

Demarest Nature News



Demarest Nature Center Association
Box 41, Demarest, N.J., 07627

www.demarestnaturecenter.org
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We hope you are enjoying the Demarest Nature Center! It is now in full bloom and is a wonderful place to visit. Come see the turtles, ducks, deer, birds, flowers, trees, foxes, and many other examples of natural beauty. The trails are well marked, so they are easy to navigate. Many amazing volunteers have ensured that the trails are beautiful and free of litter. As always, entry is free.

The past few months have been busy! We started the year with the annual maple syrup demonstration, showing how trees are tapped for sap, and how maple syrup is made. We started a monthly community walk, which is a guided tour and talk about various nature topics. Twice per year (in spring and fall), we partner with the Bergen Audubon Society to host a birdwatching event. We partnered with Marc Gussen (naturalist at Closter Nature Center) to do field trips and classroom nature talks for 12 groups of elementary school students. We partnered with the Demarest Free Public Library to invite Steve "Wildman" Brill to give a talk on foraging and a hike. We recently had our Canoe Day in partnership with Veolia, which provided the canoes. It was a chance to enjoy the outdoors, build birdhouses, and learn from the various nature exhibits during the event, including dissecting owl pellets, sampling natural honey, and learning about waste in landfills. The Scavenger Hunt and Clean-Up Day on June 1 (National Trails Day) was another day of fun, learning, and community service.

The nature center took a beating in January. The Tenakill overflowed its banks and became clogged. We want to thank Jason Gangi and the crew at the Demarest Department of Public Works for clearing the creek and all their other help this year. Thanks also to David Jiang, our Borough Council liaison, for helping to coordinate with the DPW.

Mark your calendars for the Oktoberfest on Oct. 5 from 10:00AM to 5:00PM at the Demarest Duck Pond. (The rain date is Oct. 19.)

We are all volunteers, and we use funds to maintain the trails and support wholesome activities that benefit and bring together the community. Your memberships and generous donations support these efforts. We hope you will join us as members as we provide a refuge for nature and the community. We hope to see you soon in the nature center!

– *Stephen Tillack,*
President, Demarest Nature Center



Your membership dollars allow us to continue to give back to the community and preserve and protect DNC's 55 acres of meadows, forests and wetlands.

DEMAREST NATURE CENTER RECAP

EVENT RECAPS *by Jeffrey Shaari*

We held our second annual Maple Syrup Event on Saturday, February 10. We had over 100 people attend, and had live demonstrations of sap collection and the boiling process. Special thanks to Ray Slaman, who tapped multiple maples, collected gallons of sap, and carried out the whole process for all to learn from and enjoy (including the finished product, which was pretty sweet!).

On the first Saturday of each month since November 2023, we have held Community Trail Walks. In January Ray Slaman discussed the winter landscape and the wondrous flora and fauna present in our nature center. Dave Emerson led our February hike and discussed the evolution of plants. We were then treated to a nature hike by everyone's favorite naturalist, Marc Gussen, in March; this was followed by a trail cleanup, where over 20 volunteers collected more than 100 pounds of trash. In April, I discussed the inner structure and beauty of trees hidden beneath their bark. In May, we had guest forager Steve "the Wildman" Brill teach us about the array of native and invasive species in our woods. And finally in June, we had a community scavenger hunt with prizes. This was also National Trails Day, and our volunteers cleared the Emerson Meadow and the surrounding trails of overgrowth, while others cleared a large obstruction in the Tenakill Creek and removed several bags of garbage!

Keep an eye out for future monthly walks held the first Saturday of each month at 10am!

Don Torino of the Bergen County Audubon Society led our spring birdwatching event on April 14. Keep an eye out for our next one in the fall.

On April 27th the DNC held our annual Canoe Day at the Duck Pond. In addition to canoe rides, there was bird house and bird feeder building, a beekeeper exhibit, composting education and an educational program led by SOAR Education.

In early May, naturalist Marc Gussen came to Luther Lee Emerson Shool and discussed all things nature with our elementary school students. This annual program continues to be sponsored by the DNC (another example of your membership dollars at work).

On May 11, DNC members participated in the Bergen County Audubon's Spring Bird Count and logged 59 birds across 11 species in just one hour!

On May 19, DNC board member Andrew Zimmerman represented the DNC at the annual Meadowlands Native Plant Day at DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst.



