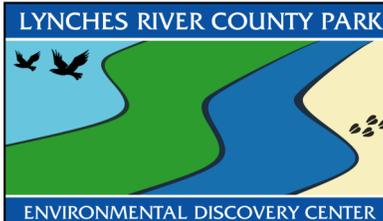


ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOVERY CENTER NEWS

Nature in the heart of Florence County
www.lynchesriverpark.com



RAIN GARDEN WORKSHOP TO BE HELD AT LYNCHES RIVER COUNTY PARK

On Monday, April 15, Lynch River County Park will partner with Clemson Extension to offer a rain garden workshop for site designers, landscape architects and installers, nursery professionals, engineers, plan reviewers, community planners and anyone interested in rain gardens and how they can benefit the ecosystem.

A rain garden is a planted depression or a hole that allows rainwater runoff, or storm water, to soak into the ground (as opposed to flowing into storm drains and surface waters which can cause erosion, water pollution, flooding, and diminished groundwater).

Rain gardens can cut down on the amount of pollution reaching creeks and streams by up to 30% by collecting and filtering rainwater from impervious urban areas, like roofs, driveways, walkways,

parking lots, and compacted lawn areas.

Rain gardens are beneficial for many reasons. They improve water quality by filtering runoff; provide localized flood control; are aesthetically pleasing; and provide interesting planting opportunities. They also encourage wildlife and biodiversity; tie together buildings and their surrounding environments in attractive and environmentally advantageous ways; and provide significant partial solutions to important environmental problems that affect us all.

Rain gardens differ from retention basins, in that the water will infiltrate the ground within a day or two. This creates the advantage that the rain garden does not allow mosquitoes to breed.

A rain garden requires an area where

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**ENVIRONMENTAL
DISCOVERY CENTER
NEWS
APRIL-JUNE 2013**

**1110 Ben Gause
Road
Coward, SC 29530
(843) 389-0550**

**Hours of
Operation:**

**Tues - Sat
9:00am-5:00pm**

**Sundays
1:00pm-5:00pm**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Go to www.lynchesriverpark.com for more information about all the exciting activities happening at the Park and to join our mailing list!

Saturday, April 6—Native American Flute Making Workshops at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.



Using indigenous river cane, participants will shape and design their own flute as they learn more about the history and culture surrounding Native American flutes and their role in shaping human musicality. It's amazing to see how a simple item found in nature can become your very own work of art!

Participants must be at least 16 years of age (participants under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian).

There is no charge for this event, but registration is required and will be accepted beginning March 19.

****Sponsored, in part, by NBSC****

Saturday, May 4—Mother's Day Nature Spa

Some lotions and oils contain potentially harmful chemicals, which can also be harmful to our health. We'll show you ways to use all-natural ingredients to create easy-to-make skin care products. We'll use these recipes to pamper you with soothing face and hand treatments. This event is free, but registration is required and will be accepted beginning April 16.

Saturday, June 1 — Father's Day Archery

Join us for an introduction to archery with a certified Archery Instructor at 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. You will learn the proper techniques and shooting styles using our equipment and archery range. Youth participants must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and must be at least 10 years of age. This event is free, but registration is required and will be accepted beginning May 15.

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water can collect and infiltrate, and plants to maintain infiltration rates, diverse microbe communities, and water holding capacity. Transpiration by growing plants accelerates soil drying between storms. This includes any plant extending roots to the garden area.

Plants selected for use in a rain garden should tolerate both saturated and dry soil. Using native plants is generally encouraged. This way the rain garden may contribute to urban habitats for native butterflies, birds, and beneficial insects.

Well planned plantings require minimal maintenance to survive, and are compatible with adjacent land use. Trees under power lines, or that up-heave sidewalks when soils become moist, or whose roots seek out and clog drainage tiles can cause expensive damage.

The Rain Garden Workshop is being offered free of charge thanks to a grant received from Waste Management. If you would like more information, please call us at (843) 389-0550 or to register online, please visit: <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/county/florence/calendar.html>.

WEEKEND PROGRAMS

Join us every Saturday and Sunday for live animal meet-and-greets! We'll introduce you to one of our animals and allow you the opportunity to meet that animal up close. Animal presentations are every Saturday at 11:30am and 3:00pm and Sundays at 2:00pm. Stop by and say hello to your favorite critter!

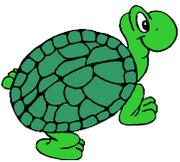


Photo of the Month



Take Only Pictures, Leave Only Footprints

The Environmental Discovery Center is looking for nature photographers of all levels to submit their best nature photos for the photo of the month contest. Every month, a photo will be featured on our Facebook page as well as in our quarterly newsletter.

Submissions are open to anyone, any age, and any experience level. Your photo should be taken within Lynches River County Park and can feature any of the landscapes or wildlife.

Please email all submissions to EDC@florenceco.org and include the following information: your name and your city and state of residence. Also, please remember to specify in your email that your photo is for the contest!

Unselected photos are still under consideration for future months.

ARE YOU CONNECTED?

