

## **2023 Field Trips** *(All take place on Sunday, 7/23. Attendance is limited; register early.)*

### **MORNING FIELD TRIPS (9AM - Noon)**

#### **Central Connecticut Trap Rock Ridge (Higby Mtn.)**

**Trip leader:** *Dennis Quinn, Owner/Herpetologist, Quinn Ecological, LLC*

Join Dennis Quinn in exploring the traprock ledges of Central Connecticut. This unique geological feature in Connecticut hosts a variety of habitats including vernal pools, emergent wetlands, early and late successional habitats, talus ledges, and a utility right-of-way. A variety of amphibians and reptiles make their home along these unique ridgelines including marbled salamanders, spotted turtles, box turtles, ribbonsnakes and eastern copperheads. A short hike up Higby Mountain offers great ridge top views that illustrate the impacts of urbanization, habitat fragmentation, and traprock mining.

**Participant Requirements/Expectations:** *Please wear comfortable shoes for moderate hiking.*

#### **Durham Meadows**

**Trip leader:** *Hank Gruner, Director of Programs (retired), CT Science Center and Julie Victoria, Wildlife Biologist (retired), CTDEEP Wildlife Division*

Hank Gruner and Julie Victoria will lead this trip into the lowlands and floodplains of the Connecticut River in search of the newly described Atlantic Coast leopard frog. Learn how to differentiate between the Atlantic coast and northern leopard frogs using field characteristics. If you keep your fingers crossed, you may just run into one of the beautiful, blue-spotted salamanders that make this site home.

**Participant Requirements/Expectations:** *Plan to wear footwear that can get wet and muddy for this trip.*

#### **In Search of Mudpuppies: Farmington River**

**Trip leader:** *Jeff Cavallaro, Herpetologist, Quinn Ecological, LLC and Sarah Anacleto, Graduate Student, Central Connecticut State University*

Join Jeff Cavallaro and Sarah Anacleto on an adventure to the Farmington River in search of mudpuppies, a species whose origins in Connecticut are the subject of current research (they are presumed to be introduced to the Connecticut River but possibly native in other waters). Learn how to cover search and capture these nocturnal salamanders while wading through the waters of the Farmington River. A great opportunity to see these magnificent animals up close.

**Participant Requirements/Expectations:** *Active participants should be prepared to get wet up to their waists; participants who wish to stay dry can observe from shore.*

#### **Mica Ledges, Durham**

**Trip leader:** *Jim Arrigoni, Environmental Director, Lyme Land Trust*

A moderately strenuous 2-mile round-trip hike to exposed rocky ledges where Black Racers and Rat Snakes bask among the scrub oaks and stunted Pitch Pines. Cliffside vernal pools support breeding Wood Frogs and Spotted and Marbled Salamanders. Great views of the basalt Broomstick Ledges and the Chalker Brook and Coginchaug River valleys, where burgeoning Beaver populations are restoring habitat for Painted and Snapping Turtles. Spotted turtles and Copperheads are also known to inhabit this Middlesex County Land Trust preserve.

**Participant Requirements/Expectations:** *Please wear sturdy shoes/boots for uneven terrain.*

**Riverside Reptiles Education Center (Cost \$16.00/person)**

**Trip leader:** *Brian Kleinman, Owner, Riverside Reptiles Education Center*

Riverside Reptiles Education Center (RREC) is a zoo dedicated to reptiles and amphibians. With a spacious 13,000 sq/ft with an additional 4,000 sq/ft of outdoor turtle and tortoise habitat, RREC gives visitors a special opportunity to get up close and personal with a diverse collection of 70 species of indigenous and exotic animals like snakes, lizards, alligators, turtles, and many other creatures from around the world. Our animals enjoy naturalistic enclosures, allowing for normal behavior and unique visitor observations.

**AFTERNOON FIELD TRIPS (Noon – 4PM unless otherwise noted)****Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven CT**

**Trip leader:** *Museum staff*

Join us for a private “sneak peak” tour of the landmark Yale Peabody Museum, currently undergoing a comprehensive, \$160M renovation and expansion. Director and herpetologist David Skelly will lead us through the galleries and other spaces of the reenvisioned Museum, sharing with us the motivations for the project and what he hopes it will accomplish. The Museum is scheduled to reopen early in 2024.

***This event takes place 2-3:15 PM***

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