

Demarest Nature News



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

www.demarestnaturecenter.org
Winter 2018 Vol. 44, No. 1

President's Message

I'll start with thanks. Thank you for caring enough about the Demarest Nature Center to support it with your membership. Your dollars have allowed us to carry on our sponsorship of nature programs at County Road and Luther Lee Elementary Schools. We've been able to offer a wide variety of activities to our schools at no charge that include bringing in our local naturalist from the Closter Nature Center, Marc Gussen, for programs like nature walks with the kindergartners and first graders in the Demarest Nature Center and the Lenape Delaware Indian classes for the fourth graders. We also contribute to sending the second graders to Abmas Farm and the third graders to Turtleback Zoo. In addition, every year we sponsor a scholarship for a deserving high school senior.

We live in the most densely populated state in the nation. New Jersey has higher population density per square mile than Japan or India. We are less than an hour away from one of the largest cities on earth. Rutgers University Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis estimates that approximately 50 acres of land are developed

every day in New Jersey, which translates to more than 18,000 acres annually.

More than fifty acres a day! Imagine the Demarest Nature Center disappearing in one day.

We are a community that supports a nature center! Ours is a living monument to the belief that preserving open space adds not only to the esthetics of our community, but also to the value of our community. If nothing else, the catastrophic storms of the past year should convince us of the importance of our Nature Center. Flood control is a direct benefit of protecting our open space.

Your continued support is what sustains the Demarest Nature Center. If you haven't already done so this year, please become a member or renew your membership using the enclosed envelope.

Thanks, and see you on the trails.

Kevin Riley
President

Visiting the Demarest Nature Center: A place for all seasons.

On any day of the week, when there is a break in the long list of things to do and errands to run, the Demarest Nature Center beckons for a visit. It tempts with an offer to unplug from the rushed pace of life, and to take a leisurely walk through the woods and meadows, by the Tenakill brook that meanders through it. The Nature Center welcomes visitors throughout the year and in all seasons. Its gifts are many and come in the form of both flora and fauna.

The Demarest Nature Center has many trails that allow a visitor to walk through the woods of various tree species. The trails are dotted with benches conspicuously placed for the best view of the wild birds that frequent the Nature Center. It has been (and in some cases still is) a home of not only the familiar white-tail deer but of wild turkeys, mallard ducks, snapping turtles, trout, egrets, woodpeckers, a Great Horned Owl and its mascot, the Great Blue Heron.

In the summer the Nature Center is lush with the greenery

of the trees, the wild grass, the full grown skunk cabbage and the aromatic milkweed. The glittering blue dragonflies and multicolored butterflies flit from the Tenakill brook to the wild rosebushes and back again. The ferns in the west side of the Nature Center create a sea of emerald. The East Meadow, located on a plateau, gives a feeling of being in a secluded spot in the Highlands.

In the fall, the gold leaves filter the golden sunlight until they are one. The woods become more transparent, and more views open up. The air is crisp and the

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Your membership dollars allow us to continue to give back to the community and preserve and protect DNC's 60 acres of meadows, forests and wetlands.

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colors of the trees are brilliant. In the early morning, wild turkey flocks can be seen traveling together in search of better grazing grounds.

In the winter, the Nature Center is quiet and peaceful. When it snows, the trails can still be seen although they are less traveled. The sun is still brilliant and the deer, in their darker winter coats, can be seen more readily against the white contrast. The peacefulness of a snowfall in the woods allows the visitor to leave all stress behind.

In the early spring, the woods begin to show a light green fuzziness. The trails stand out among rambling green plants with small yellow flowers. Daffodils and violets soon join them. The Tenakill brook becomes livelier enabling the spring trout to travel farther. Vernal pools return, giving life to peepers (tree frogs). The Nature Center is again a place of competing music and action.

Whether you visit in the summer, fall, winter, or spring, the Demarest Nature Center is an oasis of peace. It is a place where a visitor can reconnect with nature and take a step back from the stress of the daily routine. It is an undemanding host, that makes no demands on its visitors except to enjoy the visit. It never fails to please.

Teddy Lourbas

Trustee, Demarest Nature Center



*A photo of the DNC mascot in the DNC:
The Great Blue Heron*

Howling for Coyotes

My favorite animal is the wolf. We don't have wild wolves here in New Jersey so the next best thing for me are coyotes. One of the coolest things is hearing their magnificent howls. I am passionate about educating people how to peacefully coexist with wildlife including coyotes. In fact, many of us coexist with them regularly without even knowing it. Coyotes are predators but do not see humans as prey. They tend to steer clear of us unless they are sick (including rabies) or habituated to us (primarily from our food sources).

