

# Flat Rock Brook

The Newsletter of the Flat Rock Brook Nature Association

# News

Volume XXXVI, Number 2

Spring, 2011

## The Power of Water

Waterways contain more responsibility for a healthy ecosystem than can be seen with the naked eye alone. As more and more pollutants are introduced into the environment, most of the toxins, carcinogens, metals, waste, and harmful chemicals make their way into some body of water. Riparian buffers, wetlands, and waterways are natural filters that have the ability to absorb a significant percentage of pollutants that may flow through. However, our waterways are now becoming strained with excess nutrients, sediment, and pollutants. To compound the problem, increased water flow can cause detrimental erosion which can seriously affect wildlife. Adding insult to injury, invasive plant species are now decreasing the amount of wildlife in wetland ecosystems.

We recognize the importance of a healthy ecosystem, especially riparian buffers and wetlands. With grant funding from the Watershed Institute, Flat Rock Brook will be working along the Flat Rock Brook and Macfadden's Pond to remove invasive plants, replant native species, install erosion control measures along the brook's banks, and monitor the growth and health of the ecosystem. Through our hard work, we hope to begin a long-term restoration of a very important park resource. The benefits of this project will come in the form of an increase in biodiversity, improved water quality (both within the Nature Center property and downstream), and an increase in plant and animal life. Want to help? See Page 4 for details regarding an Earth Day cleanup on April 23rd to clean the Flat Rock Brook.

## *Signs of Spring at Flat Rock Brook!*



Clockwise: The forest turns green once more; Nature Day canoeing on Quarry Pond; classes discover nature under the trees, the turtles of Quarry Pond climb back on their log, a newborn fawn in the Native Habitat.



Flat Rock Brook News is published quarterly by the Flat Rock Brook Nature Association as a benefit of membership. To become a member, make your tax-deductible check payable to Flat Rock Brook and mail to

Flat Rock Brook Nature Assn.  
443 Van Nostrand Avenue  
Englewood, NJ 07631

Student (over 13) \$15  
Seniors (65 and over) \$20  
Adult \$30  
Family \$45  
Group \$50  
Sustaining \$75  
Sponsor \$150  
Life \$1,500

#### Staff

Executive Director  
Stephen Wiessner

Education Director  
Jill Bennetta

Land Manager  
Ryan Hasko

Secretary  
Sandy Chiappino

Naturalist  
Kristen Pakonis

Bookkeeping  
Lisa Higgins

#### Building Hours

Monday - Friday  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday  
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Trails are open every day  
from dawn to dusk.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Kathy Silberstein and Cynthia Sumner

For Flat Rock Brook to remain a viable Nature Center, we require the help of over 300 volunteers each year to help sustain our activities. It is especially important when volunteers within the organization take on leadership responsibility, and are willing to put in the necessary time and effort to make important projects come to fruition.

Two such individuals that give significant time and energy to Flat Rock Brook are Kathy Silberstein (right) and Cynthia Sumner (below). They are the volunteer co-chairs of our Gardening Committee. Our volunteer gardeners work every Thursday from April through October to beautify the areas around the Nature



Center building. Our Gardening Committee is an active group of about 15 individuals, and Kathy and Cynthia have been leading this enthusiastic group for the past several years. It is their leadership that is currently being called upon to direct one of our most ambitious projects—the renovation of our Backyard Habitat for Wildlife, now called the Native Habitat for Wildlife.

If you would like to join the Gardening Committee, call the Nature Center at (201) 567-1265 and we will have Kathy or Cynthia connect with you, or visit Flat Rock Brook any Thursday at 8:30 a.m. starting in April and your energy will be put to work to beautify Flat Rock Brook.

## Dredging Quarry Pond: Phase 1



Workers from the RBA Group, which has been contracted for engineering services relative to the proposed dredging of Quarry Pond, take core samples to determine levels of pollution. Several other cores were taken through 6 inches of ice to determine the original depth of the pond. The testing of the samples will determine the feasibility of proceeding to the dredging phase of the project.

