

NJMC NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**New Jersey
Meadowlands
Commission**

NJMC 2012 Nature Events Spotlight Region's Growing Reputation As Premier Outdoor Destination

River Barge Park Day, Butterfly Festival Among Many Highlights

LYNDHURST, N.J. – A festival celebrating the opening of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission's (NJMC) River Barge Park, the Third Annual NJMC Butterfly Day, a marsh cleanup and the Commission's extremely popular pontoon boat rides, canoe tours and bird walks highlight an exciting schedule of NJMC family-friendly activities in 2012. The programs reflect the Commission's ongoing commitment to promoting the Meadowlands District's amazing natural beauty and wildlife and continuing to advance the region's reputation as a premier outdoor destination.

"No matter the season, the NJMC offers healthy, educational and fun outdoor activities for visitors of all ages to enjoy the Meadowlands District's abundant natural resources," said Marcia Karrow, Executive Director of the NJMC. "I encourage everyone from throughout New Jersey and the entire Metropolitan Area to discover our unique urban environmental oasis."

The NJMC's numerous 2012 highlights include the following (all events free unless otherwise noted):

Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Raindate Sunday, May 20)

River Barge Park Day

Outwater Lane, Carlstadt

- The NJMC's latest urban environment jewel, the 5.5-acre River Barge Park, offers much-needed boating and paddling access to the Hackensack River in southern Bergen County and includes a riverfront promenade, catch-and-release fishing dock, park trail and open-air education pavilion. River Barge Park Day includes free pontoon boat rides, educational activities for kids and informational booths focusing on the preservation of the Hackensack River Watershed and its surrounding areas.

Sunday, April 22, 10 a.m. to noon

Earth Day Bird Talk and Walk

DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst

- Celebrate Earth Day with a talk and slide show on the return of raptors to the Meadowlands followed by a 90-minute walk led by the NJMC and Bergen County Audubon Society (BCAS) to look for early spring shorebirds and warblers.

Sunday June 3, 10 a.m. to noon

**Kearny Marsh Cleanup
Gunnell Oval, Kearny**

- Join the NJMC, the BCAS and the Northern New Jersey Geocachers as we clean the trails by foot and the marsh by canoe as part of National Trail Day Weekend.

Sunday, July 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Third Annual NJMC Butterfly Day

DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst

- This family event, which drew 400 people in 2011, features butterfly walks, introductory butterfly slide shows, information on butterfly identification, binoculars and gardening to attract butterflies, plus great contests and door prizes.

Tuesdays July 17 and Aug. 28, 10 a.m. to noon

Pontoon Boat Birding Cruises

Trips depart from River Barge Park, Outwater Lane, Carlstadt.

- Scope the Hackensack River and the sky above for peregrine falcons, ospreys, northern harriers, various egrets and herons, and diamond terrapins from the vantage point of a NJMC pontoon boat. Adults and children over age 12 only.
- Suggested donation is \$15. Call 201-460-4640 to reserve your spot.

Pontoon Boat Cruises and Canoe Tours

- The full schedule of guided NJMC pontoon boat tours and canoe trips runs from late May to mid-September and will be announced in late March. The rides are for ages 10 and up.
- The trips are a great way to experience the Hackensack River and its marshes from a unique viewpoint and make for fantastic photo opportunities.
- The leisurely, two-hour excursions are led by expert NJMC guides who explain the region's human and environmental history and identify birds and other wildlife along the way.
- Boat cruises have a suggested donation of \$15; canoe trips cost \$15.

Saturday, Aug. 11, 8:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Fourth Annual Kevin Karlson Shorebird Day

DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst

Spend the day with noted shorebird expert and nature photographer Kevin Karlson. Activities include bird walks, a talk on "Tips on Becoming a Better Birder" and an hour-long wildlife photography workshop.

Ongoing

First Sunday and Third Tuesday Monthly Nature Walks, 10 a.m. to noon

Various Locations

- Join the NJMC and BCAS year-round on guided nature walks. No matter the season, there are spectacular birds to be found in the Meadowlands District, from warblers and swallows in the spring and black skimmers and egrets in the summer to raptors and other migratory birds in the fall and the hawks and waterfowl of winter.
- Walks take place at DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst, Harrier Meadow in North Arlington, Mill Creek Marsh in Secaucus and Losen Slote Creek Park in Little Ferry.

For a full schedule of events visit <http://www.njmeadowlands.gov/events.html>.

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