



Rice Creek Associates Newsletter

President's Comments

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Photo by Laurel Artz

It's All about Perspective

Have you noticed that many people are happy in early spring when the sun is out and you can envision warmer longer days ahead? But ask them on a cloudy, cold, wet day and you get quite a different response? Similarly, so many say the snow we had was so pretty, even when there may have been more than we wanted. But a few days later, once it's melting, covered in sand, and no longer a blinding white, the same people are sick of it and want it gone?

These seasonal changes are inevitable. We all know, if you don't like the weather in Oswego, wait five minutes. I saw this for myself when driving to the field station to work on this newsletter. On Thompson Road, my windshield was being pelted with small ice crystals. (All old timers know that Bob Sykes would have told us the correct name on WSGO.) The sky was dark, and puffy low clouds seemed to be zooming from west to east. Yet once I turned into the entrance to RCFS, the sun was shining, the precipitation stopped, and the wind had calmed.

How you view these seasonal changes, and everything else in your life, is based on your perspective. I've been thinking about that word a lot lately. For many the term brings back art classes, or technical drawing work for technology classes. Being drawing-challenged, these were always difficult activities for me. I understood the concepts, but getting them on paper was rough. I think it must be easier for people like me now that much is done on computers instead of freehand.

Location is one of the big players in perspective. Sentimentality is another factor. One's mood, where you are emotionally, even age, all play a part. Past experiences often override one's ability to see something differently than they may have in the past. I feel this every time I go to various places on Campus. Old memories flood back and influence how I am feeling in that spot. For instance, I miss Romney field house as the location for hockey games. And I have not yet forgiven the college for paving over my old playground. At Rice Creek many spots hold special memories and with them come all sorts of varying perspectives.

However, perspectives can change based on experiences and the passage of time. Don and I have been experiencing this over the past weeks. You see, we built our house about 35 years ago. Shortly thereafter my son had an experience that would repeat for many springs, and then less regularly. Just outside his window are some large trees and then a small forest area. In our yard are many birds, including a robin who became my son's nemesis. In early spring, while the bird was in mating mode and ready to fight off challengers, the bird saw his reflection in the bedroom window. This caused the bird to attack, which meant repeated banging on the window. It really was not a situation of flying into it by accident, the robin was actively trying to fight off a challenger.

For many days each spring the bird exhibited this behavior, frightening my son who was only about 5 when this started. Clearly, my son's perspective was one of fear at the time. He still talks about it, and he is turning 40 this year! We are pretty sure it was the same bird for some years, based on his appearance and noticeable effects of aging over time. Then time would pass, and a new bird would eventually show up.

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Assistant Director's Update

Spring is on the way, following what I heard many people call an “old-fashioned winter.” For the first time since I moved to Oswego five years ago, we experienced deep and persistent snow cover for months. As someone who loves winter outdoor recreation, I loved being able to snowshoe and cross-country ski throughout the season. As an ecologist, I felt deeply satisfied to know that at least this year, our ecosystem had what used to be a normal winter, with all its benefits. The protective layer of snow guarded plant roots from freezing and drying out. It provided a secretive, “subnivean” layer for small mammals to carve tunnels into, out of sight of predators and out of freezing winds. The white snow provided greater camouflage for mammals living at slightly higher elevation, like ermines, long-tailed weasels, and snowshoe hares, that turn white in the winter. The spring melt recharged water tables and sent a flush of fresh water to plants to use for spring growth.

I wish we could have such a winter every year, if only for the sake of our local plants and animals, but they seem to be increasingly rare with global climate change. For me, this makes celebrating the snow we do have all the more important. And we did just that, during our Celebrate Snow winter festival on February 15, with over 200 people in attendance! My thanks go out to the many local community organizations, campus departments, volunteers, and RCA members who supported the event. With deep snow on the ground, visitors enjoyed snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, outdoor fires, a skijoring demonstration, crafts and science activities, history displays, and more.

*Screen shot from Dr. Jabbour's
timelapse of the eclipsed moon,
seen from Rice Creek on 3/14.*



Another exciting recent event at the field station was the Pi Day viewing of the total lunar eclipse, which happened in the wee hours of Friday, March 14, 2025. During a total lunar eclipse, the Earth moves between the Moon and the Sun, with the Earth's shadow traveling across the Moon's surface until it is completely obscured. Usually, a bit of light gets refracted by Earth's atmosphere and offers some faint illumination of the Moon's face, so instead of total darkness, we see diminished brightness and a reddish or brownish cast to the surface.

