



Rogers Ramblings

Newsletter from the Friends of Rogers

Spring | March - May 2024 | Vol. 2 Issue 2



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American Tree Moss, *Climacium americanum*

Message from the Director

The arrival of the big yellow school bus.

In the spring, the geese arrive in great flocks. They slide in upon a watery runway and make their home for a night or two before heading further north. The songbirds, species by species, lend again their signature songs to the larger springtime symphony. So many of our most treasured animals return to Rogers, and yet it is the arrival of the big yellow school bus that excites us most!

It is a shorter migration, often no more than a 60 mile radius in any direction, and yet it is a springtime migration nonetheless. A migration for education as the spring school field trips arrive.

One, two, or three at a time, the big yellow school buses, driven by the stewards of the youth, drop off the most curious kids and their teachers, bent on exploration and play. A chance to learn outdoors, to escape the confines of the classroom, to re-introduce the profound experience of learning and playing in the cultivated wild.

This is what spring feels like at Rogers, along with a slew of other things on the horizon this year. Earth Day on April 20th (the Saturday before the worldwide event on the 22nd), will offer the general public a first chance to see the Artist Residency taking place at the Stone House. Those who come throughout the day

will also be able to engage with the Oneida Indian Nation and Rogers Center staff as we learn about our unique and threatened native species.

Monday Morning Rambles have cemented themselves as a signature weekly event, and I would encourage any curious soul, no matter age or physical ability, to join in on a rambling adventure. When the water is flowing and the amphibians emerge in the spring, there exists a unique opportunity to enjoy the freshwater resources of our region.

Wishing you all the best and hoping to see you soon,

David W. Carson



Freeze & Thaw

by: David Carson, Executive Director

To look back upon this winter is to see the face of a changing climate. Freeze and thaw, freeze and thaw, freeze and thaw. Water turned to ice and back again. Snow was short-lived in the presence of winter rain. The Heron and the Eagle met in their great struggle for life, where water turned to iced and back again.

Wading into the shallows of Channels Marsh, the Great Blue Heron made haste of open water and a chance at the fish below. Creeping into position, long legs submerged to the knee, he gathered himself with each step. Slowly, patiently, he proceeded.

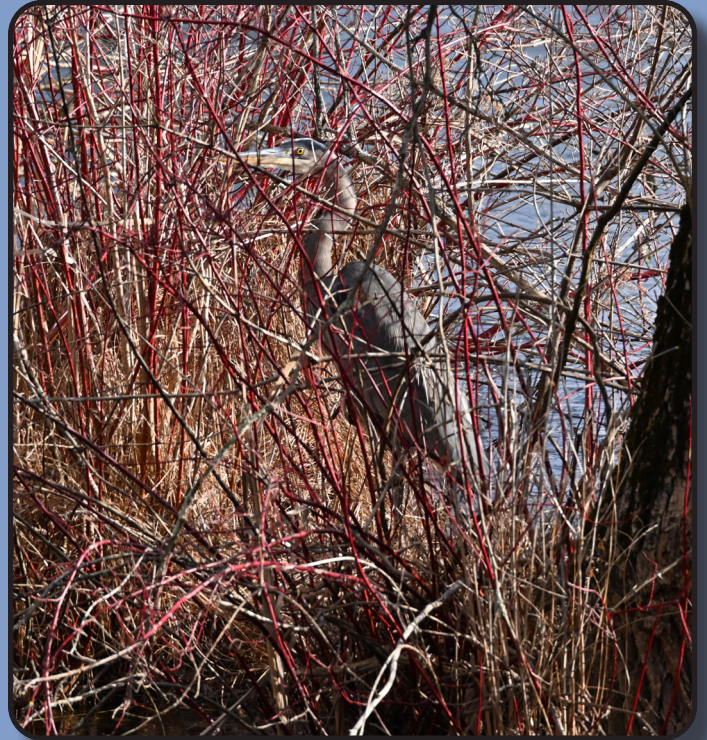
On the southern horizon, dark against the morning light seeping through the Spruce, the juvenile Eagle watched. We know not with what refined perception the Eagle came to see the evolving opportunity, only that it did.

Once in position, satisfied with the gentle current and clarity of water, the Heron stopped to hunt. Still, in the way of a wading bird of prey, all movement was suppressed for the moment. Motionless, the freeze and thaw of winter gathered 'round it. The Heron's legs froze into the ice as its position turned from that of predator to prey.

