

Cooper Environmental Center

at Cattus Island County Park



Group Education Program

Ocean County Board Of Chosen Freeholders

Chairman of Parks and Recreation

John C. Bartlett, Jr.

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Mission Of the Cooper Environmental Center

The CEC, under the auspices of the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Department of Parks and Recreation, is dedicated to educate all county citizens regarding the natural world of Ocean County. Educational programs carried out by the center, either at the facility or through outreach, will stress the natural scientific intricacies and relationships that exist within the ecosystems of the county. Each person touched by the Center, or its programs, will leave with an appreciation for the complexity and beauty of the local environment and a sense of their place within it.

General Information

Christopher Claus, Chief Park Naturalist and
Center Director
(732)270-6960

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1170 Cattus Island Blvd.
Toms River, NJ 08753

Cattus Island Park is open daily from dawn to dusk.

The Cooper Environmental Center is open daily
from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Admission is Free and the center is fully accessible.



FAQs

Q: *What is Seining and is it safe?*

A: Seining is a method of fishing using a long net connected to poles that students can pull through the water. Waders and boots are supplied to keep the participants dry. Seining at Cattus Island is done in shallow water and the students are closely supervised. Only students in the 4th grade and above are allowed to enter the water. Younger students observe a demonstration.

Q: *Can my students touch the reptiles?*

A: For the safety of the animals and students, the Cooper Center does not allow students to handle live reptiles. We do, however, have snake skins and turtle shells that the students can touch.

Q: *What if it rains on the day of my visit?*

A: The staff of the Cooper Center are prepared to run a program in wet conditions. Lightning, heavy rain or high winds will lead to the cancellation of outdoor portions of programs. Due to the high scheduling demand, rain dates cannot be scheduled.

Outreach Programs

Outreach programs are designed to bring our interpreter's skills to those that cannot come to the Cooper Environmental Center. They are perfect for schools and community organizations.

Radical Reptiles

PreK to Adult -
½ hour to 1 hour

By examining native Ocean County snakes and turtles participants will discover the characteristics of these fascinating creatures. Biology and conservation of reptiles will be discussed.

Science - 5.5 A1, B1



Pinelands Slideshow

Ages 7 to Adult - ½ hour to 1 hour

"The New Jersey Pinelands, Our Country's First National Reserve" provides audiences with an overview of the ecology and cultural history of this unique area. Included are looks at the natural resources, such as the Cohansey aquifer, rare plants and animals, and environmental conditions which support blueberry and cranberry agriculture.

Science - 5.5 B2, B3 and 5.10 A1

Social Studies - 6.5 B2, E2, C1, C2

Boy and Girl Scouts

Programs

The Cooper Environmental Center is pleased to offer programs that can meet the needs of Boy and Girl Scouts of America. Scout programs are offered on Saturday and Sunday afternoons throughout the year. A minimum of ten scouts are required to schedule a program. We are able to provide programs for any level of scout - from Daisies and Tigers to Boy Scouts and Juniors.

A typical scout program includes a tour of our exhibit room and a short nature walk. The interpreter incorporates badge requirement information as necessary into each program.



Service Projects

Various outdoor service projects are available for scout troops. In the spring and summer, troops can undertake marsh cleanups. In the fall and winter, scouts can spruce up hiking trails in the park.

Eagle Scout Candidates can also complete projects in the park, including: habitat creation, trail boardwalk building, and landscaping.

Home School and Special Circumstances

- Any of the In-House programs listed in this brochure can be provided to home-schooled groups. It is against the Cooper Center's policy to perform an outreach program in a private residence.
- Any educator who wishes to customize an existing program, or assist in the creation of a new program, may contact the center director. We would be happy to work with you.
- Beach wheelchairs are available when prior notice is given.

Service Projects for Community Groups

The staff of Cattus Island Park loves to encourage community involvement in the stewardship of park lands. If your civic or community group is interested in a group service project, give us a call. We can engage you in trail maintenance, park clean-ups or habitat creation. If you have other ideas that emphasize the unique talents or specialties of your members, let us know. We would love to work with you for the benefit of the facility. Contact Christopher Claus at (732)270-6960.

Who Should Schedule A Visit...

- Any School, Community or Scout Group
- Groups must originate from Ocean County in order to be eligible for a guided tour or program.
- Groups not originating from Ocean County may use the facility on a self-guided basis but must schedule in advance and provide insurance documentation.

When to Schedule A Visit...

If You Would Like A Program In...

Begin Reserving...