At Rice Creek, visitors had the chance to directly view the moon through an 8" telescope and see live video captured by Dr. Kamal Jabbour, broadcast on a screen outside and a large projection screen inside the building. Despite the late hour, an estimated 100 individuals attended the program, and most stuck around to see totality at 2:26 am. They also enjoyed pizza pie and homemade apple pies, to honor Pi Day ($\pi = 3.14$). For those who may have missed the event and the eclipse, Dr. Jabbour put together a two-minute timelapse of the telescope views from Rice Creek, which was posted to our Facebook at facebook.com/ozricecreek. Those who don't have a Facebook account can view the timelapse directly on YouTube. https://youtube.com/shorts/MK0D1MkSq_g?si=HKmlK4QhsHqRVOSa



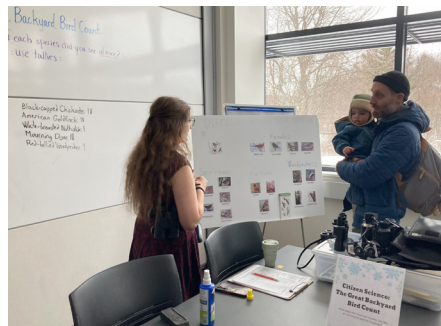


Looking ahead at our spring programs, one to mark your calendars for is Rice Creek's annual Arbor Day celebration and tree giveaway, happening this year on Saturday, April 26, 2025. The Canal Forest Restoration Project students Sarah McCauliffe and E.J. Seale have been working hard planning a whole day of festivities, including pancakes with SUNY-Oswego-made maple syrup (courtesy of the Office of Sustainability), art activities, outdoor recreation (kayaking and guided nature walk), the launch of a new, tree-themed Story Walk along our Green Trail, a research poster session with Biological Sciences students, tabling by area environmental organizations, local shopping from student and area vendors, a prize raffle, and three talks: one on trees and fungi, one on tree-themed poetry, and one on edible native trees and shrubs. And, of course, free trees all day — oak and pine seedlings and saplings. We hope you will join us in this day celebrating trees!



Finally, June 1 marks the start of the emerald ash borer biocontrol wasp monitoring season led by our colleagues at SLELO-PRISM. This is the second year of monitoring, as required by USDA, to determine if the experimental release of biocontrol parasitoid wasps conducted by SLELO-PRISM in 2022 and 2023 has been successful. Success would mean the wasps have established self-sustaining populations. We are looking for volunteers interested in helping with this project. Volunteers can help with field work (collecting samples from field locations), lab work (identifying wasps with microscopes), or both. The SLELO-PRISM team offers training to all prospective volunteers: no experience is necessary. Monitoring takes place on Wednesdays from about 10 am to 1 pm, and volunteers can come just a few times, or every week. The biocontrol wasps are tiny and are not able to sting people; they are also processed after they are dead, so a fear of wasp stings should not deter any interested volunteers. Those interested in helping should contact Megan Pistolese-Shaw at megan.pistolese@tnc.org.

Submitted by Kristen Haynes, RCFS Assistant Director



Status of Butterflies in the U.S. and Around the World- Not Good

Since the beginning of my years of documenting butterflies at the field station, 25 plus years, there seem to be and fewer to record over that time. May and June have been particularly dismal. The last handful of spring seasons have either been abnormally cold, rainy, or both and summers just don't seem to have as many varieties or numbers of butterflies.



Baltimore Checkerspots have not been seen at Rice Creek since 2011

In a way, it was no surprise to me that in early March, newspapers and network news channels reported on studies that indicate populations of butterflies throughout the contiguous United States have decreased 22% from 2000 to 2020.

As a matter of fact, insects including butterflies are decreasing greatly worldwide. Most evidence showing this is admittedly qualitative with limited quantifiable evidence across the globe. There are a number of practical reasons for this. Research on insects is more prevalent in developed nations, both professionally and through citizen scientists. Little, if any, of that work is taking place in third world nations.

Because butterflies are popular insects, they are being used as indicator species with regard to environmental health. In other words, a lack of butterfly abundance in an area can be directly correlated to the floral and faunal diversity of the surrounding environment.