Unfortunately recent overdevelopment in our area has contributed to pushing more wildlife including coyotes into suburban neighborhoods. In addition, artificial feeding of wildlife can draw all sorts of critters that coyotes love to eat close to homes. During the winter the young coyote pups disperse from their mothers to try to find their own territory. These issues can lead to human coyote conflict by no fault of their own. They are just trying to live, find food and homes just like us. They are important to our environment by eating rodents including the white footed mouse. This mouse is the one that infects ticks with the bacterium that causes Lyme Disease. The following steps can help prevent coyotes from being attracted to homes: Never feed or attempt to tame a coyote. Don't feed wildlife in parks. It's illegal, harmful and can attract coyotes. Clean community areas after events. Never leave or store pet food outside. Tightly secure garbage, recycling and green bins. Store inside until collection day. When composting, use well secured bins. Don't add meat, dairy or eggs. Remove fallen fruit from the ground. If a coyote frequents your yard, consider installing motion activated lights and/or sprinkler system, a nighttime animal deterrent or adding reflective mylar and/or rolling pvc top to your fence. Trim under bushes so that a coyote can't find easy shelter. Close off crawl spaces under porches and sheds. Remove water sources, especially in times of drought. Coyotes don't know the difference between a rabbit and a cat, and might view small domestic animals as prey, while larger dogs may be viewed as a threat, particularly during mating season (winter) and pup rearing (spring & summer). Most interactions

with coyotes in urban areas result from the presence of a dog.

Here are some tips for dog owners: Don't allow your dog to interact with a coyote in any way, including chasing or playing. Always keep your dog leashed and under control. If you walk your small dog at dusk or dawn in a coyote area, keep the leash short and be aware of your surroundings. Don't allow companion animals to roam free and keep them inside at night. Coyotes may lose their natural wariness of people because of intentional or unintentional feeding. Encourage coyotes to avoid people by "hazing" if one approaches or follows you. Try to make eye contact, wave your arms and make loud noises until he/she retreats. Always keep yourself between a coyote and your companion animal. Always keep small children near and calmly leave the area. Some other ways to scare coyotes include: stomping your feet, opening an umbrella, yelling, using an air horn, shaking coins in a tin can, banging pots and pans, spraying with the garden hose, blowing whistles, be humanely creative.

Coyotes are a beautiful, intelligent, family oriented and a very useful species. Let's live & let live!

Kind regards,

Mark Nagelhout

Trustee, Demarest Nature Center

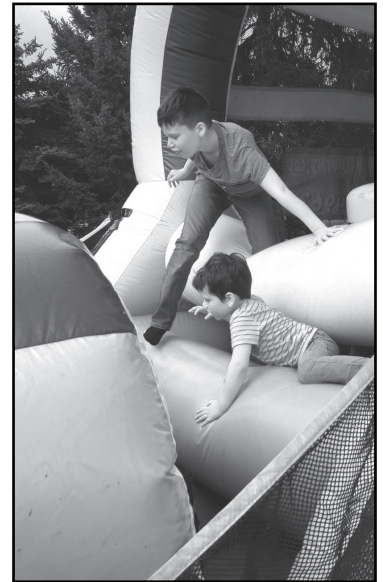
"Deer Rutting"

The deer rutting/mating season can be a fascinating time and a wildlife photographers dream. During the rutting season you can learn a lot about the bucks and watch them sparring. The rut is the time when whitetail deer, especially bucks, are more active and less cautious than usual. The buck has one thing on his mind at this time of the year: to find as many does as he can. He will chase after many does for weeks, barely eating. There are many behaviors a buck will exhibit during the rut. During prerut, bucks will spar with each other. Sparring is low intensity aggressive behavior, involving mostly pushing and shoving. Bucks of different sizes will do this to each other. After prerut is finished, a buck will rub his antlers on a tree, and make scrapes on the ground with his hooves: both are ways a buck will mark his territory and

OKTOBERFEST 2017

The Demarest Nature Center Association would like to put out a very big thank-you to everyone who contributed their time and energy in making The Craft Show at Oktoberfest 2017 a great success. We had a great turnout of both crafters and shoppers at this year's event. The money raised will be used to fund the Demarest school programs we sponsor, our yearly scholarship to a deserving high school senior, various free programs for the community and the maintenance of the miles of trails throughout the nature center year around. We apologize if we've left anyone off this list.

