*You do NOT need to be a member of the WWWs to attend these hikes, but card-carrying WWW Hiking Club members get guaranteed admittance to 12 monthly WWW hikes and two annual Challenge Hikes at a flat annual fee of \$60. New WWW members are welcomed with a pack patch and a Weis trail map T-shirt.

no snow, we'll go anyway as long as the field is frozen BUT there will only be one session per day – Saturdays at 11:00 A.M.\*, Sundays at 2:00 P.M.\*\* Cost: \$8 members, \$12 nonmembers. Limited equipment; call for availability.

### **CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRIP: HIGH POINT STATE PARK Saturday, January 23**

8:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

An opportunity to celebrate snow and winter while they're here! Participants meet at Weis and car-pool to High Point Cross-Country Ski Center, where we'll ski groomed trails and experience nature in winter. This excursion is for experienced skiers and graduates of our Beginners' Clinics (see above). Limit: 20. Cost (includes Weis equipment rental): \$30 members, \$40 nonmembers.

### **HIGHLANDS HIKES**

#### **Three Sundays, December 13, January 17, and February 7**

9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Moderately paced hikes led by an associate naturalist. Locations to be announced. Highlands Hikes offer an opportunity to visit and explore some of the many special places in the Highlands region. Participants must wear appropriate hiking footwear, dress in layers and appropriately for weather conditions; bring lunch and plenty of fluids. Hikes meet at Weis unless otherwise indicated. Cost: \$5 members, \$8 nonmembers.

## WEEKDAY and WEEKEND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### **Your time is valuable to us!**

- ✓ **Tree yard helpers\***: Assist customers in the selection of their tree and help secure it to their vehicle. (Saturdays and/or Sundays December 5-20)
- ✓ **Bird Seed Sale\***: Assist customers & carry their bird seed to their vehicle (December 5 & February 6).
- ✓ **Bakers**: For the Nature Fest Bake Sale (December 5) and the Maple Sugaring Festival (February 21).
- ✓ **Computer skills**: Maintaining and developing our store's POS and ILC's.

✓ **Cross-country ski instructors**: Saturday and/or Sundays January 2 – January 17.

✓ **Nature Store inventory**: A handful of folks are needed to help count our stock (February 28).

✓ **Program support**: Holiday Nature Fest\* (December 5), Festival of the Woods (December 12, 18 & 19), Maple Sugaring Festival (February 21); Programs need hands-on volunteers before, during, and (for a short while) after each event to assist with set-up, implementation, and break-down.

✓ **Reception**: Friendly folks to meet and greet center visitors, answer the phone, and/or process Nature Store Sales.

✓ **Public programs**: Weis welcomes skilled amateur (or professional) naturalists and outdoorsy folks to propose classes, walks, and workshops they might like to lead.

\* Programs appropriate for teen/Service Learning volunteers.

## SANCTUARY NOTES

Weis' Nature Store will be closed for inventory on the morning of Saturday, February 28.

Weis Ecology Center gratefully acknowledges the following people for their help and support:

**Summer program and field trip leaders**: Chuck and Margaret Blewett; Dr. Barbara Brummer; Debi Davidson; Philip DeRea; Linda DiDonato; Ray Fowlie; Madonna Hayes; Tom, Dave & Steven Heerema; David Hulmes; Jerry & Sue Kerns; George Petty; Rick Radis; Wendy Rhoads; Dr. Lance Risley; JJ Rusher; Suzanne Serafini; Mary Jo Sichak; Ellie Sroczynski; Eve Tomczak; Don Weise; Bob Weismantel; Ken Witkowski.

**Program support staff**: Alpha Phi Omega students; Chuck, Margaret, Correna & Adam Blewett; Tony Cacciapuoti; Dr. Anthony DeFina; Adam Greenbaum; Madonna & Joe Hayes; Tom, Nancy, Dave, Ali & Steven Heerema; Laura Hoogstrate; Cliff & Jean Huntington; Barry Milligan; Lisa Montagnino; Laura Moskin; Penny Nichols-Galvany; Collin, Caeley & Liam Philhower; Wendy Rhoads; Teri & Evelyn Rocco; Suzanne Serafini; Mary Jo Sichak; Holly VanDyk. *Continued on page 5*

## CRITTER-CARE SPONSORSHIPS

Weis Ecology Center has a small menagerie of critters that visit schools, scout groups, and libraries throughout the year (our Environmental Edu-critters). You can help us defer the expenses of their upkeep (care, feeding, checkups, etc.) by becoming a Critter-Care Sponsor!

### **Each sponsorship packet includes:**

- ✓ A certificate of appreciation
- ✓ A photograph portrait of your sponsored animal
- ✓ Natural history information sheet on your sponsored species
- ✓ A Peterson's *First Guide* to your animal's class (either birds or reptiles)
- ✓ Two invitations to our Owl Prowl (winter date to be announced)

### **Sponsored Animals:**

- Kili, the Red-tailed Hawk \$40
- Windy or Winky, the Screech Owls \$30  
(can substitute a small plush owl for field guide)
- Red, the Corn Snake \$25
- Eclipse, the Black Rat Snake \$25
- Tina, the Box Turtle \$20
- Classroom Special \$180  
(includes a classroom visit by Kili and Windy, or two reptiles)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DAY PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EVENING PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

*This is a gift from:* \_\_\_\_\_

Mail with payment to:  
**Weis Ecology Center**  
150 Snake Den Road,  
Ringwood, NJ 07456

**Adopt-a-Maple sponsors:** Joan Bernhardt; Bill & Joanne Crouthamel (from Bill & Lori Kane); Argos Gerber (from Charles & Tomi Gerber), Carl Lieberman (from Alan Lieberman), Metz Family (from Cheryl Metz); Bert & Patti Murray (from Chris Williams); Sweetie (from Dale Muto); Angie Otto; Charlie Sontag & Family (from Thom Sontag); WWW Member Art DiOrio (from Don Weise); Paula & Chris Williams.

