

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Programs, Nature Walks, Bald Eagles eBook Launch Highlight New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) Fall 2014 Public Programs

Season Begins on Sunday, Sept. 7, with Back to Football Nature Walk

LYNDHURST, N.J. –Visits from rescue dogs, nature walks, the launch of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission’s (NJMC) Bald Eagles eBook and a popular Halloween event are among the highlights of the Commission’s Fall 2014 public schedule of events. The fun and educational programs for all ages take place at the Meadowlands Environment Center (MEC) and the Center for Environmental Science and Education (Science Center) in DeKorte Park, the home of the NJMC.

“The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission is pleased to offer an array of engaging walks, talks and interactive programs for children, adults and families that highlight the amazing natural beauty of the Meadowlands and the importance of protecting our wildlife and environment,” said Marcia Karrow, Executive Director of the NJMC. “We hope that everyone will take advantage of these great programs.”

Experience the Meadowlands’ Natural Beauty On Foot and By Boat

Fall is a great time of year to get outdoors, especially in the Meadowlands. The region’s parks and natural areas offer spectacular views of scenic wetlands and the numerous birds and other wildlife that inhabit the region. Visitors can enjoy free guided nature walks with the NJMC and the Bergen County Audubon Society from **10 a.m. to noon on the first Sunday and Third Tuesday of each month.**

The season kicks off with the annual “**Back to Football**” walk on **Sunday, Sept. 7, in DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst.** Prizes are awarded to the first people who see any bird species with the same name as a professional football team. The **Tuesday, Sept. 16,** walk at **Harrier Meadow in North Arlington** includes a special bird banding demonstration by NJMC staff.

The remainder of the Fall nature walk schedule is as follows:

Sunday, Oct. 5 and Tuesday, Nov. 18: Mill Creek Marsh, Secaucus
Tuesday, Oct. 21: Losen Slote Creek Park, Little Ferry
Sunday, Nov. 2: Harrier Meadow, North Arlington
Sunday, Dec. 7, and Tuesday, Dec. 16: DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst

It’s also not too late to take a guided **NJMC Pontoon Boat Cruise of the Hackensack River.** The leisurely, two-hour trips run through September and give participants a chance to experience the river, its marshes and wildlife up-close from a unique vantage point. Experienced NJMC staff discuss the region’s human and

environmental history and point out birds and other wildlife along the way. **Trips depart from the NJMC's River Barge Park in Carlstadt. The cruises are for ages 10 and up and cost \$15. Pre-registration and payment are required. For more information, call 201-460-4677.**

September NJMC Pontoon Boat Ride Schedule

5 p.m. Sept. 3, 4, 9, 12, 17, 23 and 25.

8:30 a.m. Sept. 13.

In addition, all ages are invited to a **“Seining Adventure” on Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.** to dip net for shrimp, fish and other marsh critters at DeKorte Park. Dress for mess: There will be mud! Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4.

Awesome Animals

Visitors can learn about and in some cases meet a variety of wildlife and domesticated animals throughout the fall season. All ages can **“Get to Know NJ Black Bears” on Sunday, Sept. 14 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.** The talk, presented by the Manalapan-based Bear Education and Resource Program (B.E.A.R.), aims to inform people about the true nature of black bears, reduce unwarranted fears and promote tolerance of bear neighbors. Participants will also discover ways to lessen the chances of having bears frequent residential neighborhoods. Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4. **Note: There will be no live bears at this event.**

On Wednesday, Sept. 10, the NJMC is **launching its first eBook, “Bald Eagles in the Meadowlands & Beyond.”** The public is invited to help us celebrate while learning about these majestic creatures at a free **book talk and light reception on Wednesday, Sept. 17, from 8 to 9:30 p.m.** The crowd-sourced eBook is sponsored by the NJMC and the Conserve Wildlife Foundation. It features amazing images by 19 mostly local nature photographers, as well as chapters on our national symbol's remarkable recovery in the region, the state and nationwide. For more information on how to view or download “Bald Eagles in the Meadowlands & Beyond,” or purchase a printed copy, visit www.njmeadowlands.gov. To RSVP for the book talk and reception, contact Don Torino of the Bergen County Audubon Society at 201-230-4983.

Join New Jersey's “Batman,” Joe D'Angeli, for a live bat exhibit and bat movie night at **“Batstock,” on Friday, Sept. 19, from 6 to 9 p.m.** D'Angeli, head of the Ridgefield Park-based Wildlife and Conservation Center, will explain how these often-misunderstood web-winged wonders benefit the environment. There will even be an appearance by the Batmobile! Suggested donation is \$5. Portions of the proceeds go to bat conservation and rehabilitation groups nationwide. Registration is recommended; call 201-257-2231.

