

S P R I N G 2 0 1 5

Dyken Pond-erings

Newsletter of the Friends of Dyken Pond and the
Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

Welcome Back!

We would like to welcome back our Environmental Educators from last year who will be joining us for another season.



Keep an eye out for Ian Keefe and Casey Pendergast!

Save the Date!

National Trails Day

June 6th, 2015

Help your local park by volunteering from 9am – noon.

Story Telling with Gil Payette

June 14th, 2015

Native American myths, folklore, and legends at 1:30pm.

Let's Move Day

June 27th, 2015

Healthy outdoor family activities . Two sessions from 10:30am – 2:00pm.

Upcoming Events

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Eat, Drink, and Be Merry Fundraiser

Wednesday, May 20th from 6-9pm
at the Lucas Confectionary Wine Bar
12 Second Street Troy, New York

Newcomb Pond Parcel

This 56-acre parcel of land is home to a variety of wildlife species. Over just a one-week period our wildlife camera captured images of red fox, raccoon, river otter, and red squirrel.

Important Habitat for Many Species

Our most recent jaunt to the new site has revealed active beaver lodges, a nesting Great blue heron, and signs of river otters. Each visit we discover more species that call Newcomb Pond their home.

A Biodiversity Hot Spot

The Rensselaer Plateau is the fifth largest unfragmented forest in New York State. The acquisition of this new parcel will guarantee over 600 acres of unbroken forest habitat protected through Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center. This provides necessary habitat for larger species such as bear, moose, coyote and bobcats.

Community Involvement

Lucas Confectionary has agreed to donate 20% of all beverage sales during the specified time to the Friends of Dyken Pond Center. With over \$27,776 currently raised through direct donations, this fundraiser will bring us one step closer to reaching our \$100,000 goal.

Donate

From the Director's Desk...



Our Recommended Book of the Season

The Crossley ID Guide: Raptors (The Crossley ID Guides) by Richard Crossley

Part of the revolutionary *Crossley ID Guide* series, this is the first raptor guide including all 34 North American raptor species with lifelike scenes composed from multiple photographs including aerial and resting scenes that allow you to identify raptors just as the experts do.

Nature Vocabulary Word of the Month

Conglobulate- verb; to join closely together, to make into a ball

'The pill bug will conglobulate to protect itself if touched.'



A Note from The Friends of Dyken Pond Center... How can I get involved?

There are two ways to get involved at Dyken Pond Center- become a member of our Friends organization or volunteer your time and skills. Your membership in this organization will sponsor the continued variety of public education programs. To become a member please visit our website [here](#).

In addition to fundraising for the Newcomb Pond parcel, the Friends of Dyken Pond Center have several on-going projects including:

- planning for a new energy efficient visitor center
- collaborating with schools and other organizations to improve connections between kids and nature
- providing scholarships for youth to summer camp
- organizing teen opportunities to gain experience in the environmental field



Volunteers splitting wood on firewood day.

We need volunteers to help with:

On-going Projects * Fundraising * Accounting
Membership * Outreach * Trail Work

Contact the Center to learn more about volunteer opportunities and how you can help! 518.658.2055 or dykenpond@fairpoint.net

What's Happening at the Pond?

Earth Day 2015

This year on Earth Day we had a great turnout! Many volunteers came out and helped to prepare the center for our busy spring and summer seasons!



Staff member Ian Keefe installing the mosaics on Earth Day.



Director Lisa Hoyt harvesting compost.

Composting Toilet

Any regular visitor to the center is familiar with our composting toilets. These toilets are able to treat human excreta without the use of water through a slow, aerobic process involving peat moss. This spring we harvested our first compost, an odorless dark brown, nutrient-rich material. Keep an eye on our flower gardens to see the effects of this compost.

Birding for Beginners

Every Wednesday morning at 7:30am we meet up for 1-1.5 hours of birding around the center. All skill levels are welcome! We average over 20 species per morning so come on out and learn a call or two. An up-to-date species log can be found on our website [here](#).



A broad-winged hawk perched outside the main cabin.



Volunteers Sue and Nicole plugging logs with Reishi mushrooms.

Volunteer Tuesdays

Special Thanks to Sue Brady and Nicole Grijnsztein for coming out to help get the center ready for spring. After gardening, we had the pleasure of plugging some old logs with Reishi mushrooms. Come out to the center every Tuesday from 9am-12pm to volunteer your time and get involved. Please call or email the center to confirm a staff member will be available.

Ask the Naturalist

What happened to the boardwalk that runs across Dustin Swamp?



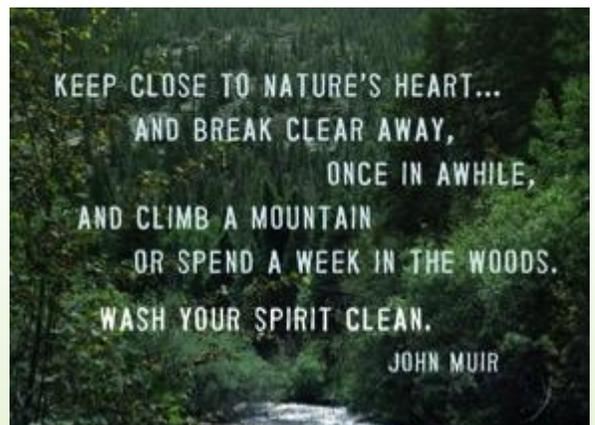
One of the most common questions we get asked here at Dyken Pond is about the boardwalk near Dustin Swamp. In the fall of 2013 a family of beavers dammed the small creek that used to run through Dustin Swamp. The result of their handiwork can be seen above. The photo on the left was taken in the summer of 2013. You can see the creek running through the middle of the boardwalk with the

open area considered a sedge meadow. The picture on the right was taken in the summer of 2014. The landscape has been changed drastically. The water level has risen 3 feet, creating a habitat for a new variety of wildlife including waterfowl and beavers- the ecosystem engineer. Currently the boardwalk is closed due to water damage. Please follow the detour signs if you are hiking this section of the Long Trail.

How the Woods Saved My Mind

By Ian Keefe

Everyone tells you how hard it is in the real world. And I can speak on behalf of most twenty somethings when I say; we really weren't listening. We heard the words: bills, health insurance, marriage, kids, careers. But thought you said beer, sex, buy a puppy and a car you can't afford. I digress. This story is about how I found myself in the woods and figured it all out.



To continue reading click [here...](#)

SOLA Summer Outdoor Learning Adventure

It's that time of year again! Registration is now open for Dyken Pond's summer camp- Summer Outdoor Learning Adventure. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis so please make sure to get your registration in early.

Limited full scholarships are available for those who would be unable to attend otherwise. Scholarships will be awarded based upon financial need and the child's desire to attend.

Please click the link to our website to the right for more information about the camp and to download a registration brochure.



Camp Information and Registration

Forest Conservation Corps A Summer Youth Work & Learning Adventure

The FCC program allows youth ages 14-16 the opportunity to work on valuable conservation projects while developing personal values and responsibilities that can enhance their education, leadership and future job opportunities.



Students will spend roughly half of their day working on conservation projects, while the other half of the day will be spent learning about the environment, job skills development and enjoying the outdoors.

For more information or to print the FCC application visit our website [here](#).

This is a shared newsletter of the:

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Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center is a Rensselaer County owned and operated public park.

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The Friends of Dyken Pond is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization formed in 1991 to support the Dyken Pond Center.