## Spring Programs at Flat Rock Brook

To register please fill out the form on page 5 and mail it along with your payment to Flat Rock Brook. **All registration is by mail and on a first come, first served basis.** You are not registered until payment has been received. **In the event of cancellation, your payment will be refunded only if we are notified at least 5 business days before the scheduled program.** Additional registration forms are available on our web site ([www.flatrockbrook.org](http://www.flatrockbrook.org)). Programs meet at the Nature Center building, unless stated otherwise. Be aware of age requirements. **For additional information, please call 201 567-1265.**



### Toddler Times

Tuesdays: March 15, April 12, and May 17  
Thursdays: March 17, April 14, and May 19.  
4:00 - 4:45 p.m.

For children ages 2-5 with a parent or favorite adult. These 45-minute programs are designed with the little ones in mind. Each session includes a story with a natural science theme and a craft, along with an outdoor hike. **Registration by mail is required.** Per child, per class cost is \$5 for members, \$8 non-members.

### Signs of Spring Walk

Sunday, March 20  
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

For adults and children ages 6 and older  
New life will be stirring at Flat Rock Brook as spring arrives. Let's take to the trails looking for sprouting flowers, the stirrings of active wildlife, and other signs of spring. Come stretch your legs and shake off the winter blues! **Registration by mail is required.** Free for members, \$5 non-members.

### Wild Art - NEW

Sundays, March 20, 27, April 10, 17, and May 1, 22  
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

For children ages 7 to 10  
Let's get creative with nature! This program is for those who enjoy exploring and crafting. Each session we will go outside for inspiration as the seasons change and complete an art project to take home. Come discover the natural wonders of spring with an artistic eye! **Registration by mail is required.** \$5 members, \$8 non-members per session.

### Garden in the Morning

Every Thursday from March 31 through October  
8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

For adults

The Flat Rock Brook Gardeners invite one and all (everyone is welcome regardless of experience) to the kick off of the 2011 gardening season. Gardeners meet every Thursday beginning March 31 through the month of October. Each session begins with a 10-minute mini-lesson. **No need to register,** just bring willing hands and gloves! Please note that the March 31 session begins at 9:30 am. Free to all.

### Sunset Hikes

Every Tuesday in April and May  
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

For adults and children ages 10 and older.

Take a sunset hike along the trails and through the forest with our Trail Guides. Hikes are about 2-3 miles. These hikes are great for beginners, an easy workout and a relaxing way to end your day. Enjoy the beauty and take advantage of hiking close to home. **No need to register.** Free for members, \$5 non-members.

### Spring Bird Walks

Mondays, April 25 and May 2, 9, 16, 23  
8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

For adults and teens

Join Education Director Jill for one or more morning bird walks as we search for colorful spring migrants and resident birds returning to nest. These informal walks provide the basics to enjoy bird watching in our natural areas or right in your own backyard. Bring binoculars and field guides (or borrow ours). For beginner or veteran birders. **No need to register.** Free for members, \$5 non-members per session.



*Summer Camp page 7*

Continued on page 4

## Volunteer Days at Flat Rock Brook Spring Cleaning for Earth Day I Children's Garden

Saturday, April 16; 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

For Families

Join the staff and volunteers at Flat Rock Brook to do a little spring cleaning in the Children's Garden! This year's garden will be a rainbow, and we need your help to get us started the right way. Let's get dirty and have some fun preparing for a wonderful growing season. **No need to register.** Free for all.

## Spring Cleaning for Earth Day II Flat Rock Brook

Saturday, April 23; 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

For adults and children 6th grade and up

Do your part for Mother Earth! Join the Flat Rock Brook staff in a spring clean-up of the Flat Rock Brook. Each spring after the rains, lots of bottles, plastic bags, and paper wash into the brook from upstream. Help clean the brook of this pollution. Bring waterproof boots or borrow ours. **No need to register.** Free for all.