Come meet a hawk, an owl and other raptors from the Flat Rock Brook Nature Center at the **“Birds of Prey” program on Sunday, Nov. 9, from 2 to 3 p.m.** Participants will find out all about these feathered ambassadors' behavior, physiology, adaptations and natural history. Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4.

Get ready for Thanksgiving with **“All About Turkeys,” on Saturday, Nov. 22, from 1 to 2 p.m.** We'll serve up some turkey facts and history, a scavenger hunt for kids with prizes, and a cranberry sauce demonstration and take-home recipe. Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4.

Some very special canines return to the Meadowlands by popular demand for the **“Meet a Rescue Dog” program, on Sunday, Dec. 14, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.** Members of Mahwah-based New Jersey Search and Rescue will talk about how the dogs carry out their missions in all elements, and give tips for what you can do if you get lost in the wilderness. New Jersey Search and Rescue is officially recognized as a non-profit, state and county emergency management resource organization. Cost is \$5 per person, MEC members \$4.

Halloween Fun

Kids of all ages are invited to DeKorte Park on **Thursday, Oct. 23** for “**Halloween at the Meadowlands,**” **from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.** The highly popular annual program includes hayrides, a “Spooky Walk,” ghost stories and games. This event sells out quickly. Advance payment and pre-registration are required. Early registration is recommended. Cost is \$8, MEC members \$6.

Astronomical Wonders

Stargazers young and old alike can view and learn about planets, stars and other celestial bodies at the NJMC’s **William D. McDowell Observatory**. The Observatory, which features a research-grade telescope with a 20-inch mirror, is **open to the public for free on Monday and Wednesday nights**, excluding holidays and weather permitting. **Observatory hours are 8 to 10 p.m. in September and October, and 7 to 10 p.m. in November and December.** Adults must accompany children, and you must be able to climb 25 steps to reach the telescope. Registration is not required. The Observatory also offers a “**Let’s Talk Astronomy**” lecture series on Tuesday nights. Each month focuses on a specific aspect of astronomy. Registration is required. Cost is \$5 per person, MEC members \$4.

Nature As a Canvas

The NJMC is hosting several art workshops for adults and children this fall, with the environment as your muse. Basic supplies are provided at all programs. A four-session “**Autumn Watercolor Series**” will introduce participants to the unique qualities of watercolor painting and how to capture the movements and colors of the season. **The workshops will take place from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28.** The cost for the four sessions is \$60, MEC members \$40. Materials are provided.

Adults and kids ages 12 and up are invited to “**The Beauty of Gray: Charcoal Still Life with Shells and Skulls,**” **on Saturday, Nov. 1, from 10 a.m. to noon.** Exercises will focus on “seeing” natural objects such as shells and animal skulls for their visual components (shape and proportions) and using pencil techniques to translate what you see to paper. Take-home supplies are provided. Cost is \$20, MEC members \$15.

Children ages 5 to 12 can get in on the fun with “**Watercolor Pencils for Kids: Signs of Fall,**” **on Saturday, Dec. 13.** There are two sessions to choose from: **10 a.m. to noon or 1 to 3 p.m.** Instructors will teach how to create fun drawings with “no mess” color. Young artists can also explore painting animals getting ready for winter, sleepy winter trees, an exciting holiday, or ice and snow special effects! This workshop is very popular; early registration is recommended. Children must be accompanied by adults. Cost is \$10 per child (no fee for adults).

In a related program, “**Art of the Heavens**” explores how early humans created art from inspiration from the cosmos. The talk, on **Thursday, Nov. 6, from 2 to 3 p.m.,** is geared toward adults and examines some of the most important artists throughout history and how their work reflected an interest in the heavens. Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4.

Welcoming A New Season

The fall schedule ends by welcoming the next season with a “**Winter Solstice Celebration**” **on Thursday, Dec. 18, from 7 to 9 p.m.** Visitors of all ages can learn about the history of the solstice, make a solstice craft and enjoy solstice-themed treats. Adults must accompany children. Cost is \$5, MEC members \$4.

The Meadowlands Environment Center is an NJMC facility operated by Ramapo College. For more information on Fall 2014 programs, or to register, visit www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec. There is no phone registration. For questions, call 201-460-8300. Those interested in receiving email alerts about NJMC public programs should email communications@njmeadowlands.gov or call 201-460-4619.

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