

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

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**New Jersey
Meadowland
Commission**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Family Science Nights, Animal and Nature Programs Highlight New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) Fall Public Schedule

Fun, Educational Series for Kids and Families Begins Thursday, Sept. 13

LYNDHURST, N.J. – A new Family Science Nights series, visits from live animals, nature-themed talks and workshops, and the popular “Halloween in the Meadowlands” event are just some of the many highlights on the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission’s (NJMC) Fall 2012 schedule of educational programs for all ages. Programs are held in the Meadowlands Environment Center (MEC), in DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst, and reflect the Commission’s renewed commitment to bringing families together to experience the wonders of science and nature that surround us in the Meadowlands.

“The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission is pleased to present a variety of fun and educational experiences that will foster a sense of environmental awareness in children and their parents and the importance of protecting the Meadowlands’ unique urban ecosystem,” said Marcia Karrow, Executive Director of the NJMC. “The Fall 2012 schedule is the Commission’s most engaging to date, and we highly encourage families to take advantage of these unique learning opportunities.”

Special Film Screening

The season begins on **Thursday, Sept. 13**, at 7 p.m., with a special, free screening of “The Lost Bird Project,” an acclaimed new documentary about the stories of five birds driven to extinction in modern times and sculptor Todd McGrain’s project to memorialize them. The film will be followed by a question-and-answer session with McGrain, three-time Oscar nominated Director Deborah Dickson, Emmy Award-winning Producer Muffie Meyer and Executive Producer Andy Stern.

Family Science Nights

The NJMC is proud to kick off its inaugural Family Science Nights series on **Wednesday, Sept. 19**, with “H2Olympics,” in which children can learn about water by participating in Olympic-themed games and activities. On **Tuesday, Oct. 9**, we’re all about amphibians. “Fish, Fish, Fish” provides an opportunity for kids to learn the difference between species. Participants can bring a T-shirt and make a fish print to take home.

Family Science Nights continue on **Thursday, Nov. 1**, when families of children and young adults with special needs are invited to explore how animals and plants survive in the wild. “Astounding Adaptations” includes animal movement, protection and feeding simulations that include live animal interaction. This event is an extension of the MEC’s MarshAccess program, which provides a full range of hands-on, classroom and field-based educational experiences for those with developmental, visual, hearing, mobility, learning/cognitive and age-related disabilities.

The next program, on **Tuesday, Nov. 27**, tells you everything you need to know to “Build an Aquarium,” including water chemistry, tank set-up, habitats and the species best-suited for your needs. Family Science Nights wraps up on **Tuesday, Dec. 4**, with “Keeping Track,” when attendees can discover how to identify animals by their footprints.

All Family Science Nights events are \$5 per person, \$4 for MEC members, and run from 7 to 9 p.m. While the programs are geared toward those ages 6-12, parents are welcome to bring children of all ages.

Live Animals, Spooky Walk, Solstice Celebration and More

The fall schedule also includes a number of animal visits. Raptors come to the MEC on **Sunday, Oct. 14**, at 1 p.m. for “Hawks, Owls & Eagles ... Oh, My!,” while birds, lizards, tarantulas, alligators and snakes drop by for “A Touch of Nature,” on **Sunday, Dec. 2**, at 2 p.m. Some “Terrific Turtles” are on hand **Sunday, Dec. 16**, at 1 p.m.

Additional wildlife-related events include a talk on safe seafood consumption, **Thursday, Sept. 20**, at 2 p.m.; a “Seining Adventure” (fishing with large nets), **Saturday, Sept. 29**, at 1 p.m.; “Fantastic Fish,” a program geared toward children ages 5 and under, **Sunday, Oct. 21**, at 1 p.m.; a discussion of the relationship between “Comets, Asteroids and Wildlife,” **Thursday, Nov. 8**, at 2 p.m.; and a “Turkey Trot” featuring a scavenger hunt for kids and cranberry sauce demonstration and take-home recipe for parents, **Sunday, Nov. 18**, at 1 p.m.

Kids can become wildlife artists by going on a “Bugs and Beasts: Drawing Safari,” **Sunday, Sept. 23**, at 1 p.m., and during “Fur, Fins and Feathers: Watercolor Pencils for Kids,” **Saturday, Nov. 3**, at 1 p.m. A series of classes for teens and adults, “Exploring Wildlife in Watercolor Pencils,” includes demonstrations, guided instruction and independent work time. Classes are **Wednesdays Nov. 7, 14 and 28**, from 7 to 9 p.m. Registration for the three-week series is \$60 per person, \$45 for MEC members. Supplies are included for all art workshops.

The fall calendar would not be complete without the much-anticipated “Halloween in the Meadowlands” event. This year’s festivities include crafts, games, hayrides and a spooky walk. The Halloween program is **Thursday, Oct. 25**, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Parents are encouraged to register now, as the event traditionally sells out fast. The cost is \$8 per person, \$6 for MEC members.

The Commission welcomes the holiday season on **Sunday, Dec. 9**, with “Rockin’ in the Ocean,” a high-energy concert by Gigi and the Lend Me a Hand Band performing rock, swing and doo-wop songs about our oceans’ inhabitants. The season ends by saying goodbye to fall with a “Special Winter Solstice Celebration,” on **Thursday, Dec. 20**, at 7 p.m. The evening combines solstice and astronomy traditions. Participants can make a yule log, create and eat Asian rice-ball solstice treats, and much more.

The Meadowlands Environment Center is an NJMC facility operated by Ramapo College. For more information on Fall 2012 programs, and to register, visit www.njmeadowlands.gov/ec or pick up a registration form at the Environment Center, 2 DeKorte Park Plaza, Lyndhurst. For questions, call 201-460-8300.

Program costs not listed above:

Free

“Should I Tell My Children and Grandchildren to Eat the Fish and Crabs They Catch?”

Thursday, Sept. 20

“Seining Adventure,” Saturday, Sept. 29

“Comets, Asteroids and Wildlife,” Thursday, Nov. 8

\$10 per person, \$8 MEC members

“Bugs and Beasts: Drawing Safari for Kids,” Sunday, Sept. 23

“Fur, Fins and Feathers: Watercolor Pencils for Kids,” Saturday, Nov. 3

\$10 per adult and child, \$8 per adult and child for MEC members

Fantastic Fish, Sunday, Oct. 21

Terrific Turtles, Sunday, Dec. 16

\$7 per person, \$5 MEC members

“Hawks, Owls, & Eagles ... Oh My!” Sunday, Oct. 14

“A Touch of Nature,” Sunday, Dec. 2

“Rockin’ in the Ocean,” Sunday, Dec. 9

\$5 per person, \$4 MEC members

“Turkey Trot,” Sunday, Nov. 18

“Winter Solstice Celebration,” Thursday, Dec. 20

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