In the United States alone, all regions of the country with the exception of the Pacific Northwest have shown butterfly population declines ranging from 4.8 to 36%, with the greatest decline in the Southwest. Factors contributing to this decline include but are not restricted to habitat loss through human land development, overuse of pesticides, invasive species and global warming phenomena (temperature extremes, massive fires, extreme rainfall, drought).

The news reports enticed me to take a closer look at what is happening at Rice Creek. I decided to compare the average number of individuals recorded from May through September for the years 2000 and 2024, the most recent year for recorded data at Rice Creek. I also calculated the average number of butterflies recorded per year per survey. The chart below shows the results:

Yearly and Average Monthly Individuals at Rice Creek

	2000	2024	% Change
Avg. Indiv/Survey Yr	62	33	-47
May	62	31	-50
June	83	22	-73
July	82	27	-67
August	52	48	-8
September	58	44	-25

Over that 25-year period, the average number of butterflies per survey for those years declined by 47%. Most of the decline occurred in June, showing a disturbing 73% decrease. August appears to be the most stable month over the 25-year period with only an 8% decline. September falls in at second place, with a 25 year decrease of 25%. As both August and September are significant months in which some butterfly populations are known to migrate, it makes sense (at least to me) that declines in the number of individuals recorded are less significant than in the preceding months.



It has been many years since we recorded any Hairstreak species

When considering which butterfly species specifically show the greatest declines, it seems that generalist species appear to be most stable, whereas specialist species are declining at greater rates. A generalist species is one whose larvae feed upon a variety of plants; a specialist species has a specific plant on which its larvae feed and no others.

So, if a butterfly species can survive by feeding upon a number of different plants, this flexibility gives it a greater chance to continue living in a given area. If one of those hosts should be affected by a condition that causes it to decrease in healthy amounts butterflies can rely on other plant species for its larvae to survive.

If the same situation occurs to a plant on which a minimalist butterfly depends (an invasive plant species can do this), that butterfly has no food plant for its larvae. One might argue that the butterfly has wings and can simply fly to an area where the food plant is available. As true as this is, some plants on which butterfly larvae feed only grow in restricted environments. As those environments often are not common, this presents a dire situation for the butterfly.

An article in ***Science*** lists a few of the conclusions researchers have made. Among them are, in sum:

- Butterflies are declining.
- Declines are common across species, where increases are rare.
- Species declines are prevalent in all US regions.
- Improved monitoring is needed.

On point #4, I am pleased to say that yearly butterfly data taken since 1996 is presently being entered into a national database that was used to report these findings. Rice Creek Field Station is doing its part to contribute data to significantly help in these environmental studies.

Submitted by Michael Holy

What is Nature Study?



What does nature study mean to you? Perhaps you're thinking botany, zoology or maybe ornithology – the type of courses and learning you may get in high school or college. Or maybe you are thinking it's Natural History where one studies the life cycle, habitat and the organism's role in an ecosystem.

Although nature study often delves into facets of those types of studies and more, today nature study generally means having an interest in one or more aspects of nature. Nature study is pursuing a deeper understanding through direct observation. In nature study, the learner controls the level of knowledge to be learned. You acquire what you want to know at your pace and level.



For many people, birdwatching is nature study. An individual sees or hears a bird they don't know and tries to identify it. They may go deeper and learn not only its name, but what the opposite sex of the bird looks like or song it sings.

I enjoy nature study. Mostly, I focus on birds, wildflowers, and insects, but here's the thing about nature study – it often leads you serendipitously down other enjoyable paths. For example, my curiosity in seeing new birds takes me to new habitats. Often in these new locations I encounter new wildflowers that intrigue me and learn their names. Then there is that unusual insect on the flower, etc.



At the turn of the 20th century many educators as well as community leaders were concerned that children no longer knew the plants and animals around them. Many of these children's families moved off their farms and into the city for better paying jobs leaving behind their direct contact with nature.

This deeply concerned teachers and civil leaders. This concern created an educational reform called the *Nature Study Movement* that originated at Cornell. The promoters of this new educational movement believed that not only being familiar with your immediate natural environment made you a better educated individual, but it also made you a better citizen. One who would be more empathetic to their environment as well as to other living creatures, including other people.

Photos: Paul Knittel

Spring Peeper, Toad, Monarch Caterpillar, Red Clover

Photos: Susan DiCriscio

Eastern Bluebird, Pine Martin, Luna Moth, Foxes



Edward Austin Sheldon, the head of the Oswego Normal and Training School (the school later to become SUNY Oswego and the namesake of the Sheldon Institute), played a major role in the Nature Study Movement through his practice and promotion of a teaching method emphasizing hands-on discovery and learning. His method is still used today.