Stay in the loop and learn the latest Environmental Discovery Center scoop! Join our online community to keep in touch with the latest news, tidbits, events and opportunities. Subscribe to our mailing list at www.lynchesriverpark.com or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

facebook

twitter

PLEASE HELP
THE EDC WITH
ITEMS ON OUR
WISH LIST:

- Large Tetra Whisper Filter Cartridges
- Tetrafauna ReptoMin Floating Food Sticks For Aquatic Turtles, Newts and Frogs
- Birdseed and deer corn
- Aquariums with lids (any sizes)

ANIMAL SPOTLIGHT: YELLOW-BELLIED SLIDER

The yellow-bellied slider (*Trachemys scripta scripta*) is a land and water turtle, and is a subspecies of the pond slider. Native to the southeastern United States, it is the most common turtle species in its range. It can be found slow-moving rivers, floodplain swamps, marshes, seasonal wetlands and ponds. Adult male yellow-bellied sliders typically reach 5-9 inches in length and females can reach anywhere from 8-13 inches. The carapace (upper shell) is usually brown and black, often with yellow stripes. The skin is olive green with patches of yellow down the neck and legs. As the name implies, the plastron (bottom shell) is mostly yellow, and may have dark spots on the edges. Yellow-bellied sliders are often confused with Eastern River Cooters, which also have yellow stripes on the neck and yellow undersides, but lack the dark spots characteristic to the yellow-bellied slider.

Mating can occur in spring, summer or fall. Yellow-bellied sliders mate



in the water, but the female will nest and lay eggs on land. Normally, 6-10 eggs are laid at a time, with larger females capable of bearing more. The eggs incubate for 2-3 months, and hatchlings will stay in the nest through winter. Hatchlings are almost entirely carnivorous, feeding on insects, spiders, crustaceans, tadpoles, fish and carrion. As they age, adults eat less meat and get most of their nutritional needs from plants.

The slider feeds mainly in the morning, spending the majority of their day basking on a shore or on a log, or while floating. At night it sleeps along the bottom or resting on the surface near logs or brush piles. Dense surface vegetation provides cover from predators and supports high densities of aquatic invertebrates and small vertebrates, which offers better foraging than open water.

Yellow-bellied sliders have become popular pets, as has their *Trachemys scripta* subspecies cousin, the red-eared slider. Both turtles have often been obtained as pets; however, as they grow larger, they are often released into the wild which can cause problems for native species, which are out-competed for food and other resources.

Source: USGS Non-indigenous Aquatic Species <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/factsheet.aspx?SpeciesID=1262>

JOIN THE FUN: VOLUNTEER!

The EDC relies on the help of dedicated volunteers for many aspects of the center's operations, including animal husbandry, trail maintenance, landscaping, assistance at special events, and interaction with our many visitors.

The EDC has many exciting and rewarding volunteer positions. You will have the unique opportunity to be a part of our ever-expanding and dynamic educational facility. Volunteers will also receive: an invitation to our annual volunteer appreciation banquet; after completing 20 hours of volunteer service, you will receive an EDC t-shirt; and, after completing 40 hours

of volunteer service, a leaf with your name will be placed on the Benefactor Tree at the EDC.

Volunteer Job Descriptions:

•**Docent** - Assist with providing educational programs to visitors.

•**Landscaping** - Assist in maintaining native plant gardens and landscape plantings.

•**Roving Naturalist** - Roams the EDC and answers questions about the animals, exhibits and Lynches River County Park.

•**Special Events** - Assist with events such as Earth Day celebrations, River Jamboree, First

Saturday events, and many more!

•**Exhibits** - Assist with exhibit design and construction.

•**Animal Husbandry** - Assist with the maintenance of habitats, food preparation and care for the EDC animals.

If you enjoy the outdoors and sharing your love of nature with others, then you will definitely enjoy volunteering at the Environmental Discovery Center! Come and volunteer - there's room for everyone! Learn about nature, gain experience, and build your resume.

Come once a month or once a week — the sky's the limit!

VISITING THE ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOVERY CENTER AND LYNCHES RIVER COUNTY PARK

Lynch River County Park is open everyday except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas day from 9:00 a.m. to sunset.

Do not depend on MapQuest, Google Maps or GPS units for driving directions. These sources often provide alternate routes to the park, which may not be accurate.



FUN FACTS ABOUT SPRING

1. Which holiday does not occur during the spring season? a) St. Patrick's day; b) Easter; c) Father's day; d) Mother's day
2. What does spring symbolize? a) faith; b) love; c) rebirth; d) death
3. Is spring considered the a) first; b) second; c) third; d) fourth season of the year?

I.A.2.C.3.A

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The environmental education programs offered at the EDC actively engage students in learning about nature and the environment and are correlated with South Carolina Science Academic Standards.

Teachers are encouraged to bring their public, private and home school classes to the EDC to engage in standards-based activities, including an off-trail nature hike, that will further their knowledge of the natural world while they have fun outside the classroom.

To see a list of programs offered, please visit our website at www.lynchesriverpark.com. There, you will also learn about grants that will assist you and your stu-



with traveling for field trips.

Programs range from one to two hours in length.

We are also very happy to an-

nounce the addition of our new Reptile Rodeo Outreach program where we can bring the EDC to your classroom with this one-hour program for all grade levels. This program features live reptile species common to South Carolina and teaches your students about the role and importance of reptiles in the ecosystem (only available within Florence County during the months of November, December, January and February).

There is no charge for our programs; however, specific times and dates must be reserved. Call the EDC at (843) 389-0550 to schedule a field trip experience.