## Take Mom for a Hike!

Sunday, May 8; 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

For families and children 4 and up

What better way to celebrate Mother's Day than to take mom outside for a relaxing and educational walk at Flat Rock Brook? We'll stroll on the trails looking for animal moms working hard to take care of their young in the wild. Moms attend for FREE! **Registration by mail is required.** Per person cost: \$5 for members, \$8 for non-members

## Birding with Bergen County Audubon



Tuesday, May 24; 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

For adults

Come and join Flat Rock Brook and Bergen County Audubon Society in search of the elusive warblers that migrate through our forest. Leaders will help find and identify these little flying phenoms as we walk the trails. Bring your optics and get ready for some good birding! **Registration by mail is required.** Free to all.

## Become a Trail Guide!

Do you love the outdoors? Do you love children? Put your two loves together and become a Flat Rock Brook Trail Guide! We teach children of all ages, from pre-k on up. Many schools use our 150-acre preserve to enhance their science curriculum and allow children to learn first-hand how nature works. Spring orientation begins in March and there are still openings for new Trail Guides to come on board.



Being a Trail Guide is a rewarding experience. We offer multiple trainings for each of our programs, shadowing opportunities, and enrichment field trips. We expect each Trail Guide to teach at least eight times a season (spring and fall) and to make a time commitment of at least 30 hours per season. To learn more about becoming a Trail Guide, call Education Director Jill Bennetta at 201-567-1265 or e-mail her at [jill@flatrockbrook.org](mailto:jill@flatrockbrook.org). If you are interested, come to our spring season Trail Guide potluck luncheon and orientation, which will be held at Flat Rock Brook on Tuesday, March 22 from 12:30-2:00 p.m.

## Nature Program Co-op Events



### Warbler Walk

Saturday, May 21, 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Hosted by Bergen County Audubon Society and Overpeck Preserve

We will explore Overpeck Preserve at the height of Warbler migration. The walk will be led by experienced birders from the Bergen County Audubon Society. Meet at the trailer past the stable area. The walk is free and open to all. Bring binoculars if you have them. **No need to register.** For more information, visit either [BergenCountyAudubon.org](http://BergenCountyAudubon.org) or [OverpeckPreserve.org](http://OverpeckPreserve.org).

## The Rotary Club of Englewood Supports Flat Rock Brook

Flat Rock Brook received a \$5,000 grant from the Rotary Club of Englewood to support the expansion of our environmental education initiatives. The funds will help the Nature Center as we transition many new exciting projects from design into action, including the renovation of our Native Habitat for Wildlife, the certification of our Nature Center as a “green building” by the United States Green Building Council, and our most ambitious initiative to install museum-style exhibits in the main room of our Nature Center. Each of these projects has an educational component, and this grant will enable our education staff to develop curriculum, consider maintenance requirements, and plan for the integration of these projects as we move forward to installation. Thanks to the Rotary Club of Englewood’s support, we look forward to achieving greater things in our education program now and into the future.

Daniel Fitzpatrick (left), President of the Rotary Club of Englewood presents a check for \$5,000 to Stephen Wiessner, Executive Director of Flat Rock Brook.



### Flat Rock Brook Program Registration Form

To register for a program fill out the registration form and mail it with your payment to the **Flat Rock Brook Nature Assn., 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood, NJ 07631**. All fees are per person. Additional forms are available on our website ([www.flatrockbrook.org](http://www.flatrockbrook.org)).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Member Yes No (circle one)

Name of Program	Date	# Attending	Age(s)	Cost/Person	Amount

I would like to become a member of Flat Rock Brook and receive discounts on programs, invitations to members only events, and Flat Rock Brook’s quarterly newsletter.

- |                |      |                              |                                  |
|----------------|------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ___ Family     | \$45 | Sustaining                   | \$75                             |
| ___ Individual | \$30 | Sponsor                      | \$150                            |
| ___ Senior     | \$20 | Life                         | \$1,500                          |
| ___ Student    | \$15 |                              |                                  |
| ___ Group      | \$50 | New <input type="checkbox"/> | Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> |

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. Total Programs \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card: Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  Master Card  Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (Required) \_\_\_\_\_

## From Executive Director Stephen Wiessner **Protect and Preserve a Precious Heritage: Create a Living Legacy**

Our members' financial support enables Flat Rock Brook to keep up its important work of preserving and protecting its precious green acres and educating the public about the environment, not only today but for future generations. You can help perpetuate this mission for years to come by creating a living legacy for Flat Rock Brook.