Other movers and shakers of the **Nature Study Movement** you may recognize include Anna Botsford Comstock, John Burroughs, Liberty Hyde Bailey, Henry David Thoreau, and Louis Agassiz to mention just a few. They were either involved directly or greatly influenced the movement.

My curiosity about nature never ends. It is always there and is always interesting - and educational. Often, I feel like I'm going down a deep, dark, rabbit hole - but in a good way - discovering one interesting fact after another, after another, and so on.

In the words of Louis Agassiz, one of the founders of the Nature Study Movement and a distinguished professor of Natural History at Cornell University, "Study nature, not books." Although, I'm sure he would not object to using books to supplement your nature study discoveries! Enjoy.

Submitted by Paul Knittel



RCA Reflection Talk

A Brief History of Nature Study

Saturday, May 10th, 2025 at 2 PM | In-person and by Zoom
Free to public, Light Refreshments Served

Speaker: Paul Knittel Naturalist & Educator

From the late 1800s to the early 1900s a major educational reform took place regarding how children should be taught. Called the Nature Study Movement, its purpose was to teach science using the outside environment. It was believed that this would foster a love for nature while developing a sense of responsible citizenship. Nature Study today means different things to different people - from being self-taught to enjoying a guided nature walk. Will discuss naturalists such as Liberty Hyde Bailey, Anna Botsford Comstock, John Spencer, Henry David Thoreau, John Burroughs, Louis Agassiz, Charles Darwin, John James Audubon and Edward Austin Sheldon.

Persons with disabilities needing accommodations to attend this event should contact Rice Creek staff at 315.312.6677 at least 2 days prior to the event.



For more information:
315.312.6677
rca@oswego.edu



Name: Kamal I. Mohamed

Background/Education: B.Sc., (Agric.) Honors, and Master's of Science in Soil Microbiology from University of Khartoum, Sudan. Ph.D. in Plant Ecology and Systematics from the Department of Biological Sciences, Old Dominion University, Norfolk Virginia.

Current roles at RCFS and on campus: Director of the Field Station, 2013 - present.

What led you to RCFS: As a field botanist, I like the outdoors and I use the Field Station a lot in teaching. It's a blessing to have a Field Station this close to SUNY Oswego. It provides opportunities for our faculty and students to do research in their backyard without the need to travel far, thanks to RCA's Small Grants Program. Moving into Oswego, some of our faculty used the station and its resources to transition and start their own local research projects here at Oswego. As well, this benefited us in understanding the biology and biodiversity of the Field Station.



Your involvement with RCFS current/past: In the past I volunteered for the herb garden. I have been doing this for the last 12 years and plan to do so after retirement. I also taught a couple of field courses at the station and continued to teach at least one course until now. As Director, some of my responsibilities include implementing proper land management practices and maintaining and improving the trails at Rice Creek Field Station, establishing operational policies, updating and improving the teaching, field, and ground equipment, working with Rice Creek Associates through its Board of Directors to promote and advocate for the Field Station, and collaborating with the Department of Biological Sciences on various issues related to the Field Station.

Meaningful memory of RCFS or RCA event:

I always remember the time I spent walking the trails in the various seasons collecting early spring ephemerals and summer plants. While on the trails I met other scientists including Mike Holy, Peter Weber, and John Weeks. Mike and Peter surveyed butterflies and John while he was working on his 7 am nature radio program which I listened to every morning on my commute. I enjoyed talking to John Weeks when he visited the station, which he did frequently. His last visit was a few months before his death, which was documented in 2023 in the RCA Newsletter at the time. John filled me in on the history of the Field Station and explained many things to me including his 4-seasons paintings displayed in the station lobby. I am also proud of the fact that John mentioned that Rice Creek was his favorite Nature Center among all the ones he built, probably because it was the first he designed and supervised.



Save the date!

*Retirement Celebration
for
Dr. Kamal Mohamed*

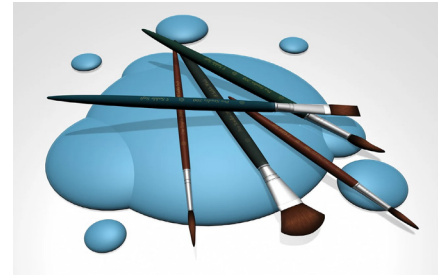
Friday May 23rd

2:00-4:00

Rice Creek Field Station



Watercolor Classes



Shown in the photos are participants in the most recent watercolor class with Robert Jones. The theme was *Winter Wonders*.