OH DEAR, MORE DEER IN MY GARDEN! *by Jin Kupperman*

It seems that more and more white-tailed deer are seen grazing around our Borough of Demarest. They seem to have gotten so comfortable being around us that they barely even blink when I walk by, even with my big dog barely 6 feet away. It is very frustrating to have your beautiful garden plants, shrubs or even trees be damaged by deer.

I did not find a clear-cut solution to this problem but the consensus seems to suggest a multi-pronged approach may work the best. Planting deer-resistant species of plants, spraying deer repellents and protecting plants with wire cages can help. The Community-Based Deer Management Plan of New Jersey Fish and Wildlife provides for controlled hunting to combat overpopulation of deer.

HERE ARE SOME LINKS WITH MORE INFORMATION:

Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/deer-resistant-plants/>

Garden Wars: Dealing with Deer

<https://mgofmc.org/garden-wars-dealing-with-deer/>

Native Deer "Resistant" Plants by Native Plant Society of NJ

https://npsnj.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/npsnj_deer_resistant_native_plants.pdf

Community-Based Deer Management by NJ Fish & Wildlife

<https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wildlife/community-based-deer-management/>

DEMAREST NATURE CENTER RECAP

The Demarest Nature Center holds the **JOHN GOODWIN PHOTO CONTEST** once a year. It is named in memory of John Goodwin, an original board member who was a photographer and lived in Demarest.

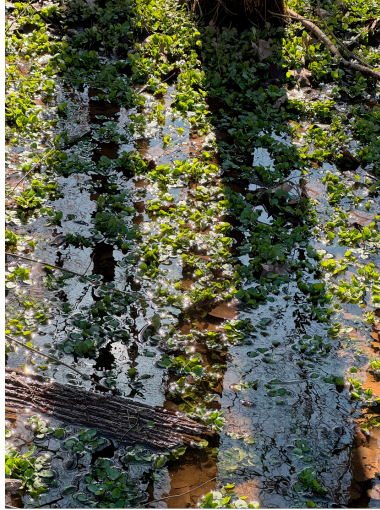
1st Place Children's Category

Alexander S., 5th Grade
(bird in snow)



2nd Place Children's Category

Max G., 5th Grade
(reflections on puddle)



3rd Place Children's Category

Nicholas S., 2nd Grade
(bird perched on bridge)



JOHN GOODWIN

1st Place Adult Category

Joshua Sazer (bird preening in water)



GRAND PRIZE Gamliel Chetrit (creek in autumn)

