



Denison Pequotsepos  
Nature Center

# Unbe-leaf-able fun at DPNC this autumn!

Public programs for all ages,  
homeschool, before & after school,  
volunteer opportunities, and more!

Plus the return of 2 fan-favorite events:  
**Wild Mushroom Festival &  
Spooky Nature Trails!**

**FALL 2025 CATALOG**  
September—November



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## DPNC MISSION

To inspire an understanding of the natural world and ourselves as part of it—past, present, and future.

## CONTACT US

[www.dpnc.org](http://www.dpnc.org)  
(860) 536-1216  
[info@dpnc.org](mailto:info@dpnc.org)

## PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS

DPNC is pleased to offer scholarships for many of our public programs, including camp and preschool. For more information, contact us at [info@dpnc.org](mailto:info@dpnc.org) or (860) 536-1216.

## Did you know?

Mr. Bill, our Great Horned Owl mascot, has called DPNC home since 2010 and is over 16 years old!

## DPNC LOCATIONS

### Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center

109 Pequotsepos Rd.  
Mystic, CT 06355

### Gungywamp

231 Gungywamp Rd.  
Groton, CT 06340

### Coogan Farm Nature & Heritage Center

162 Greenmanville Ave.  
Mystic, CT 06355

### The Peace Sanctuary

233 River Rd.  
Mystic, CT 06355

## OTHER PROGRAM LOCATIONS

**Watch Rock Preserve:** 7 Joel Road, Old Lyme

**Knox Preserve:** 84 Wilcox Road, Stonington

**Rocky Neck State Park:** 244 W Main Street, Niantic

**Conn College Arboretum:** 270 Mohegan Avenue, New London

**Barn Island Wildlife Management Area:** Palmer Neck Rd, Stonington

**Haley Farm State Park:** 24 Haley Farm Lane, Groton

**Perry Preserve:** North Anguilla Road, Stonington

**Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve:** 8 Memorial Park Drive, Niantic

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# EARLY CHILDHOOD



*All programs require pre-registration.*

## Chickadees

Ages 2–4 years with caregiver

**Fridays @ 9:30–11 AM**

**Members:** \$150.45/session

**Non-members:** \$177/session

[Register](#)

Spend time with your little one as you learn about the natural world together! Each week we'll explore a seasonal topic, have circle time, meet live animals, go on nature walks and more at DPNC. Class will meet outside on fair weather days. During inclement weather part of class time will be held inside.

### Session 1 (7 weeks)

Fridays from 9/12–10/24

### Session 2 (7 weeks)

Fridays from 10/31–12/19

## Eager Explorers

Ages 2.5–4 years

**Sign up for either Tues, Wed, or Thurs**

**@ 9:30–11:30 AM**

**Members:** \$206.55/session

**Non-members:** \$243/session

[Register](#)

Does your child love nature? Are they ready for a drop-off class on their own? Eager Explorers is just the place to start! Through nature play, circle time, meeting animals and hikes on the trails, children learn important social, emotional and school readiness skills.

### Tues. Session 1:

9/9–10/21

### Wed. Session 1:

9/10–10/22

### Thurs. Session 1:

9/11–10/23

### Tues. Session 2:

10/28–12/16

### Wed. Session 2:

10/29–12/17

### Thurs. Session 2:

10/30–12/18

## Discovery

Ages 2+

**3rd Saturday of every month**

Free with support from Community Foundation of Eastern CT

[Register](#)

In this class for children with special needs accompanied by their caregiver, children explore nature each month. Activities, circle time, animals and lots of time outside give the students and caregivers plenty of time to socialize and enjoy the outdoor world!

