

**Ansonia Nature  
And Recreation Center**

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# Spring 2015 Calendar of Events

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## Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center Mission Statement

The mission of the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center is to foster an ethic of environmental stewardship that will connect our communities to the natural world of the Lower Naugatuck River Valley, and balance the demand for recreation with the need for conservation.

### APRIL

#### **ANSONIA COMMUNITY ORGANIC GARDENERS: Annual Meeting – Sat. Apr. 4, 10 am**

Come to the Nature Center to participate in this annual planning session for growing your own food this spring, summer, and fall. Pre-registration, while not required, is appreciated. For more information, call Pat Evans of ACOG, 203-906-5591.



#### **WILDLIFE REHABILITATION OPEN HOUSE Sat. Apr. 4, 2 pm**

Dawn Sotir will introduce you to the "job description" of wildlife rehabilitators, what to expect if you become one, and what to do to provide "first aid" to a wild animal in need. **FREE**, but please register.



#### **FULL PINK MOON HIKE – Sat. Apr. 4, 7:30 pm**

Enjoy the sounds of spring with our Nature Center guides as we lead you around our wetlands to spot some spring amphibians by the light of the moon. For all ages (children must be accompanied by an adult), **FEE: \$1.00**. Please call to register.



#### **SPRING TERM JUNIOR RANGERS – Registration begins Thurs. Apr. 9 at 3:30 pm.**

Calling all kids 11 to 14 years old who love nature! Has your child wanted to work with animals, garden, help maintain our trails, and help with special events? This is the opportunity to help the Nature Center in our 8-week after-school program. Parental permission is required. Class size is limited; this class fills up fast! **FREE**.

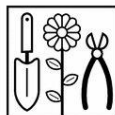
#### **NATURE'S CHILD: Amphibians – Fri. Apr. 10, 10:30 am**

Learn about these ancient and fascinating creatures secretly inhabiting our woods and wetlands. Take a hike to discover the Nature Center's slippery critters. Make a take home craft too! **TUITION: \$7 per child (\$5.00 for family-level FANCI members and Ansonia residents)**. Please pre-register for this class for preschoolers and their adults.



#### **SPRING CLEANING AND PLANTING DAY Sat. Apr. 11, 9 am–noon**

We'll supply gloves, plants, and pizza. Scouts, youth groups, student interns – this is a great community service opportunity! Help us beautify our park and get ready for spring. Bring your own garden tools if you want. Please pre-register.



#### **AMPHIBIANS WITH ATTITUDE – Sat. Apr. 11, 2 pm**

Do you ever wonder why some salamanders have yellow spots? Come to this family program and discover some of Connecticut's fascinating amphibians. Let's get our feet wet as we explore the Nature Center's vernal pools and get a first hand look at these slimy critters. **FREE**; please pre-register.



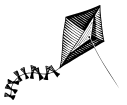
#### **PET LOSS GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP Sundays, Apr. 12, May 10, June 14, 11 am**

Losing a beloved animal can be tragic and a very emotional time for humans. There are numerous resources to turn to for the loss of a human loved one, but there are limited resources for when we lose an animal. Susan Wilson has created this support group for those of us who have lost an animal or have one in the process of moving on. Join us for these **FREE** sessions.



#### **KITE WORKSHOP – Sun. Apr. 12, 2 pm**

Join Ranger Martin for this family-friendly workshop. Construct your own kite and design and personalize it any way you want! If we have dry and windy weather, you can launch your creation after the class. **MATERIALS FEE: \$7 per kite.**



#### **SPRING BREAK NATURE DAYS**

**Mon. Apr. 13–Fri. Apr. 17, 9:30 am–3 pm**

For children from 5 to 11 years old who love the outdoors and wildlife, these popular classes will not only be educational but also a chance to explore the 156 acres the park offers. We will visit a variety of habitats such as the park's wetlands, fields, and woodlands. Great time of the year for amphibian searches too!!!

**TUITION: \$150 priority students (Ansonia residents and current family-level FANCI members), \$175 all others.**

*(While you're here for Spring Break, why not register for Summer Nature Days? See "Things to Come" at the end of the Calendar!)*

#### **FAMILY ORGANIC GARDEN PROGRAM**

**Fridays, Apr. 17–June 26, 3:30–5 pm**

Food Corps and ANC will lead fun, family-friendly activities in our organic garden. Learn about growing a variety of fruits and vegetables. Dress appropriately; keep in mind you might get water and/or soil on your clothing. Closed-toe shoes, please! **FREE** with the potential to take home fresh local produce!



