

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2011



NJMC Announces 2011 Pontoon Boat Cruise and Canoe Tour Schedule

Season runs from May 21 to Sept. 29

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission’s (NJMC) tremendously popular pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours of the Meadowlands District launch this year on Saturday, May 21, providing a fantastic opportunity to see and learn about the Hackensack River and its marshes and witness the region’s remarkable, recovering urban ecosystem up-close.

“The NJMC’s pontoon boat rides and canoe tours are an extraordinary way to experience the Meadowlands District’s magnificent scenery and diverse vegetation and wildlife,” said Marcia Karrow, Executive Director of the NJMC. “These breathtaking excursions, along with the District’s beautiful parks, hiking trails and recreation areas, make the Meadowlands an ideal eco-tourism destination.”

The leisurely, two-hour pontoon boat cruises and three-hour canoe tours are led by expert NJMC guides who discuss the area’s natural and man-made history and point out the fauna and flora that inhabit the River and its tributaries. Be sure to bring your cameras and video equipment. The Hackensack River is a wonderful waterway on which to see many species of birds, including herons, shorebirds and northern harriers. Turn your head skyward and you’re likely to view peregrine falcons perched underneath bridges, ospreys searching for tasty snacks and, if you’re lucky, a bald eagle.

Studies by the NJMC have shown an extraordinary increase in the number of avian species that inhabit the Meadowlands District, providing a dependable indicator that the Hackensack River is getting cleaner and supporting an ever-expanding food chain. The roughly 280 species of birds that can be seen in the region feed on perch, mummichogs and other fish in the River.

Pontoon boat and canoe tours are for ages 10 and up, and group trips are available upon request. The NJMC provides all equipment, and the rides are fully insured. Due to the popularity of the trips, it is recommended that reservations be made early. Canoe tours are \$15 per person. Suggested donation for pontoon boat rides is also \$15 per person.

The trips launch from various Meadowlands locations. Pontoon boat trips depart on weekdays at 10 a.m. or 5:30 p.m. and at 8:30 a.m. on Saturdays. Canoe tours begin at 8:30 or 10 a.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays. For a complete schedule of trips and to register online, visit <http://www.njmeadowlands.gov/environment/tours.html>. Registration forms are also available at the NJMC headquarters and Meadowlands Environment Center, both in DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst.

For more information, call 201-460-4640. To learn more about the Meadowlands District’s natural beauty and its vast array of active and passive recreation activities, visit the NJMC’s homepage, www.njmeadowlands.gov, and its nature blog, www.meadowblog.net.

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