In an instant, the young Eagle attacked from above, talons extended from their bright yellow sheaths. With deadly intent, it clawed at the eyes of the Heron. Its talons grasped the Heron's wing at the wrist and pulled back with two great strokes of its wings. Only the Heron's legs, frozen into the ice, held it in place.

The hunt that ensued exhausted the Heron. Tirelessly, menacingly, the Eagle attacked from above. Thrusting its singular form of defense skyward, the Heron's beak drove toward the chest of the Eagle, just out of reach. The Eagle, undeterred, stood on the newly frozen ice. Predator and prey, three feet apart, reconciling themselves to the life and death of the freeze and thaw.

For what felt like an eternity, the attack and recovery persisted. An onslaught of talons, a rebuttal of



The heron spent nearly the rest of the day recovering on a little island, hidden in the dogwoods. It flew and landed, so we knew its wings and legs were not too badly damaged from its encounter with the eagle.

extended beak, the elongated stare of two animals pursuing their own survival at the expense of another's.

Without warning, the Eagle took flight to the highest branch of the closest tree. The Heron, freed from the ice by the prolonged struggle, escaped with injured legs. Dangling beneath, it flew on unsteady wings to a dry patch of dogwoods. There it recuperated under the watchful eye of the Eagle, perched on the highest branch of the closest tree.

As open water returned to Channels Marsh, so, too, did the Great Blue Heron recover. The juvenile Eagle, having flown off, made space for the Heron to fly, and fly the Heron did. To a place beyond the water, where it would neither hunt nor be hunted. Beyond the struggle for survival, away from the danger of winter's freeze and thaw.



Upcoming Programs

Spring 2024

All programs require preregistration unless otherwise noted.

To register or for more information, call (607)674-4733 or email Ellen@friendsofrogers.org.

Monday Morning Rambles

Start the week off right with a nature walk. We meet every Monday 10:00 AM (or 9:00 AM if we are traveling). See page 6 for destinations. Check our website for details.

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25
Apr. 1, 15, 22, 29
May 6, 13, 20

Storytime & Hike

At 10:30 AM every Wednesday, families are invited to join Jenni Larchar for an hour and a half of stories, music and outdoor exploration.

Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27
Apr. 3, 10, 17, 24
May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

March

Saturday Family Program: Ice Harvesting with Fred von Mechow

Saturday, Mar. 2, 10:00-11:30 AM

Ice harvesting was once something every small community throughout the Northeast did to make sure they could keep their food from spoiling come the summer heat. Join Roger Center's own Fred von Mechow for a demonstration of this traditional activity. Sponsored by the Otis Thompson Foundation. **Call or email to register.**

Equinox Nature Trivia Night Wednesday, March 20, 7-8:30 PM

Do you know your bird trivia? How about botany? The names of famous naturalists? Stretch your mind and celebrate your inner nature nerd. Come as an individual or form a team. If the night is mild, we will meet at the fire pit. Bring your headlamps and a sweater! Otherwise, we will be indoors. **Call or email to register.**

The Quarterly Book Club

Welcome to **Quarter Two** of the **Quarterly Book Club**! Each quarter we read a new book, with two meetings to discuss what we have read, and the third meeting a trip to a regional destination that ties into the book.

The meetings can be virtual or in-person at Rogers Center, and the trip will be in-person, carpooling from Rogers Center.

Q2: April-June *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer

Mtg. 1: Apr. 30, 7 PM Sections 1 & 2

Mtg. 2: May 28, 7 PM Sections 3 & 4

Destination: June 22, 9:00 AM Onondaga Lake to see restoration area, Section 5

For more info or to register:

607-674-4733; Ellen@friendsofrogers.org

Upcoming Programs

Spring 2024



All programs require preregistration unless otherwise noted.

To register or for more information, call (607) 674-4733 or email Ellen@friendsofrogers.org.

QBC: Destination Day #1 - Beaversprite **Saturday, March 30, 9:00 AM**

We wrap up the **first quarter** of our book club with a trip to Beaversprite in Dolgeville, NY. Meet at Rogers Center at 9 AM and we'll carpool. It's about a 1.5 hours drive. We'll walk the trails and visit the home of one of the most famous beaver researchers, and we'll discuss the final chapter of *Eager*. We anticipate being back at Rogers Center about mid-afternoon. Bring your lunch and water to drink. Dress for the weather & for hiking.