Through various planned giving tools you can help ensure Flat Rock's future and make special, larger gifts than possible from annual income or during your lifetime, and with potential significant tax benefits. These include bequests made in a will or trust, donations of appreciated property or securities, or designation of Flat Rock Brook as beneficiary in your qualified retirement plan, life insurance policy, payable-on-death accounts, or employee stock ownership plans. Several of our members have taken advantage of a federal regulation allowing individuals who are 70½ or older to use IRA Required Minimum Distribution funds to make tax-free gifts of up to \$100,000 to qualified charitable organizations. Such gifts for 2011 can be made any time before Dec. 31, 2011.

If you contemplate such giving, it is important to consult your legal and financial advisors.

**Please Think Of Flat Rock Brook When You Think Of The Future!**

## **Flat Rock Brook Installs High Efficiency Boiler**

In January, Flat Rock Brook installed a super high-efficiency boiler to replace the original unit that was installed in 1980 when the Nature Center building was completed. The new boiler operates at 96.4% efficiency in contrast to the old boiler which was estimated to be between 60 and 70% efficient. It is so small that it hangs on the wall of the boiler room. Between the new furnace and the solar panels we installed two years ago, it is expected that our energy costs will be reduced by \$2,000 annually. The cost of the new boiler was made possible by a gift from Honorary Trustee Gallya Gordon. Our thanks to Gallya whose generous donation will keep us warm for many years to come!



## **Welcome to our New Members**

Robert and Silvia Alweiss, Christen Callahan, Elizabeth Carson and Jerald Krauthamer, William Chiappane, Fay Collins, David and Britt Cryer, Taeyul Fox, Olive Graham, Judith Griffin, Jay and Elana Harmon, Eunsoo Kim, Brandy Moriah, Michael and Suzanne Rosenberg, Barbara Shaughnessy, Bruce Tatarian, Diane Tose, Justine Volesko, Si K. Yoo.

### **The Garden Club of Englewood's Annual Plant Sale**

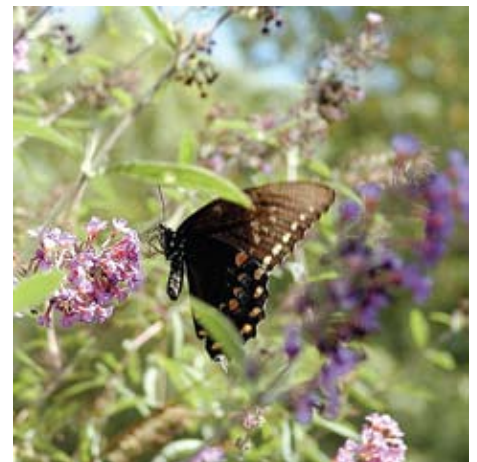
**Friday, May 6th, 11:00 am to 7:00 p.m.  
Veterans Memorial Park, Depot Square in Englewood.**

## **Go Green with FRB**

The passing of the Fertilizer Control Law is a great first step to restoring our local waterways, including the Flat Rock Brook. Under this new law, phosphorus will be removed from fertilizers that are sold in New Jersey and 20 percent of nitrogen within fertilizers will be in a slow-released form. Lawn care professionals will now have to attend training for the appropriate application of fertilizer. We are excited by the passing of this law as it will have a positive impact on the park's waterways.

Excess phosphorus and nitrogen in our waterways can cause significant problems including detrimental algae blooms and deterioration or loss of aquatic life. To do your part to protect our waterways and native ecosystems, please keep these lawn care tips in mind for the spring.

- If using fertilizer, purchase a type that does not contain phosphorus and only slow-released nitrogen (even though the new law now prohibits fertilizers with phosphorus, it will still take time to phase out).
- Do not apply fertilizer right before rain.
- Consider testing your soil for composition. Once determined, only the necessary nutrients should be added without excess waste.
- Consider converting a portion of your lawn into native habitat including wildflowers, annual grasses, and shrubs. Native plants will need little care in the form of irrigation or fertilizing once established.