We plan to offer these popular classes quarterly so be watching your email for details.

Remember, RCA members have a reduced class fee and get first notice before information is released to the general public. Membership has its privileges!



Photos submitted by Michael Flanagan

Continued from Page 1

Well, we had not heard from any robins in a while, but that all changed about two weeks ago. Suddenly we have a determined robin, maybe more than one, ready for battle. Only now they are no longer attacking just the one bedroom window, oh no. They now have moved on to also hitting our bedroom windows on two sides of the house, and also our living room windows that are under a roof over our porch.

Please know that every one of these birds has flown away seemingly uninjured. It is not the same as flying full throttle in to a window that appears to be open sky. No, it is flying with feet out, ready to fight, beaks attacking.

You might ask how perspective is involved in this bird drama. Well when our son was young, we were clearly concerned with his being afraid of the birds attacking his windows. We may have also found it a bit humorous, having to worry about good old robin red-breast being an attack bird. But we also felt bad for the bird, being a hostage to his natural instincts.

But now, well, it hits differently, pun intended! I have been working at the computer right under the window in my son's former room, and been the victim of one of these crazy birds suddenly banging in front of my face frightening me enough that I jump and consequently scare my poor cat off my lap. Don and I both jumped when one bird flew like a kamikaze pilot into the living room window. And, I have been awakened more than once by birds pecking at the window above my bed. So my attitude has changed. While I still have concern for the birds, it is being overpowered by my patience running thin with all the tapping and banging.

To wrap up, perspective is a complex notion. It is not stagnant, and can even be changed with effort if you should choose to attempt that. As you are looking out during rainy April and bemoaning the mud, get outside and enjoy the other changes that are happening. Enjoy the sun when it shines, enjoy the longer amounts of daylight. Look for all the beautiful signs of spring that are there if you take the time to view them, and know that warmer weather is coming. Perhaps your perspective and resulting attitudes will modify. I can't think of a better place to experience this than on the grounds of RCFS. See you on the trails!

Submitted by Laurel Artz

Get to Know the RCFS Faculty/Staff

Name: Kristen Haynes

Background/Education: BS Natural Resources, Cornell University; PhD Ecology, SUNY-ESF. Business Manager at Cranberry Lake Biological Station, SUNY-ESF, 2015-2018.

Current roles at RCFS and on campus: Assistant Director of Rice Creek Field Station.

What led you to RCFS: I had two unexpected opportunities during graduate school to work at field stations. The first was an offer to work as the Business Manager at Cranberry Lake Biological Station, a boat-access-only site operated by SUNY-ESF in the northwestern Adirondacks. I served in that role for three years. Since that role was seasonal, I also had the opportunity to spend a fall semester as the Graduate Assistant at another of ESF's field stations: the Adirondack Ecological Center in Newcomb, in the central Adirondacks. I loved both of these experiences. I enjoyed the place-based nature of field stations, which offered the opportunity to get to know and connect with one specific place on Earth — developing scientific/ecological knowledge and also emotional connections with the land. I also appreciated how field stations served as a nexus for different groups of people doing a variety of interesting and important activities: students, professors, behind-the-scenes staff, community members, volunteers, etc. — engaged in formal or informal learning, research, and educational outreach — all in a very hands-on way. Nurturing these connections and supporting these educational activities was something I found gratifying and meaningful. As my PhD program was nearing its end and I began searching for what came next, I discovered the job ad for my role at Rice Creek Field Station. I feel very fortunate to have landed at Rice Creek and have the opportunity to again work with a mix of people doing different but amazing things, especially Rice Creek Associates, who do so much to support the field station!

Your involvement with RCFS current/past: My role at Rice Creek includes directing our public educational programs, managing (with assistance) our equipment and collections, mentoring student interns, facilitating use of the field station, and working on grants and projects. These include the Canal Forest Restoration Project and the Accessible Trails initiative.