April

Solar Eclipse Day! **Monday, April 8, Noon - 4:30 PM**

If you didn't make plans for heading to western NY, Syracuse, Watertown, or other points north, you can still come out to Rogers Center to enjoy the first total solar eclipse our area has seen since 1925. The next one will be in 2079, so now is the time to see it! We have special eclipse glasses for those who join us, and we'll teach you how to make some safe viewing devices. The darkening begins shortly after 3:00 PM.

Wildflower Walkabout **Saturday, April 13, 10:00-11:30 AM**

It's woodland wildflower season - time to scour the forest for those spring ephemerals. Today we will walk Hillside Trail up on Cush Hill. The terrain can be a little rugged, so wear sturdy footwear and dress for the weather. Sponsored by the Otis Thompson Foundation. **Call or email to register.**

Earth Day Celebration **Saturday, April 20, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

Spend the day with us learning a bit more about the nature in your back yard and how you can be proactive in living a greener life. **See page 7 & our website for details.**

City Nature Challenge **Friday April 26 - Monday April 29**

Once more the Friends of Rogers has thrown its hat into the proverbial ring to compete in the international nature "scavenger hunt" known as City Nature Challenge. This is our second year and our sights are set on beating our scores from last year. Visit our website for lots of details, and read more about it on page 8 in this newsletter.

May

Wildflower Walkabout **Saturday, May 11, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM**

Our second search for spring ephemerals takes us further up Cush Hill to the Summit Trail. Some sections are steep, but we will go slowly. Join us to see what's blooming on the hill. Sponsored by the Otis Thompson Foundation **Call or email to register.**

Three Things Thursday: Chemical Ecology - the Interface Between Insects & Plants

Thursday, May 16, 7:00 PM

Our popular summer lecture series returns. As we say, any day you learn something new is a good day, so learning three new things has got to be awesome. Tonight's presenter is Dr. Robert Raguso of the Raguso Lab at Cornell. Chemical ecology integrates chemistry and biology, examining the chemical interactions between organisms and their environment. It's a whole other language of the natural world that few of us consider beyond pheromones. Our senses are blind to most of these interactions, and Dr. Raguso will help lift the veil so you can discover some of the secret exchanges that occur around us every single day. **Call or email to register.**

Rogers Center Programs at a Glance: Spring 2024

M A R C H						1	2 Ice Harvest with Fred
	3	4 MMR: Adams Farm	5	6 Storytime & Hike	7	8	9
	10	11 MMR: Channels Marsh	12	13 Storytime & Hike	14	15	16
	17	18 MMR: Spruce Ridge & South Loop	19	20 Storytime & Hike Nature Trivia Night	21	22	23
	24	25 MMR: Adams Farm	26	27 Storytime & Hike	28	29	30 QBC: Beaversprite
A P R I L	March 31	1 MMR: Leland Reserve	2	3 Storytime & Hike	4	5	6
	7	8 Solar Eclipse	9	10 Storytime & Hike	11	12	13 Wildflower Walkabout
	14	15 MMR: Labrador Hollow	16	17 Storytime & Hike	18	19	20 Earth Day Celebration
	21	22 MMR: Great Swamp Heron Rookery	23	24 Storytime & Hike	25	26 City Nature Challenge	27 City Nature Challenge
	28 City Nature Challenge	29 MMR: City Nature Challenge	30 Book Club Q2 Mtg #1				
M A Y				1 Storytime & Hike	2	3	4
	5	6 MMR: Baker SF	7	8 Storytime & Hike	9	10	11 Wildflower Walkabout
	12	13 MMR: Hunts Pond	14	15 Storytime & Hike	16 Three Things Thursday	17	18
	19	20 MMR: Stone Quarry	21	22 Storytime & Hike	23	24	25
	26	27 Holiday	28 Book Club Q2 Mtg #2	29 Storytime & Hike	30	31	

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

Saturday, April 20
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Make 2024 the year you learn about your wild neighbors.

We'll have experts on hand to help you learn to identify the birds, salamanders, snakes, frogs, insects, spiders, fish, plants and mammals that call Central New York home.

Local native plant nursery, Wild Ginger, will be on hand with native plants for you to place in your garden, and we'll have native trees and shrubs for you to add to your landscape.

**“THE EARTH IS WHAT WE
ALL HAVE IN COMMON.”**

—Wendell Berry

WILD
GINGER



2024

Created by community science staff member Lila Higgins at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHM), and Alison Young and Rebecca Johnson at the California Academy of Sciences (CAS), City Nature Challenge (CNC) is an international effort for people to find and document plants and wildlife in cities across the globe. It's a bioblitz-style competition where cities are in a friendly contest with each other to see who can make the most observations of nature, who can find the most species, and who can engage the most people.