### Ages 2–5 with a caregiver:

9:30–10:30 AM

### Ages 6+ with a caregiver:

10:30 AM–12 PM



*All programs require pre-registration.*

## Environmental Afternoons

*Ages 4-15 years*

**Tuesdays @ 1:30-4:30 PM**

**Members:** \$21.25 per child, per class

**Non-members:** \$25 per child, per class

**[Register](#)**

Our science-based curriculum introduces students to the wonders of the natural world. New topics are covered each week through hands-on activities, meeting live animals, games and time for nature play and socialization. Sign up for one or all of the classes. Classes are limited to 12 students. Please bring a snack and water bottle to each class. Be prepared to go outside in all weather conditions! Meets at DPNC.

**Explorers: ages 4-6**

**Scientists: ages 7-9**

**Adventurers: ages 10-13**

**Animal Curators: ages 13-15\***

\*Please note that our Animal Curator Program does not follow the same curriculum as above. Students are immersed in hands-on activities working with our resident and rehabilitating wildlife. Activities include cleaning and setting up tanks, providing enrichment activities for wildlife and learning more about the care of wild animals. Students alternate animal care tasks with hikes, nature journaling and other group activities at DPNC.



# CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

*All programs require pre-registration.*



## Adventures in Nature: To Migrate or Not?

Ages 6–10 years

**Saturday, Sept. 13**  
**10 AM–12 PM**  
@ DPNC

Free with generous support from Chelsea Groton Foundation

[Register](#)

Join us the second Saturday of every month as we adventure into nature! This month, we will explore which backyard birds migrate and which don't. We will discover ways to identify the birds that stay by using their sizes, colors, and their calls. You will meet some of our resident birds and hike our trails to test your newfound identification skills. Don't let this program fly off without you!



## Adventures in Nature: Skulls & Bones

Ages 6–10 years

**Saturday, Oct. 11**  
**10 AM–12 PM**  
@ DPNC

Free with generous support from Chelsea Groton Foundation

[Register](#)

Join us the second Saturday of every month as we adventure into nature! This month, we will explore a vital part of a special group of animals. We will take a look inside different vertebrates and see their various skulls and bones. Explore why bones are shaped differently, and how you can tell a lot about an animal just by seeing its skull. Test your animal skull ID and play a matching game to see if you can tell which skulls belong to who!

## Nature Night Out

Ages 6–12 years

**Saturday, Sept. 20 & Nov. 22**  
**5–8 PM**  
@ DPNC

**Members:** \$34/child  
**Non-members:** \$40/child

[Register](#)

Treat your kids to a fun-filled evening at the Nature Center while you treat yourself to a night off! They'll explore the outdoors with exciting games, hands-on nature activities, live animal encounters, and an evening hike. To top it all off, we'll gather around the fire for pizza and s'mores! Don't forget to dress for the weather and bring a flashlight for the adventure ahead!

## Nature Night Out: Cooking Edition

Ages 6–12 years

**Saturday, Oct. 11**  
**5–8 PM**  
@ Coogan Farm

**Members:** \$34/child  
**Non-members:** \$40/child

[Register](#)

Treat your kids to a fun-filled evening at Coogan Farm while you treat yourself to a night off! We will enjoy cooking our own dinner, meeting animals and going for a night hike. We'll make our own pizza for dinner, and to top it all off, we'll create a delicious dessert! Don't forget to dress for the weather and bring a flashlight for the adventure ahead!

## Adventures in Nature: Beavers

Ages 6–10 years

**Saturday, Nov. 8**

**10 AM–12 PM**

@ DPNC

Free with generous support from Chelsea Groton Foundation

[Register](#)



Join us the second Saturday of every month as we adventure into nature! This month, we will explore why tonight's full moon is called the Beaver Moon. Build your knowledge on the many adaptations that make beavers so unique, from their big front teeth to their double layered fur coats. Become an honorary beaver and try to construct your own beaver dam. You wouldn't want to miss this program!

## Vacation Day: Colors of Fall

Ages 6–10 years

**Monday, Oct. 13**

**9 AM–1 PM**

@ DPNC

**Members:** \$42.50/child

**Non-members:** \$50/child

[Register](#)

As the days shorten and the air feels more crisp and cool, trees transform from green into a vibrant array of reds, oranges, and yellows. But how does this spectacular change happen? Through activities, demonstrations, and a colorful hike, we'll learn all about these changes.