#### **SPRING WILDFLOWERS OF CONNECTICUT**

**Sat. Apr. 18, 10 am**



Connecticut is blessed with many colorful spring wildflowers. Known as spring ephemerals, these perennial plants emerge quickly in the spring and die back to their underground parts after a short growth and reproduction phase. Our Powerpoint presentation will highlight several native wildflowers such as wood anemone, Dutchman's breeches, bloodroot, saxifrage, trillium, trout lily, lady's slipper, wild geranium, squawroot, Jack-in-the-pulpit, May apple, wild ginger and others. Stories and folklore of our native spring wildflowers will be shared. Indoors program with optional hike. Geared for adults and older children. Presenters: Peter and Barbara Rzasa. **FREE**.

#### **STEPPING STONES MINI EXHIBIT: Healthyville**

**Tues. Apr. 21–Tues. May 5**

The Nature Center welcomes Healthyville, a portable exhibit promoting healthy choices. Shop at the Good Foods Market, use a pulse meter, balance food choices with physical activity, practice brushing and flossing in a big mouth, and more. *Healthyville was created by Stepping Stones Museum for Children. Healthyville Mini Exhibit was made possible by GE Capital with additional support by Newman's Own Foundation, People's United Community Foundation and Purdue Pharma.*



#### **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION – Sat. Apr. 25, 10 am–4 pm**



Every day is Earth Day at the Nature Center! We invite everyone to honor Mother Earth with our Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center co-hosting this annual event. Enjoy free hikes, live animals, and much more! Join one of our naturalists for an amphibian walk! Food and snacks! Local vendors and exhibitors! All are welcome, young and old—bring friends and family.

## MAY

### WILDERNESS SURVIVAL: Edible and Medicinal Plants

Sat. May 2, 2 pm

Backyards, vacant lots, woodlands, and open fields support tons of food and medicines for the natural collector! Join Ranger Jessica, who has a degree in biology, for this in-depth study class. Jess will lead us in identification of wild plants, and we'll taste and smell some along the way. Please pre-register. Class size limited. **FREE.**

### FULL FLOWER MOON HIKE – Sat. May 2, 7 pm



Flowers are starting to bloom in the woodlands along the trails. Join our Nature Center staff for this nighttime fragrance hike. **FEE: \$1.00**; please call to register.

### RAIN BARRELS 'R US – Sun. May 3, 2 pm

Join Alexis Wilcox and Dan Rozanski of Duck Truck Composting in Hamden as they lead you through the process of how to make your own rain barrel for your house and garden. It only takes a few simple tools and small parts to make a big impact on the environment. Please register for this **FREE** program.



### NATURE'S CHILD: Baby Birds – Fri. May 8, 10:30 am



If we find a baby bird this spring, what should we do? Join one of our Nature Center naturalists to learn about the life of a baby bird. Hear a short story, make "binoculars," and then take a short scavenger hunt hike. **TUITION: See Apr. 10.** Please call in advance for this class for preschool children and their adults.

### FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT: Over the Hedge – Fri. May 8, 7 pm

This animated film will have the kids laughing out loud! It's the tale of a group of forest friends led by a mischievous raccoon, RJ (voiced by Bruce Willis), as a suburban housing development threatens their forest. Ken Fox of TVGuide.com called the movie "A sly satire of American 'enough is never enough' consumerism and blind progress at the expense of the environment." **FREE**; you can buy popcorn and lemonade for \$1.00. Please register.



### D.E.E.P. C.A.R.E. PROGRAM: Fishing – Sat. May 9, 9 am

This beginners' session is geared for children over 6 years old with their adults. Join Ranger Martin and Russ Zelanin for this pond side class. Equipment is included, but if you have your own, bring it. Meet at the Nature Center building for instructions, then head to the water! **FREE.** Please pre-register; class size is limited.



### PET LOSS GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP – Sun. May 10, 11 am

See Apr. 12 listing for description.

### SPRING MIGRANTS OF THE NATURE CENTER

Sat. May 16, 8 am

Join avid birder Kathy Gambacini for this early morning walk to find the birds living in or moving through our parklands to nest farther north. This is a prime time for birders. Bring your own binoculars or use ours. Dress for walking outdoors. We'll start with a quick introduction to birds. **FREE**, but please register in advance.



### EXPLORE REDWING POND – Sat. May 16, 2 pm

Join the Nature Center staff for a fun afternoon catching frogs and other inhabitants of Redwing Pond. We'll start with a brief talk on the vertebrates and invertebrates who inhabit the pond and learn how to identify them. Use our collection equipment to help us catch, observe and release these critters. **FREE**; please pre-register.

## JUNE

### THE TURNING OF VENUS – Fri. June 5, 7 pm

Gaianne Jenkins, a retired mathematician with an interest in paleoastronomy, will tell us about an ancient calendar used as late as the Middle Ages that predicts the motions of the moon and some planets. She will focus on the eight phases of Venus and the ancient five seasons of the year. On the night of this talk Venus will be near maximum Eastern elongation, turning from the phase of the lake to the phase of the earth, and we will be changing from spring to high summer. After the talk, weather permitting, we will view Venus through telescopes; it should appear as a bright half disc. **FREE**; please pre-register.