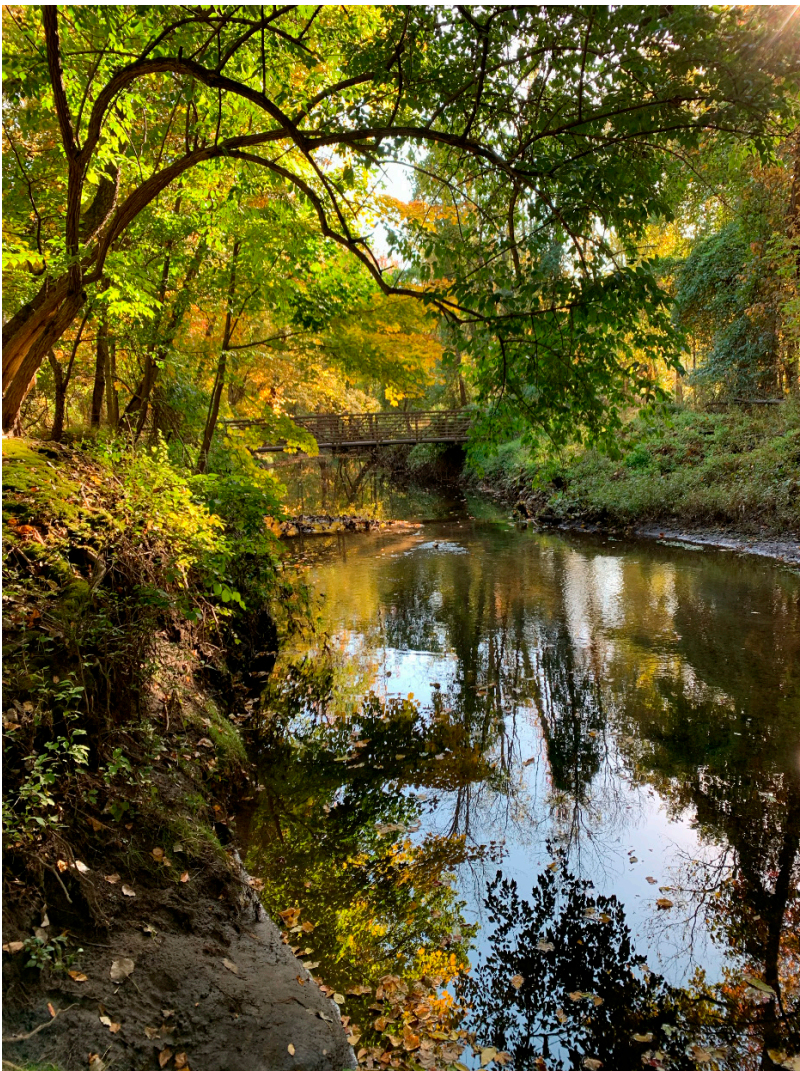


PHOTO CONTEST

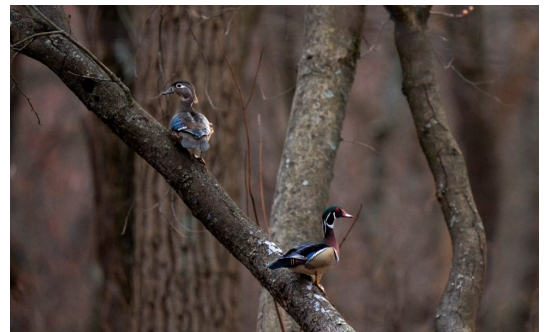
2nd Place Adult Category

Richard Harris (turtle on log)



3rd Place Adult Category

Joel Rudin (ducks on limb)





DEMAREST NATURE CENTER ASSN.

Borough of Demarest
P.O. Box 41
Demarest, N.J. 07627

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BUTTERFLIES *by Jeffrey Shaari*

Now that things are warming up, keep an eye out for butterflies. Butterflies are cold-blooded, which means that they rely on the ambient air to warm their bodies, so they are likely to be seen when the air temperature is above 60-80 degrees. They feed on the nectar of flowers, rotting fruit and animal dung, but can also sip oozing sap from woodpecker holes on trees.

Some butterfly behavior:

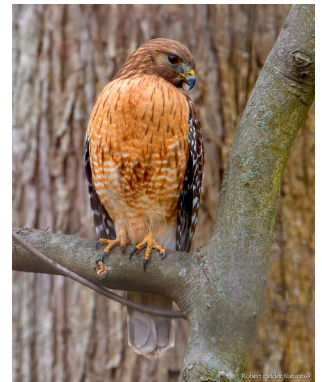
Basking: when butterflies land with their wings spread open to absorb the warmth of the sun.

Puddling: when butterflies gather around a puddle to sip mineral-rich water to cool off and obtain some nutrition.



SOME BIRDS FROM OUR DNC

courtesy of Robert Helder.



WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO LEASH YOUR DOG

by Jeffrey Shaari

New Jersey state law requires dogs to be leashed at all times and for their owners to clean up after them; this law also applies while in all areas of the Demarest Nature Center, including on trails and in the woods. Pet waste can carry diseases for both wildlife and humans. This is especially important in the DNC as the Tenakill Brook, which runs right through the woods, is a tributary of the Oradell Reservoir, from where we get our drinking water. Plus stepping in dog poop really stinks! Thank you for your cooperation!

--- CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA! ---



facebook.com/people/Demarest-Nature-Center/100091316019265/



instagram.com/demarestnaturectr/

www.demarestnaturecenter.org

email: info@demarestnaturecenter.org

Edited by Stacey Braff & Peter Coy

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Ray Slaman
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Andrew Zimmerman

The Demarest Nature Center is proud to be the charter organization for Boy Scout Troop 20.

For more information, please contact them at dnc.troop.20.demarest@gmail.com.

We are a 501(c)3! There is no greater feeling than supporting a worthy organization. The Demarest Nature is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. This means that your donations are tax deductible. Your donations support all of our educational programs, scholarships, events and the continued preservation of our green space. Consider a gift to the Demarest Nature Center as an investment in the future of our community. Of course, it goes without saying, or with saying in this case, that we are not offering tax advice by the above statement. Contact any of our trustees if you would like more info.