Our Thanks to Mayor Ray Cywinski, Borough Clerk Susan Crosman, Deputy Registrar Elise Wrede, Chief of Police Jim Powderley and the Demarest Police Department, Special Officers, Crossing Guards, Donny Russell & the Demarest Department of Public Works, Rev Myung Sun Han, (Pastor of the United Methodist Church of Demarest), Yoonjung Lee and The Korean Demarest Parent Association, Reuben Lee, Justin Song, Ethan Coy, Brian Park, Joanna Lasky, Sally Keen, Suzanne Ornstein, Shaheena and Akhtar Hilal, Jenny Akdag, Jimmy Hu, Laura Nelson, Hilaury Stern, Helen Schoppe, Irene Lourbas, Dave Emerson, Barbara Hoffman, Kathy Kobylarz, Ed Hirning, Mike Hubschman, Toni Dolan, Bob Gioia, Masaaki Ishikura, Brandon Bobe, Alan Epstein, Joan Stein, Ella Lasky, Libby Andreopoulos, Lisa Caruso, Mary Beth Cotrell and Gozen Tuysuzoglou and **The DNCA Board of Trustees:** Kevin Riley, Tom Birch Peter Coy, Joe Connolly, Kumiko Ishikura, Richard Jaretsky, Rita Rivero, Scott Lasky, Teddy Lourbas, Peter Simpson, Anita Gonzalez, Mark Nagelhout, Kim Nagelhout, Caj Piltzecker and Council Liaison Jim Carroll.



The Demarest Nature Center Association is a 501(c)(3) organization. It receives no funds from the town of Demarest and survives solely on membership fees, donations, and its annual fundraiser, The Craft Show at Oktoberfest.

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proclaim his dominance for other bucks to see. The most prominent behavior of all during the heat of the rut is fighting, where bucks show their true dominance to others. In fighting, bucks usually battle against similar sized deer, and small bucks do not normally challenge mature large ones: often, smaller bucks fear the more mature bucks and leave or avoid the dominant deer's territory. The energy expenditure of chasing and fighting during the breeding season can result in a buck losing an immense amount of weight, with some research documenting losses of as much as 20% of body weight. In the postrut, a buck will need to replenish his body and catch up on the weight and energy he has lost. The deer rutting/mating season occurs from October through December so please remember to drive defensively.

Here are some helpful tips to help prevent collisions: Deer are most active at dawn and dusk. Be especially watchful during these times. One deer crossing the road may be a sign that more deer are about to cross. Watch for other deer—they will move fast to catch up with leaders, mothers, or mates and may not pay attention to traffic. When you see brake lights, it could be because the driver ahead of you has spotted a deer. Stay alert as you drive by the spot, as more deer could try to cross.

Wonder why the person ahead is driving so slowly? The driver may know where to slow down and be extra alert for deer. Don't be too quick to pass, and watch out. Take note of deer crossing signs and drive accordingly. They were put there for a reason. Try to drive more slowly at night, giving yourself time to see a deer with your

headlights. Lowering the brightness of your dashboard lights slightly will make it easier to see deer. Be especially watchful when traveling near steep roadside banks. Deer will pop onto the roadway with little or no warning. Be aware that headlights confuse deer and may cause them to move erratically or stop. Young animals in particular do not recognize that vehicles are a threat.

Deer hooves slip on pavement and a deer may fall in front of your vehicle just when you think it is jumping away. In closing, the Demarest Nature Center is a vital home to wildlife and always needs to be protected. I dream that one day all humans will see our planet, nature, and all life as a gift. One to be treasured, and cared for, not conquered, killed, and changed.

Kimberly Nagelhout
Trustee, Demarest Nature Center

DEMAREST NATURE CENTER ASSN.

Borough of Demarest

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Membership Envelope
INSIDE**

What's Happening This Year!

Please visit our website:

www.demarestnaturecenter.org

for details and updates on our upcoming events.

You can now donate on our website using Paypal.

If you are interested in becoming one of our Board of Trustees or you'd like to join our volunteers, email: info@demarestnaturecenter.org.

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.

Photos by Kevin Riley unless where otherwise credited.