Meaningful memory of RCFS or RCA event: During spring 2020 (my first spring at Rice Creek), when the world seemed very bleak, I discovered the amazing spring ephemeral wildflower display in the 'old woodlot' section of Rice Creek. Over many visits, from March through May, I saw a fascinating world unfolding: wild



leeks emerging, Christmas ferns uncurling, white and red trillium leaves and then flowers, the other-worldly blue cohosh with its purplish hue unfurling from the ground and revealing its yellow-brown-purplish flowers. I felt joy and peace watching these little miracles. They somehow helped me feel hopeful during a scary and uncertain time. Now, it is an annual tradition for me to visit this section of Rice Creek during spring to document the season as it progresses and connect again with those feelings of hope, joy, and peace.

Best Native Trees for Home, Urban and City Landscapes in the Northeast

This Rice Creek Reflection presentation took place on February 1. Dr. Donald J. Leopold from SUNY ESF shared information on the best trees to plant in our area.

Attendees were given a list of trees for reference while Dr. Leopold briefly discussed most of them. He broke the trees into five categories: For Food, Small Trees, Medium Trees, Large Trees, and For Climate Adaptation (native further south of New York State).

Good trees for landscapes typically have the following attributes: aesthetic value, cold hardy, structurally strong branches and disease and insect resistant.

Trees used in urban planting must be tolerant for compacted soil (resulting in limited oxygen for roots), tolerant for salt, producing little or no leaf or fruit litter and must fit into limited space.

Along the way, Don shared interesting tidbits of selected tree species on the list. Among the many were:

- All spruce trees have shallow root systems.
- Red Buckeye, which blooms in mid May, is a hummingbird magnet. It is one of a handful of tree species that though native south of New York is a candidate for climate adaptation here.
- Nurseries cannot sell invasive trees and plants without an invasive tag affixed to the plant. Norway Maple is such an example. Purple Loosestrife, a very invasive plant, cannot be sold, even with a tag.
- Bur Oak and Northern White Cedar require soils of high pH.
- Trees such as Eastern Hemlock, White Ash and American Elm should not be planted due to their susceptibility of insects or disease.
- A Northern White Cedar was estimated at 1600 years old, making it the oldest living tree in the northeast states.

Members of the audience asked a number of questions throughout his presentation. They were readily answered, indicative of the expertise that Dr. Leopold has accumulated through his career.

He graciously offered to answer future questions by offering his email address. Also available are a number of free videos, most of which are approximately three minutes long. If you have questions regarding those or anything pertaining to trees, he may be contacted at djleopld@esf.edu. You may view a recording of the Reflection at: <https://youtu.be/L26S9DI1oI0?si=fC8VeboQBKS80Ode>

Submitted by Michael Holy

RCA Volunteer Service Times

Three dates have been set for RCA Volunteer Service Mornings.

Each will run from 10:00 to 12:00 noon.

The first will appropriately be held on **Earth Day, Tuesday, April 22nd**.

Tasks will depend on trail conditions.

The second date is **Tuesday, May 20th**.

This day will focus on cleaning up the herb garden area.

The third date is **Tuesday, June 17** with tasks TBD.



Spring Programs

2025

Jr Naturalist Program

Themed monthly indoor-outdoor programs for budding naturalists & their families.
Attend 5 programs & earn a patch!

Marvelous Maple

Sat, Mar 1, 10-11:30 a.m.

Busy Beavers

Sat, Apr 5, 10-11:30 a.m.

Spring Foragers: Exploring Edible Plants

Sat, May 3, 10-11:30 a.m.

Fantastic Frogs & Terrific Toads

Sat, Jun 7, 10-11:30 a.m.

Nature Walks

Explore the forests, fields, wetlands, and waterways of Rice Creek with our educators. Walks are 1 mile or less over gentle to moderate terrain on our trails.

Seasonal Discovery Walks

Saturdays at 11 a.m.:

Mar 8, 15, 22, 29 Apr 12, 19, 26
May 10, 17, 24, 31 Jun 14, 21, 28

Maple Tapping & Walk

Sat, Mar 1, 1-2:30 p.m.

The North American Beaver

Sat, Apr 5, 1-2:30 p.m.

Spring Foragers: Exploring Edible Plants

Sat, May 3, 1-2:30 p.m.

Frogs & Toads

Sat, Jun 7, 1-2:30 p.m.

Observatory Sessions

View celestial objects like the moon, bright planets, galaxies, nebulae, & star clusters. Please call (315) 312-6620 on the evening of each event for a recorded weather update.

Spring Sessions

Fri-Sun, May 2-4, 8-10 p.m.