Rogers Center tossed our proverbial hat into the City Nature Challenge ring in 2023. Because Sherburne is so small, we expanded our "city" to include three counties: Madison, Chenango and Otsego.

Who Can Participate?

Absolutely anyone can take part! That's the beauty of this challenge.

- Families? Yes!
- School groups? Yes!
- Neighborhoods? Absolutely!
- Researchers? Of course!
- Hikers? Birders? Botanists? Yes, Yes and Yes!
- Bikers? Why not!
- Garden Clubs? Wonderful!

All you need is a digital camera - your phone will do nicely. Load the free iNaturalist app on your phone or computer, then on the days of the competition, go out and take pictures of nature. Upload your images to your iNaturalist account. It's that easy!!!

We have videos on our website to help you learn how to use iNaturalist if you are new to the app, as well as tips for taking photos that work best for ID.

Want to do more? Try your hand at identifying your discoveries, and the discoveries of others.

On the days of the competition (Friday-Monday of the last weekend of April), anyone who is out in these counties uploading photographs of the plants and animals (birds, mammals, herps, fish, invertebrates) they see in those three counties automatically becomes part of the competition.

For our first year, our results were not too bad: 33 observers uploaded 783 observations, documenting 326 species. Let's beat that this year!

**Join us April 26-29, 2024
for City Nature Challenge!**



CITY NATURE CHALLENGE IS ORGANIZED BY



CALIFORNIA
ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES

NATURAL
HISTORY
MUSEUM
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Summer Camp

New this year: we have consolidated our age groups. We now have sessions for 4-6 year olds, 7-11 year olds, and 12-15 year olds. Each week has a theme and each day is packed with fun and adventure. Forms are available on our website, or you can pick them up at the visitor center.

July 8-12 The Joys of Summer
 This session celebrates all the wonders of summer that make it special in the eyes of a child: catching insects, playing in water, building forts, flying kites, and getting muddy. **Sessions for 4-6 year olds and 7-11 year olds.**

July 15-19 Amazing Adventures
 Every day is a new adventure. One day teams compete in the Amazing Nature Race. On another day, we spend our time exploring ancient skills. A day spent studying the river and/or ponds is guaranteed to get us wet! What other adventures await you? You'll have to come and find out. **Sessions for 4-6 year olds and 7-11 year olds.**

July 22-26 Call of the Wild
 Our "caveman camp" celebrates the primitive skills our ancient ancestors had to master for their survival. Learn how to follow a trail, use a slingshot, create "cave art" and more. Campers are sorted into clans and each clan selects a territory and a specialty skill. At the end of the week, the Clans gather to trade goods and enjoy a campfire. **7-11 year olds.**

July 29-Aug 2 Magical Woodland
 After receiving an invitation via Owl Post, campers arrive at Rogers Magical Woodland ready for a week of fantastical fun. The week begins with sorting into one of four "houses," and the creation of a wand. From there, each day campers participate in lessons in Herbology, Potions, Charms and more. **7-11 year olds.**

Aug. 5-9 Joys of Summer Session 2
4-6 year olds.
Curious Naturalists
 Older campers are invited to spend a week doing "deep dives" into the many branches of natural history. Each day we study a different branch of science: ornithology (birds), entomology (insects), botany (plants), and more. Campers choose a sit spot, which they visit each day for half an hour of observation, which they record in their nature journals. **12-15 year olds.**

Age	Time	Member/General Public
4-6 YO	9:00 AM - Noon	\$149/\$190
7-11 YO	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	\$199/\$245
12-15 YO	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	\$199/\$245



Where the Road Might Lead

Family Adventure Page with Jenni Larchar



Storytime in Spring

As the snow begins to melt and the first spring flowers poke through, it's hard to stay indoors! Temperatures that begged us to put on our coats in the fall now beckon us outside in just our long sleeves! I love stepping out the door, taking a deep breath and soaking in the coming of spring!

Our weekly Storytime & Hike is a perfect addition to spring exploration with your little ones. Get together with other families as we get outside and investigate the changing of the seasons.

In spring, every week seems to bring something new on the trails. The frozen grass soon gives way to bright green shoots. Birdsong shifts from mellow winter sounds to bright, cheery chirrups. The frozen water

brightens and reveals fish, turtles and plants that have been resting through the winter months.

Winter kept our eyes on small tracks printed in the snow, but now we watch for signs of a skunk emerging from his burrow. We see the exposed under-snow tunnels and trails of tiny voles and mice. We notice busy birds gathering twigs and grass to build new nests and prepare to lay their eggs.