# Summer Nature Day Camp '11

Summer Nature Day Camp offers hands-on discovery and adventures for children ages Pre-K to seventh grade. Explore the forest, pond, and meadow through nature activities, crafts, hikes, and games. Camp fee includes a Flat Rock Brook T-shirt. Participants must be or become \$45 family members. Children may attend only one week-long session. Please contact our office (201) 567-1265 or visit our web site at [www.flatrockbrook.org](http://www.flatrockbrook.org) for details. **Registration by mail is required. Please register early as sessions fill up quickly.**



## Endangered Earth

Participants will learn about a variety of environmental issues that affect their communities, and how to take action and create a positive impact. For children entering 5th, 6th and 7th Grades. \$200  
Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Session D-1: July 11-15  
Session D-2: August 1-5



Wet and Wild campers take a closeup look at the residents of Quarry Pond as they learn about the importance of water to the natural world.

## Cool Creepy Crawlies

Your child will leave camp looking at insects and other “unhuggables” in an entirely new way!

For children 4 to 5 years old. \$125  
Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
or 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Session A-1: June 27- July 1  
Session A-2: July 11- 15  
Session A-3: August 15-19

## See Like an Eagle; Hear Like a Fox

Campers will use their five senses to experience how animals and plants survive in nature.

For children entering 1st and 2nd Grades. \$200  
Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Session B-1: June 27- July 1  
Session B-2: July 18-22  
Session B-3: August 8-12  
Session B-4: August 22-26

## Wet and Wild

Campers will explore the wonderful world of water and learn how it keeps the natural world “flowing”.

For children entering 3rd and 4th Grades. \$200  
Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Session C-1: July 5-8 \*\$160  
Session C-2: July 25-29  
Session C-3: August 15-19

## Registration Form for Summer Camp

To register for summer camp, please fill out this form and send it with your payment to Summer Camp, Flat Rock Brook, 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood, NJ 07631. Registrations must be postmarked. One form per child, make copies if necessary, or obtain copies on-line at [www.flatrockbrook.org](http://www.flatrockbrook.org).

**Session # and Dates:** 1st Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. Eve: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a current member?  Yes.  No. (If no, add \$45 membership fee.)

Camp fee: (from above) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Membership (\$45) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my  Visa  MasterCard  Discover

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (required): \_\_\_\_\_

## Spring Calendar

### March

- 15 Toddler Times
- 17 Toddler Times
- 20 Signs of Spring Walk  
Wild Art
- 22 Trail Guide Luncheon
- 27 Wild Art
- 31 Garden in the Morning

### April

- 5 Sunset Hikes
- 7 Garden in the Morning
- 10 Wild Art
- 12 Toddler Times  
Sunset Hikes
- 14 Garden in the Morning  
Toddler Times
- 16 Spring Cleaning:  
Children's Garden
- 17 Wild Art
- 19 Sunset Hikes
- 21 Garden in the Morning
- 23 Spring Cleaning:  
Flat Rock Brook
- 25 Spring Bird Walks
- 26 Sunset Hikes
- 28 Garden in the Morning

### May

- 1 Wild Art
- 2 Spring Bird Walks
- 3 Sunset Hikes
- 5 Garden in the Morning
- 8 Mother's Day Hike
- 9 Spring Bird Walks
- 10 Sunset Hikes
- 12 Garden in the Morning
- 15 **NATURE DAY**
- 16 Spring Bird Walks
- 17 Toddler Times  
Sunset Hikes
- 19 Garden in the Morning  
Toddler Times
- 22 Wild Art
- 23 Spring Bird Walks
- 24 Birding with Audubon  
Sunset Hikes
- 26 Garden in the Morning
- 31 Sunset Hikes

# Nature Day

## at Flat Rock Brook

*Sunday, May 15, 11 - 4 p.m.*



*Featuring . . .*

**MAD SCIENCE**

*And much more*

*Nature Stories and Crafts*

*Canoe Rides on Quarry Pond*

*Mother Nature's Game Room*

*Face Painting & Scavenger Hunts*

*\$5.00 per person - Rain or Shine*

**Flat Rock Brook Nature Association**  
**443 Van Nostrand Avenue**  
**Englewood, NJ 07631**  
**201 567-1265**



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