Arbor Day Festival & Tree Giveaway

Sat, Apr 26, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Celebrate trees and the environment with a day-long festival hosted by Rice Creek's Canal Forest Restoration Project! Attractions include:

- **Tree Giveaway** – all day – oak & pine seedlings & saplings
- **Free pancakes & SUNY Oswego-made maple syrup** – 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Story Walk** grand opening & **kids' crafts** – 10 a.m.
- **Art for teens & adults** – 10-11 a.m.
- **Kayaking & canoeing** (using our boats) – 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Make a **local purchase**, learn about **research**, and meet regional **environmental organizations** Noon-2 p.m.
- **Three invited talks:** Fungi & Trees, Tree Poetry, and Edible Native Trees & Shrubs, 2-4 p.m.
- **Giveaway prizes** donated by local businesses!

Rice Creek Reflections

Talks hosted by Rice Creek Associates.
Attend in person or by Zoom.
Free to attend. Includes refreshments!

Poking About With Porcupines

Sat, Mar 29, 2-3:30 p.m.
Presenter: Pat Carney

A Brief History of Nature Study

Sat, May 10, 2-3:30 p.m.
Paul Knittel

Birdwatching & Banding

Birdwatching for Citizen Science

Beginners & experts welcome!

Sat, Apr 19 & 26, 9:30-11 a.m.

Bird Banding

Witness wild birds up close as Dr. Baldassarre and his team safely catch, band, and release birds, supporting science and conservation. Sign up for email alerts: bit.ly/ricecreek_banding

Learn more, sign up for our monthly updates, and become a member at linktr.ee/ricecreek



We randomly select one RCA member each quarter to receive a special prize!

This quarter's winner of an Insect Guide is

Anne McGivney

Please call the field station at 315-312-6677 to set up a time to collect your prize.

Update on Our Fundraising for the Accessible Trails Project (ATP)

Thank you so much to all who have donated to the Rice Creek ATP!

As you know, the ATP will overhaul the green trail loop, AKA the Carlita Snygg Memorial Trail. It will extend over the Brownell Road bridge to the property line, and from the entrance of the green trail back over to, and including, the herb garden area.

RCA members generously responded to our fundraiser letter. So far, between direct donations and the Art Auction proceeds, we have raised a total of \$5,678.00 .

If you have not yet made a contribution but would like to do so, please send donations to:

**Rice Creek Field Station
SUNY Oswego Building #23
Oswego, NY 13126**

Checks should be made out to:

The Oswego University Foundation/RCA.

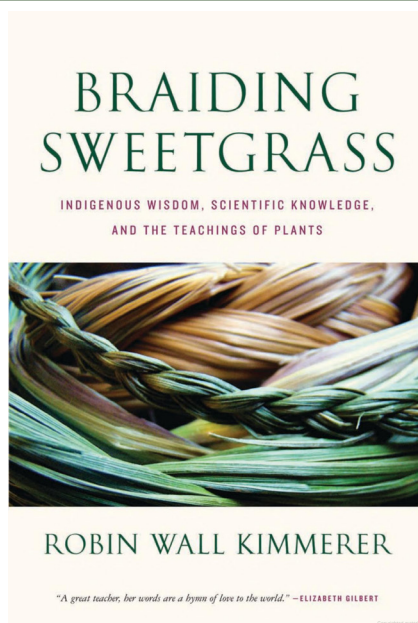
Or, you may donate directly online at bit.ly/give-rca .

Be sure to designate that the funds are for RCA, then email us at RCA@oswego.edu to let us know it is to be directed to the ATP fund.



We have a secret we cannot share, but here's a little hint:

If you have not yet read ***Braiding Sweetgrass***, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, you might want to add that to your must do list for this summer!



About Rice Creek Field Station

Rice Creek Field Station is a part of the State University of New York at Oswego. While its primary function is to provide facilities for field-oriented research and courses in the natural sciences taught at the college, facilities are also available for public education and recreation.

The field station houses superb collections, field equipment, and laboratories. It is surrounded by several hundred acres of forest, fields, trails and wetlands, including Rice Pond. Schoolchildren visit the field station and many individuals and groups use the area for hiking and cross-country skiing.

Rice Creek welcomes dogs. However, to protect sensitive natural features and as a courtesy to other visitors, dogs should be on a six-foot leash. Also, please be kind and clean up after your pet. Thank you.