January - June	First Business Day in September
July - August	First Business Day in March
September - December	First Business Day in May

How To Schedule A Visit...

- Call **(732)270-6960** during normal business hours.
- Please be prepared with the following information:
 - Group name, address and phone number.
 - Grade level and program.
- We strive to maintain a ratio of no more than 25 students to 1 naturalist although 30:1 is possible.
- Let us know, in advance, if any members of your group have special needs so we can serve you better.
- All scheduled groups will be mailed a confirmation letter along with rules, regulations and, in certain cases, pre-trip activities.
- All group programs are free of charge.

Ecology Explorers

Grades 3rd and up - 4 Hours (Can be abbreviated to 3)



The Ecology Explorers program encourages students to use observation skills while measuring habitat components of three different ecosystems. Salt marsh, forest, and bay set the stage for wonder and excitement. Older

students (4th grade and up) seine in Silver Bay for estuary creatures while younger students see a seining demonstration. This program is available April 1st through October 20th.

Science - Grade 4 - 5.5 B1
Grade 6 - 5.10 A1

Estuary Encounters

Grades 7th to 12th - 4 hours (Can be abbreviated to 3)



This program is designed for older students to explore and discover the estuary. A marsh hike and bay seining hone students' observation skills. A dichotomous key activity and watershed activities will stress the interrelationships between plants, animals and human

influences in the Barnegat Bay Watershed. This program is available April 1st through October 20th.

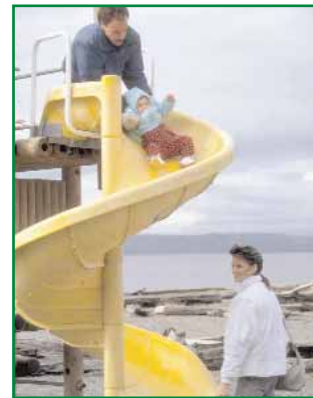
Science - Grade 8 - 5.5 B1
Grade 12 A2&3
Grade 12 - 5.10 B1

Power Point Presentations

For those unfamiliar, Power Point® is a computerized presentation similar to a slide show but with more pizzazz.

Ocean County Parks 101

Ages 12 to Adult - ½ hour to 1 hour



Our Parks Presentation highlights the Ocean County Department of Parks and Recreation including its fields, forests and playgrounds. It is a great introduction to the resources available to all county residents and guests.

Social Studies- 6.5 B2, B3, E2

Ocean County Is For The Birds

Ages 12 to Adult - ½ hour to 1 hour



This program is an armchair traveller's introduction to Ocean County's common avifauna. The presentation is designed as a travelog of Ocean County's habitats and the amazing diversity of bird species they contain.

Science - 5.5 B1 & 5.10 A1, B1

Owl Pellet Dissection

Grades 4th to 7th - 60 minutes



This program is designed to explore how regurgitated owl pellets can teach us about ornithology, anatomy, and small mammal populations. Instructors must provide the owl pellets (call us for sources). We provide safe dissection tools and up to one hour of instruction.

Science - 5.1 B1&C1, 5.5 A1, 5.10 A1 & B1

Math - 4.1 A1

In-House Programs

If you have the ability to come to us, then please do. Our slate of In-House Programs take advantage of Cattus Island Park's 530 acres and the Cooper Environmental Center.

At Home In The Forest

Grades K to 2nd - 1½ Hours



Squirrels serve as a familiar forest creature to introduce the concept of habitats. A delightful story sets the stage for understanding an animal's need for food, water, shelter and space. A nature walk will bring the students into the squirrel's habitat to observe and gather information.

Science - 5.1 A1, 5.5 A1, 5.10 A1

Math - 4.1 A1

Colors in Nature

Grades K to 2nd - 1 ½ to 2 Hours



A child's world is full of color. By comparing the colors found in nature, students will discover how important color is to the natural world. Students will then create their own picture using nature's crayons. Some real and some not-so-real creatures will demonstrate how color is used as a defense mechanism.

Science - Grade 4 5.5 B1

Art - Grade 2 1.3 A1

Animal Adaptations

Grades K to 4th - 1½ - 2 Hours



Animals have many varied adaptations to facilitate survival in a variety of habitats. Fish, mammals, reptiles and birds are similar in many ways but also possess obvious and sublime characteristics that are unique to each group. A naturalist will interpret the adaptations of the groups and present living and preserved examples of each. Students will also create a wildlife print to take home.

Science - 5.2 A1, 5.5 B1, 5.10 A1