**Eagle Scouts:** Adam Blewett; Chase Brush; Steven Heerema; Justin Kuo.

**Earth Day workers:** Chuck & Adam Blewett; Cheryl Brooks; Kelly Burja; Maria Castillo; Eileen Castillo & Jason Reilly; Mike Gaeckle; Linda & Rich Greendyk; Dana & Nancy Haig; Jay Nugent; Collin, Kaleigh, and Liam Philhower; Teri Rocco; Shirley & Andy Rosenbaum; John & Noreen Watson. Critter Care Sponsors: Charles, Tomi and Chase Gerber.

**Gardening and invasive plant management:** Chuck Blewett & family; Rich & Linda Greendyk; Tony Cacciapuoti.

**Resource and display donations:** Norman Schantz/William Paterson

University; Suzanne Serafini; Mary Jo Sichak; Isobel Wayrick.

**Technical support:** Bill Boesenberg ([www.snakes-and-scales.com](http://www.snakes-and-scales.com)); Joe Hayes; Alan & Zachary Ligertwood; Mike Lyncheski/Harrier Group; Len Soucy/The Raptor Trust; Joe Troy/Green Mountain Tree Experts.

**Business supporters:** Chuck Blewett/Pfizer; Tom Heerema/Verizon Volunteer Incentive Program; Sal DiCarlo/Verizon Matching Incentive Program; Bob & Chris Kenyon/Triangle Trophy; Mark Roberts/Roberts Mechanical; Rick Weiman/Waldwick Plastics Corporation; Prime 15 Steakhouse.

World Series of Birding: Suzanne Serafini; Diane Brown; Tom Heerema; Jay Nugent; Karla Risdon; Mark Roberts; Beverly Robertson; Holly Van Dyk; and our sponsors!

And many thanks to Kristen Tomassichio, our 2008 Ramapo Fellowship student! She was a huge asset to Weis's educational programing this past summer, and we wish her much success in all of her future endeavors. ■

## Adopt-a-Sugar Maple

*"The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit."*

— Nelson Henderson

Invest in the future by adopting one of Weis's sugar maples and thereby supporting our environmental education endeavors.

Cost: \$30 members, \$40 nonmembers.

### Supporters receive:

- An attractive adoption certificate
- A plaque posted on a Weis maple for the sugaring season
- Two tickets to the Pancake Brunch (March 21).
- An 8 oz. jar of homemade Weis maple syrup.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

DAY PHONE (with area code) \_\_\_\_\_

EVENING PHONE (with area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Plaque \_\_\_\_\_

This is a gift from \_\_\_\_\_

### BRUNCH SEATING

(choose one):

9:30 A.M.     10:30 A.M.

11:30 A.M.

12:30 P.M.     1:30 P.M.

### ADDITIONAL FUNDRAISER TICKETS FOR BRUNCH

\$6.50 members, \$9.50 nonmembers:

# \_\_\_\_\_ members; # \_\_\_\_\_ nonmembers

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Weis Ecology Center Events at a Glance

Saturday, December 5 ..... Bird Seed Pickup  
 Saturday, December 5 ..... Christmas Tree Sale Begins\*  
 Saturday, December 5 ..... Open House:Holiday Nature Festival  
 Saturday, December 5 ..... WWW Hike  
 Thursday, December 10 ..... Nature Program: Cooperative Owl Prowl  
 Saturday, December 12 ..... Festival of the Woods  
 Sunday, December 13 ..... Highland Hike  
 Saturday, December 19 ..... Festival of the Woods  
 Sunday, December 20 ..... Festival of the Woods  
 Saturday, January 2 ..... Cross-Country Skiing Begins \*\*  
 Sunday, January 3 ..... WWW Hike  
 Saturday, January 9 ..... Women's Hike  
 Sunday, January 17 ..... Highland Hike  
 Saturday, January 23 ..... High Point Cross-Country Ski Trip  
 Sunday, January 24 ..... Hudson River Eagles  
 Sunday, February TBA ..... Delaware River Eagles  
 Saturday, February 6 ..... Bird Seed Pickup  
 Sunday, February 7 ..... Highland Hike  
 Wednesday, February 10 .... Maple Sugaring Programs Begin  
 Saturday, February 13 ..... Women's Hike  
 Sunday, February 21 ..... Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge  
 Sunday, February 21 ..... WWW Hike  
 Sunday, February 21 ..... Open House: Maple Sugaring Festival  
 Sunday, March 21 ..... Pancake Brunch  
 Sunday, March 21 ..... WWW Hike

\*Every Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. through December 20

\*\* Every Saturday and Sunday at 9:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M., and 2:00 P.M. through January 17