## Vacation Day: Nature's Engineers

Ages 6–10 years

**Tuesday, Nov. 4**

**9 AM–1 PM**

@ DPNC

**Members:** \$42.50/child

**Non-members:** \$50/child

[Register](#)

From the way birds fly to how beavers build, engineers are inspired by nature every day. We'll explore how animals and plants have influenced some of our coolest inventions then seek out inspiration to build some of our own!

## Vacation Day: Forest Forts

Ages 6–10 years

**Tuesday, Nov. 11**

**9 AM–1 PM**

@ DPNC

**Members:** \$42.50/child

**Non-members:** \$50/child

[Register](#)

School's out—time to head into the woods! We'll combine natural materials, teamwork, and creative problem-solving to explore the basics of survival shelter construction. Kids will learn how to build all kinds of shelters, from simple lean-tos to more elaborate forts.

# FAMILY PROGRAMS

*All programs require pre-registration.*

## Family Crabbing Adventure

Friday, Sept. 12

6-8 PM

@ the Peace Sanctuary

**Members:** \$12.75

**Non-members:** \$15

[Register](#)

Join us for crabbing at our secret location. There will be a brief intro to basic techniques of crabbing and crab identification before we start. We'll provide the nets, bait and lines. Wear shoes that can get wet and provide traction on slippery rocks, no flip flops or crocs!



## Bugs & Beyond!

Sunday, Sept. 7

1-2:30 PM

@ DPNC

Free with generous support from the Rotary of the Stoningtons

[Register](#)

The world is teeming with fascinating creatures and among the most diverse and successful are the arthropods, our 6- and 8-legged friends! Following an introduction to their amazing adaptations, we'll then head out to the fields to see what species we can find using nets, field guides, and bug jars.

## Sounds of Nature

Saturday, Sept. 27

2-3 PM

@ DPNC

**Members:** \$8.50

**Non-members:** \$10

[Register](#)

Nature is filled with beautiful music. Take time to appreciate the lovely sounds that are created by nature during this guided walk for families. We will listen for birds and frogs as we stroll the trails at the Nature Center.



## Buggin' Out: Edible Insects!

Saturday, Oct. 18  
2-3 PM  
@ DPNC

Members: \$12.75  
Non-members: \$15

[Register](#)



Calling all adventurous eaters! Discover the world of edible insects! Adults and families will explore the ecological and health benefits of incorporating insects into our diets, including their role in reducing environmental impact and providing a rich source of protein and nutrients. Participants will also have the opportunity to sample a variety of insect-based foods and expand their culinary horizons by trying dishes made with bugs!

## Family Hike Night & Campfire

Friday, Nov. 7  
6:30-8 PM  
@ DPNC

Members: \$12.50  
Non-members: \$15

[Register](#)

Explore the magic of the forest at night on a guided hike for the whole family! We'll explore the trails and make stops along the way to test our nighttime senses, like listening for hidden wildlife. After our hike, we'll gather around the campfire to toast marshmallows and enjoy the cozy fall evening.

## Meet the Animals

Friday, Nov. 14  
5-6 PM  
@ DPNC

Members: \$8.50  
Non-members: \$10

[Register](#)

Get up close and personal with DPNC's amazing animal ambassadors! Bring the family to meet snakes, turtles, owls, and more as we explore their fascinating adaptations and discover the vital roles these creatures play in our ecosystems. It's a fun and educational experience for animal lovers of all ages!

**Don't forget to check out the Wild Mushroom Festival on October 18 and Spooky Nature Trails on October 24 & 25 in our Special Events section on page 17!**



# BIRDING PROGRAMS

## Swallow Watching

**Saturday, Sept. 13**

**6-7:30 PM**

@ Watch Rock Preserve

**Members: \$17**

**Non-members: \$20**

[Register](#)

Join us at the Watch Rock Preserve to witness the migration of the Tree Swallows! This program is suited for adults and older, interested children. Meets at Watch Rock Preserve: 7 Joel Rd, Old Lyme, CT 06371.