Directions

To get to RCFS take Route 104, turn south on Thompson Rd., located 100 yards west of the College's main entrance. The field station is 1.4 miles on the right.

Hours

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Trails are open dawn to dusk daily.

When visiting Rice Creek, please sign in and out at one of the brown registration boxes, located by the small parking area at the main entrance or near the herb garden.

We're social!

Find us on Facebook at:
Rice Creek Field Station
facebook.com/ozricecreek
Rice Creek Associates
facebook.com/rice.creek.92



Find us on Instagram at:
Rice Creek Field Station
instagram.com/ozricecreek



Find us on YouTube at:
Rice Creek Field Station
youtube.com/@ricecreekfieldstation4287



Current RCA Board Members

The operational policies of Rice Creek Associates are managed by its Board of Directors. Directors are elected from the general membership and serve three-year terms.

Laurel Artz, President	Cory Brosch
Pat Jones, Co-Vice President	Michael Holy
Sheri Morey, Co-Vice President, Secretary	Michael Flanagan
Don Artz, Treasurer	Paul Knittel
Andrew McElwain, Small Grants Chair	

Rice Creek Field Station Staff

Kamal Mohamed, Director	Tom Neill, Grounds Keeper & Facility Custodian
Kristen Haynes, Assistant Director	
Wendy Fragale, Secretary	Linda Knowles, Naturalist
	Timothy McMonagle, Naturalist

Newsletter

Laurel Artz, Publication Production
Kristen Haynes, Editor
Don Artz, Editor

Make a Gift

Visit oswego.edu/give-rca to make your gift.

If you wish your donation to go toward a specific project or cause, please let us know by phone at 315.312.6677, or email us at rca@oswego.edu.

New and Renewal Memberships

RCA's yearly memberships run from March 1 to February 28 each year.

For current members: For your convenience, your current membership expiration date may be found either within the email message transmitting this newsletter or on your newsletter mailing label if you received this newsletter by mail. If you have any questions concerning your current RCA membership details, please email Don Artz at RCA@oswego.edu.

For new members: The RCA Board of Directors welcomes new members at any time of the year and looks forward to bringing you the best that Rice Creek has to offer!

Please note that we consider all member information confidential and will not share it with any other groups or businesses.

Both new and renewal memberships may be completed online!

- To renew, become a new member and/or to donate online, please go to oswego.edu/join-rca.
- To join or renew by mail, please complete the form below and mail it along with your dues payment to the address indicated at the bottom of the form.

Join/renew RCA membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____ Date _____

ALL MEMBERSHIPS ARE MARCH 1 – FEBRUARY 28

☐ New Membership ☐ Membership renewal

May we email newsletters to you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Share name in newsletters? ☐ Yes ☐ No

LEVEL:

☐ Student (\$5.00) ☐ Individual (\$15.00) ☐ Family/Couple (\$25.00) ☐ Contributing (\$35.00)
☐ Sustaining (\$75.00) ☐ Life (\$350.00) ☐ Corporate (\$500.00)

I/We would like to make a tax-deductible contribution in addition to membership fees to the

☐ General Fund ☐ Trail improvement ☐ Exploring Nature Program for Children ☐ Small Grants Program
☐ Accessible Trails Project

in the amount of \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED (membership + contribution): \$ _____ Date _____

Please make checks payable to: Oswego University Foundation/RCA

Return to: Rice Creek Field Station
SUNY Oswego, Bldg #23
Oswego, New York 13126



Rice Creek Associates
SUNY Oswego, RCFS #23
Oswego, New York 13126

TO:

RCA Events & Reflections Spring 2025

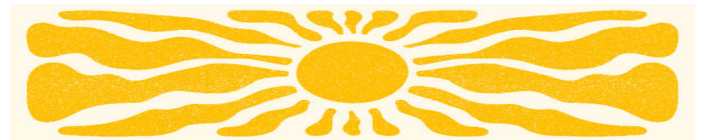
Saturday, May 10th, 2:00 pm

Paul Knittel

A Brief History of Nature Study

Friday, May 23rd, 2:00-4:00

**Retirement Celebration for
RCFS Director Dr. Kamal Mohamed**



***May the Sun
bring you new energy by day.***

***May the moon
softly restore you by night.***

***May the rain
wash away your worries.***

***May the breeze
blow new strength into your body.***

***May you walk
gently through the world
and know its beauty
all the days of your life.***

- Apache Blessing