### CT TRAILS DAY – Sat. June 6, 9 am

Join Nature Center director Alison Rubelmann, an avid hiker and nature buff, for this morning walk. Discover the flora and fauna of our typical New England woodland. This moderate hike will also visit the settlement of the Paugasucks. Bring water and a snack. Please wear sturdy shoes. Suitable for older children and adults. **FREE**; call to register.



### NATURE'S CHILD: Tidal Pools – Fri. June 12, 10:30 am

Come to meet some animals from Long Island Sound who are visiting the Nature Center's salt water tank. Snails, crabs, a sea star perhaps, and even a sponge may be on hand to delight you. A craft to take home is planned, and a short story too. **TUITION: See Apr. 10 listing.** Please pre-register for this class for preschool children and their adults.



### OUTER ISLAND FIELD TRIP – Sun. June 7, 8:30 am sharp

Join the staff of ANC on this amazing field trip to Outer Island, one of the Thimble Islands off the coast of Branford, CT. Meet us at 8:30 am at the Thimble Islands Ferry Service for the 9:00 am ferry. Outer Island is a wildlife refuge and also an ecological preserve and refuge for migratory birds. Its habitats include rocky intertidal zone, marsh, and beach, all typical of Long Island Sound. A docent will teach us about the flora and fauna and the beauty of this unique natural environment. **FEE: Round trip ferry fee is \$10 per person.** Registration required; trip limited to 14 people.



### FANCI ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK SUPPER

Wed. June 10, 5:30 pm



Join the Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center, Inc. to see what new and exciting projects they've been working on. Bring your own table setting and a casserole, salad, dessert, or other dish to share. Election of FANCI officers will take place at this meeting. Bring ideas for next year's programs and projects. Please register in advance.

### NATURE GAMES FOR CHILDREN – Sat. June 13, 2 pm

"You Can't See Me!" Come join Ranger Jessica for an afternoon of hiding in the woods, chasing each other through the fields, and pretending we are the animals that live in Connecticut's forests, while learning about the wonderful wild world around us! We'll top it off with a wilderness scavenger hunt! **FREE.**



### PET LOSS GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP – Sun. June 14, 11 am

See Apr. 12 listing for description.

### "LITTLE FAIRIES, BIG MAGIC" with Cyril May

Sat. June 20, 2 pm

This unique fairy tale magic show has both a fairy theme and an environmental message about protecting the wilderness. Cyril the sorcerer—the Merlin of environmental magic—is delighted to perform this show as a way to remind young and old alike that just as we need our homes, so do creatures in the wild. **FREE** family program. Please call to register.



### SUMMER SOLSTICE DRUMMING – Sat. June 20, 7:30 pm



Bring your own drum and join Ranger Dawn Sotir to celebrate the new season and the return of long days and short nights. Please call to register and reserve your place in the circle. **FREE.** For adults and children 10 and up.

### WILDERNESS SURVIVAL: Fire Making – Sat. June 27, 2 pm

How do you start a fire without matches or a lighter? Where do you find good firewood when you're stranded in the wilderness? Join Ranger Jessica to learn how to build fires from things you find outside! We'll visit the cedar tree to collect its bark, gather some dead branches from our pines, and work on creating our very own coals to ignite the blaze! **FREE**; please call to register.



### FULL STRAWBERRY MOON HIKE – Sat. June 27, 8 pm



Join Nature Center rangers for this nighttime exploration of the park's trails as we follow the scents of summer through forest and field environments in this adventure geared for adults and children. Wear sturdy shoes. Enjoy a summer fire too! **FEE: \$1.00**; please pre-register.

**\*\*ONGOING PROGRAMS\*\*** Sundays: Guided Hikes, 1 pm • Thursdays: Yoga for Your Health, 6:30 pm—call Pam, 203-888-4124 • Saturdays: Creature Features, 12 noon

**\*\*\*THINGS TO COME (Summer 2015)\*\*\*** Moonshine and Firefly Hike • Mud Madness • Family Movie Nights • Puppeteer/Singer Chris Rowlands • **AND...**

### SUMMER NATURE DAYS

Mon. Aug. 3–Fri. Aug. 7, Mon. Aug. 10–Fri. Aug. 14, Mon. Aug.

17–Fri. Aug. 21, 9 am–3 pm. Choose one or more weeks!

For children from 5 to 11 years old who love the outdoors and wildlife, these popular classes will not only be educational but also a chance to explore the 156 acres the park offers. We will visit a variety of habitats such as the park's wetlands, fields, and woodlands. A great choice for a fun late-summer experience!

**TUITION: \$150 priority students (Ansonia residents and current family-level FANCI members), \$175 all others.**

**Be sure to see the Friends' Focus for information on the Playground Revitalization Project!**

Please check our website for updates:  
[www.ansonianaturecenter.org](http://www.ansonianaturecenter.org)

