

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Brian Aberback, Public Information Officer
Phone: 201-460-4619 Cell: 201-615-8570
brian.aberback@njmeadowlands.gov



**New Jersey
Meadowlands
Commission**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NJMC Announces 2014 Pontoon Boat Cruise and Canoe Tour Season

Guided Tours Run from June through September

Provide Unique Opportunity to Experience the Meadowlands' Natural Beauty

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's (NJMC) highly anticipated pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours of the Hackensack River are set to launch in June, giving visitors a unique, up-close chance to explore the amazing natural beauty and wildlife of the Meadowlands while learning about the history of the river and the region. Cruises start on Wednesday, June 4, at 5:30 p.m., departing from the NJMC's River Barge Park in Carlstadt. The canoe season begins on Saturday, June 14, at 8:30 a.m., launching from Mill Creek Point Park in Secaucus.

“The Meadowlands Commission's pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours are the pinnacle of our public programs and cannot be surpassed in giving visitors a new, extraordinary view of the Meadowlands and an understanding of its history,” said Marcia Karrow, Executive Director of the NJMC. “These trips are truly a wonderful opportunity and, judging by the number of return visitors, an experience that you'll want to relive again and again.”

For those who only know the Hackensack River and the Meadowlands from the vantage point of the surrounding highways or the window of a commuter train, a NJMC guided pontoon boat cruise or canoe tour shines an entirely new light on this magnificent body of water, its marshes and surrounding ecosystem, all framed by a spectacular view of the Manhattan skyline.

Expert NJMC staff narrate the two-hour boat cruises. While talking about the Hackensack River estuary's storied history they also point out wildlife along the way. The Hackensack River is a great place to see many of the more than 280 bird species that have been documented here, including 34 on New Jersey's threatened, endangered and species of special concern lists.

Keep an eye on the shoreline for egrets, herons and sandpipers. Turn your gaze skyward and you might see peregrine falcons perched under bridges, ospreys searching for tasty snacks or, if you're lucky, a bald eagle. Don't forget your camera for these fantastic photo opportunities. The cruises head south from River Barge Park in Carlstadt and pass under historic lift bridges and drawbridges. The excursions also visit the river's marshes, where muskrats, diamondback terrapins and fiddler crabs may be seen. No two cruises are alike, as each takes a slightly different path along the river, at different tides.

Canoe tours last three hours and focus on the river's marshes, taking participants on a journey through a diverse array of vegetation and wildlife. Paddlers will learn the basics of salt marsh ecology and enjoy the magnificent scenery while rowing past wetlands and down creeks.

Pontoon boat and canoe trips are for ages 10 and up. Canoes hold up to three people, and at least one person should have canoeing experience. Requests for group pontoon boat and canoe trips are welcome. Due to the high popularity of these tours, early reservations are recommended. Canoe tours are \$15 per person and the suggested donation for pontoon boat rides is also \$15 per person.

All pontoon boat rides depart from River Barge Park in Carlstadt. Canoe trips launch from River Barge Park as well as Mill Creek Point Park and the Saw Mill Wildlife Management Area, both in Secaucus.

For a complete schedule of trips and to download a registration form, visit www.njmeadowlands.gov. Registration forms are also available at the NJMC offices and Meadowlands Environment Center, both in DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst.

For more information, call 201-460-4677.

NJMC 2014 Pontoon Boat Tours (All tours launch from River Barge Park, Carlstadt)

June

5:30 p.m. June 4, 10, 12, 18, 20, 24 and 26

8:30 a.m. June 14

July

5:30 p.m. July 2, 8, 10, 16, 18, 22, 24 and 30

10 a.m. July 9 and 23

8:30 a.m. July 19

August

5:30 p.m. Aug. 5, 7, 13, 15, 19, 21 and 27

10 a.m. Aug. 6 and 20

8:30 a.m. Aug. 23

September

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

8:30 a.m. Sept. 13

NJMC 2014 Canoe Tours

8:30 a.m. June 14, Mill Creek Point Park, Secaucus

8:30 a.m. July 26 and Aug. 16, River Barge Park, Carlstadt

8:30 a.m. Sept. 13, Sawmill Wildlife Management Area, Secaucus

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