

July Nature Programs

JULY 2, 10:00 AM - Fungi and Lichens: “Lich-en the Fungus Among Us” Live Webinar

This presentation by Park Naturalist Jen Bulava is an overview of the important roles that lichens and fungi play in the environment (not for identifying individual species). The three main types of fungi will be discussed, with a focus on mycorrhizal associations with plants. Discover the many ways that people and animals use lichens. Gain a better appreciation of the beneficial and amazing relationships within the fungi kingdom. This lecture is provided as part of the “Pinelands Speakers Series” live webinars hosted by the NJ Pinelands Commission every Thursday from June 4-July 30. The series is free and open to anyone. All of the webinars will be live-streamed on the Commission’s YouTube channel link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBgpC8sbR3Acrjo7ppxs3Uw>

Week of JULY 6– LEAVE NO TRACE – Young Naturalist Program

Teens will learn to how to appreciate, respect, and protect natural resources by first listening to our online video. Then they will use the page in their packet to observe and report examples that both demonstrate and violate Leave No Trace principles in the Park of their choice. For ages 13-17. Registration in YNP required. This program will be available beginning July 6.

JULY 8 - COLOR HIKE – Jr Ranger Program

Most things in nature are brown and green. Since their home is brown and green, lots of animals try to blend in so they don’t get eaten. But sometimes we see other colors in nature. Look at the colors listed on the specific page in your Jr Ranger Packet and see how many you can find in the parks, take photos, and then share what you found with the naturalists. Students will learn how both camouflage and bright colors are used for survival strategies. Those who register for this week will receive a quick video link to explain why bright colors are found in nature. For ages 5-8. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available July 8-14.

JULY 8, BENEFICIAL INSECTS– Jr Ranger Program

Learn about beneficial insects in a short age-appropriate video. Then use the specific worksheet in your Junior Ranger Packet to see how many kinds of beneficial insects you can find in the Park of your choice. Share what you found through pictures, lists, and drawings. For ages 9-12. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available July 8-14.

JULY 13, 9:30 AM - KEY TO ID – Young Naturalist Program, Smith’s Woods

Explore the red trail at Smith’s Woods while using dichotomous keys to correctly identify the flagged species of plants. For ages 13-17. Registration in YNP required.

JULY 15, HABITAT OBSERVATIONS – Jr Ranger Program, Long Bridge

Students will visit many different habitats (forest, field, wetland, open water) and observe the different species found in each. Share what you found through pictures, lists, and drawings. For ages 9-12. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available from July 15-July 21.

JULY 15, SCAVENGER HUNT – Jr Ranger Program, Long Bridge

Junior Rangers will be given a specific list of things to find around Long Bridge Park. They will need to find as many of the natural objects as possible on their scavenger hunt. Take pictures and report back to the Park Naturalists with what you found. For ages 5-8. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available from July 15-July 21.

JULY 20, 9:30 AM - DRAGONFLIES – Young Naturalist Program, Long Bridge Park

Learn how to identify the differences and similarities between dragonfly and damselfly species while conducting an official an official survey. For ages 13-17. Registration in YNP required..

JULY 22, MAP ADVENTURES – Jr Ranger Program, Long Bridge Park

A fun event for the whole family! Work together as a family to complete a quest using a special map (provided in an email link to registrants). A great way to learn orienteering with a map. For ages 5-8. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available beginning July 22.

JULY 23, ROCKS AND MINERALS – Jr Ranger Program, Amico Island

Students will learn the differences between minerals and rocks, the most common types found here, how they are formed, and where all the rocks at Amico Island came from in an online video. Then take a walk around Amico Island with your family and examine the different minerals and rocks found there. For ages 9-12. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available beginning July 22.

JULY 27, 8:30 PM - NOCTURNAL OBSERVATIONS– Young Naturalist Program, Smithville Park

Take advantage of this special opportunity to explore the parks at night! We will look and listen for nocturnal observations of animals and check out any constellations if it is a clear night. Summer star chart will be provided to registrants via email. For ages 13-17. Registration in YNP required.

JULY 29, TREES AS ARTISTIC INSPIRATION – Jr Ranger Program, Smithville Park

Students will walk past some of the largest and most impressive trees in the park system. Along the way, they will write, draw, and let their creativity flow as they inspired by these awesome trees. Jr rangers can then share their art on our Facebook page. For ages 9-12. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available beginning July 29.

JULY 29, TREES AS HABITATS – Jr Ranger Program, Smithville Park

Students will learn how trees provide a home for many plants and animals by taking a very close look at the things that live on and in trees. Using the specific pages in their packet as a guide, they can draw or photograph any animal or other plant that is using a tree as a home. For ages 5-8. Registration in Jr Ranger Program required. This program will be available beginning July 29.