Springtime is a perfect time to get outside and experience nature. Spring changes happen fast, and it's amazing when you get to witness it while it's happening! Join us each Wednesday at 10:30 am for stories, songs and an explore! You can also pack a snack and stay to play with new friends!

NATURE'S
Nursery

Registration is now open for
our Spring Session
March 20- May 15

This spring, give your preschooler the gift of exploration! Each Wednesday for 8 weeks, children ages 2-5 will spend 2 hours exploring, experimenting and playing outside to experience the changing of the seasons.

Independent bathroom skills are not required for this Spring session. Parents will be asked to volunteer as a helper for one class period. No late registrations will be accepted. Registration must be received by 3/13/24.

Session runs 3/20-5/15, with no class held 4/3. \$125 per child

For more information, contact Jenni Larchar at jenni@friendsofrogers.org



News Flash

Friends of Rogers Receives PTNY Grant to Fund New Community Engagement Position

This winter Friends of Rogers received a grant from Parks & Trails of New York, an advocacy group that works to expand, protect, and promote parks, trails, and open spaces throughout New York State, to fund a new position on our staff: Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC).

Funded for two years, this part-time position addresses Friends of Rogers' commitment to making our natural areas, our organization, and our entire community more inclusive and equitable.

The person who fulfills this position will have varied responsibilities, including assisting our senior educator with school programs and building relationships with underserved audiences throughout our region.

The CEC reports directly to the Executive Director, and focuses on increased community engagement, program development and growth, and access, equity and inclusion in all our nature-based programs and organizational initiatives.

The Bird Cabin Reopens

Over a year in the works, the newly refurbished Bird Cabin is ready to open to the public once more.

Home of the George Lesser Mounted Bird Collection, the Bird Cabin also features interpretive panels that celebrate Rogers' time as a CCC camp in the 1930s, and holds many volumes from our bird library.

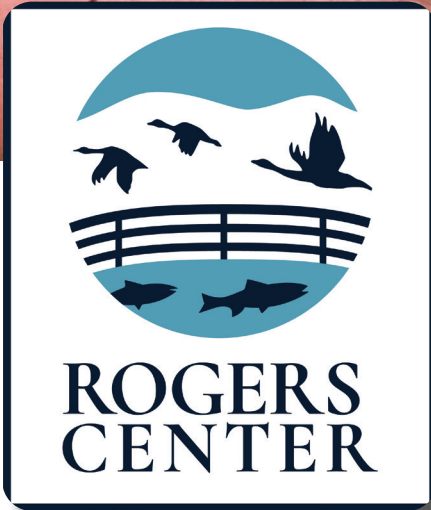
This renovated space is now available for small groups to hold meetings, will serve as "base camp" for our summer campers, and will also be open to the public for special events (such as Earth Day).



Pollinator Habitat Slated for Installation at Adams Farm

In 2023, Friends of Rogers received a \$12,000 grant from the Chenango County Soil and Water Conservation District to pilot its new habitat restoration efforts with the installation of two one-acre pollinator plots near the parking area at Adams Farm.

This project will begin this spring with solarization of the target areas via the application of tarps for 12 months, effectively killing the existing vegetation and seed bank using non-toxic methods. Native seeds, of species indigenous to our region, will be sown utilizing a variety of techniques, ranging from broadcast seeding to seeding on snow. The resulting spaces will provide pollinators with a range of floral food sources that will bloom across the seasons. As a bonus, many of these plants will also be host plants for other native insects, and will provide food resources for birds.



If you need to reach us...

The Friends of Rogers is here for you. If you have any questions about programs, nature, or visiting, please reach out and contact us.

Contact Us!

Phone: 607-674-4733
Web: www.friendsofrogers.org
Email: info@friendsofrogers.org
Address: 2721 State Hwy 80, PO Box 932, Sherburne, NY 13460

The Visitor Center is Open
Wednesdays- Saturdays
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Sundays Noon - 4:00 PM
Mondays & Tuesdays by appointment

Rogers Center, in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, will assist in providing for those individuals with special needs. Please notify us in advance of your needs that may require special staffing.

A standard wheelchair is available for use on our trails and paved paths.

Friends of Rogers Staff

David Carson, Executive Director
Ellen Rathbone, Senior Educator
Jeremy Fetzko, Media & Marketing Coordinator
Jenni Larchar, Children's Program Coordinator
Amy August-Ruiz, Bookkeeper & Administrative Assistant

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