*All programs require pre-registration.*



## Fall Warblers Walk

**Monday, Sept. 22**

**8-9:30 AM**

@ Knox Preserve

**Members: \$17**

**Non-members: \$20**

[Register](#)

Join us for a guided walk of the trails at Knox Preserve. We will be on the lookout for warblers, vireos, and other small songbirds as they prepare to head south. Participants are encouraged to bring their own binoculars and water. This program is suited for adults. Meets at 84 Wilcox Rd in Stonington, CT.

## Big Sit Breakfast

**Saturday, Oct. 11**

**8-10 AM**

@ Rocky Neck State Park

*Meets in the large parking lot near the picnic tables on the opposite side of the park from the beach.*

**Members: \$21.25**

**Non-members: \$25**

[Register](#)

Rise and shine with the birds at our "Big Sit" breakfast event! What's a "Big Sit," you ask? It's a fun, low-impact birdwatching event where participants stay within a designated 17-foot diameter circle and tally every bird species they see or hear from that single location. This family-friendly, community science event will have a naturalist on hand to help with ID, answer questions and to share fun facts. Light breakfast snacks will be available as well.

## Birding at Conn College Arboretum

Sunday, Oct. 19

8-10 AM

@ Conn College Arboretum

Members: \$17

Non-members: \$20

[Register](#)

Join us as we explore The Arboretum looking for migrating and resident songbirds and raptors. This program is great for birders of all skill levels. Meets at the Connecticut College Arboretum, 270 Mohegan Avenue, New London, CT. This program is suited for adults.

## Birding at Haley Farm

Saturday, Nov. 22

9-11 AM

@ Haley Farm State Park

Members: \$17

Non-members: \$20

[Register](#)

Join us as we explore Haley Farm State Park looking for migrating and resident shorebirds, ducks and raptors. This program is great for birders of all skill levels. This program is suited for adults.

## Winter Duck & Waterfowl Walk

Saturday, Nov. 15

1-2:30 PM

@ Barn Island

Members: \$17

Non-members: \$20

[Register](#)

Join us at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area for a birding adventure as we search for wintering shorebirds, ducks, and raptors. Whether you're a seasoned birder or just starting out, this walk is perfect for observing a variety of waterfowl. Open to adults of all skill levels! Meets at the boat launch at the end of Palmer Neck Road in Stonington, CT.



# ADULT PROGRAMS

*All programs require pre-registration.*



**SAVE THE DATE:** October 8 – Annual Meeting for DPNC members. Invitation to come via email.

## Mindfulness with Tyler Haling

Sunday, Sept. 14  
1:30–3:30 PM  
@ DPNC

Members: \$17  
Non-members: \$20

[Register](#)

Mindfulness is the practice of being present in the moment and observing your thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgement. It enhances self-awareness, reduces stress, and promotes balance. In this workshop, you'll learn techniques and tools to integrate mindfulness into your daily life, helping you cultivate peace and clarity. Whether you are a beginner or have experience, everyone is welcome in this supportive environment.

## Fall Equinox Poetry

Thursday, Sept. 25  
6–7 PM  
@ DPNC

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Join us for an evening of poetry that will lift the heart and stir the soul. Presented by Christie Williams, Stonington's own Poet Laureate, this night is for lovers of the natural world. Margaret Gibson, Emerita State Poet Laureate of CT and Lou Gabordi will be among the poets presenting this evening.

## International Day of Peace Walk

Sunday, Sept. 21  
12–1 PM  
@ the Peace Sanctuary

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

The United Nations International Day of Peace provides an opportunity for all individuals to come together in spirit and action to forward the ideals of and conditions for peace. This global day of peace is observed in cities, towns and villages worldwide. The Peace Sanctuary is a fitting place to celebrate our local history of peace with a guided walk. This program is suited for adults and older, interested children.

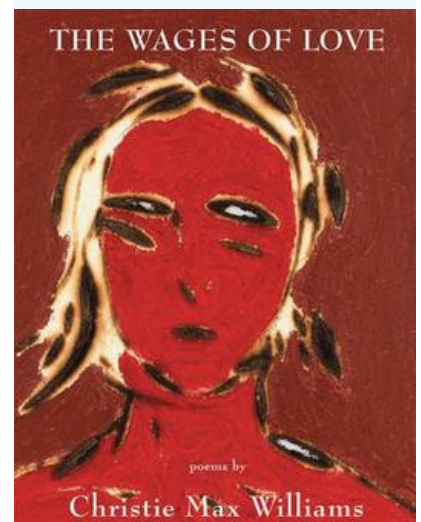
## Connecticut's Predators

Wednesday, Oct. 15  
6–7 PM  
@ DPNC

Members: \$8.50  
Non-members: \$10

[Register](#)

Discover the hidden world of our diverse local predators. From snakes to bears, learn about their current population numbers, what habitats they live in and discuss their natural history.



## Eyes in the Soles of my Feet: Caroline Sutton

Wednesday, Oct. 22 @ 5-6 PM

@ DPNC

Members: \$8.50

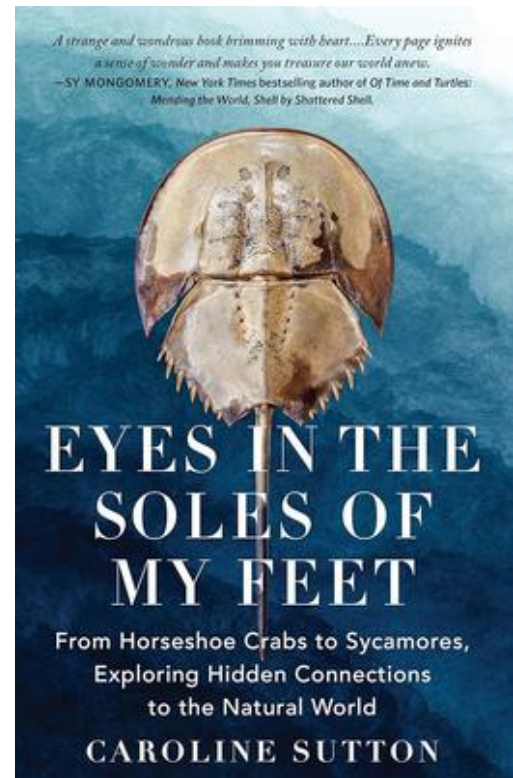
Non-members: \$10

[Register](#)

*Join us for a conversation with the author followed by a Q&A session.*

When is a weed not a weed? When is a bug not a pest? Science writer Caroline Sutton reveals the secrets of the natural world in what bestselling author Carol Safina calls an "astonishing" collection of essays.

With this fascinating and eye-opening collection, Sutton provides an intriguing and unique perspective on our natural world, and reveals secret and intimate connections between plant and animal life that we often overlook or malign, be it the industrious mole tunnelling in our backyards to the ancient horseshoe crab scuttling on our shores. This book is certain to appeal to readers of science and ecology, as well as those curious to look deeper into the seen and unseen intricacies of nature. *Soul of an Octopus* author Sy Montgomery calls it "a strange and wondrous book brimming with heart... Every page ignites a sense of wonder and makes you treasure our world anew."



## Raptors of CT

Thursday, Oct. 30

6-7 PM

@ DPNC

Members: \$8.50

Non-members: \$10

[Register](#)

Get to know the raptors living in your backyard! We'll discuss Connecticut's native birds of prey, including owls, hawks, and falcons, and bring out a few of DPNC's resident animal ambassadors so you can see these raptors for yourself. Along the way, you'll learn about their incredible hunting adaptations, the vital roles they play in local ecosystems, and how you can spot them.

## Owls of CT

Thursday, Nov. 20

5:30-6:30 PM

@ DPNC

Members: \$8.50

Non-members: \$10

[Register](#)

Who are CT's native owls, and how can you spot them in the wild? In this program, we'll explore their habitats, adaptations, and how to identify them by sight and sound, from the tiny Eastern Screech Owl to the Great Horned Owl. After the presentation, meet some of DPNC's resident owl ambassadors up close and hear their rescue stories.



# GUIDED HIKES & WALKS



*All hikes require pre-registration.*

## Equinox at Gungywamp

**Monday, Sept. 22**  
**4-6:30 PM**

@ Gungywamp

**Members:** \$25.50  
**Non-members:** \$30

[Register](#)

Gungywamp is an archaeological site of distinct natural and cultural interest. It has rocky ridges, glacial erratics and swamps along with enigmatic stone shelter and structures whose use and origin are open to interpretation. Walk with us through the woods and absorb the mysteries of Gungywamp. This program is suited for adults and families comfortable walking two miles over uneven terrain. Pre-registration is required. Meets at Shepherd of the Sea Chapel parking area, 231 Gungywamp Road, Groton.

## Full Harvest Moon

**Sunday, Sept. 7**  
**6:30-7:30 PM**

@ the Peace Sanctuary

Free with generous support from the Rotary of the Stoningtons

[Register](#)

Celebrate the Harvest Moon with a night hike at the Peace Sanctuary. With a DPNC educator as our guide, we'll wander the trails and wait for the moon to rise over the Mystic River. This hike is of moderate difficulty over uneven terrain.

## Avalonia's Perry Preserve

**Saturday, Sept. 13**  
**2-3:30 PM**

@ Perry Preserve

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Join us as we explore the beautiful Perry Preserve, an Avalonia Land Conservancy property in Stonington. Rock walls, foundations and ledges will be just a few of the discoveries along the way. Meets at the trail entrance on North Anguilla Rd in Stonington, close to the North Stonington town line.

## Hike the Nature Center

**Sunday, Sept. 28**  
**2-3 PM**

@ DPNC

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Join us for a hike along the trails at DPNC. We'll explore a variety of habitats, including forests, meadows and wetlands and learn about local wildlife, native plants, and the unique ecosystems that call this area home.

## Full Hunter's Moon

**Monday, Oct. 6**

**5:30–6:30 PM**

@ Coogan Farm

Free for both members and non-members.

[Register](#)

Celebrate the full moon during a hike up the hill at Coogan Farm. Please note full moon hikes happen even on overcast nights and are suitable for adults and older, interested children. Heavy rain cancels. Meets in the parking lot at Coogan Farm.

## Peace Sanctuary

**Thursday, Oct. 9**

**3–4 PM**

@ the Peace Sanctuary

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Enjoy a peaceful hike at the historic Peace Sanctuary. This moderately challenging hike will take you through beautiful landscapes with stunning views of the Mystic River, all while learning about the sanctuary's history. A perfect way to reflect and recharge in nature.

## DPNC-Avalonia Trail Hike

**Sunday, Oct. 12**

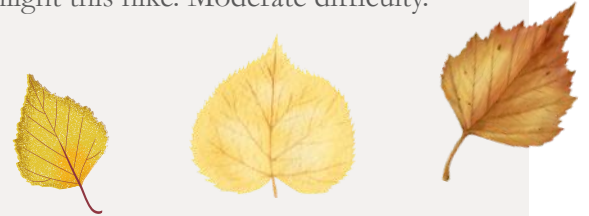
**1–3 PM**

@ DPNC

Free with support from the Rotary of the Stoningtons

[Register](#)

Explore the edges of DPNC with a hike out on the orange trail. Beautiful yellow birch trees and soon to fill vernal pools will highlight this hike. Moderate difficulty.



## Gungywamp Hike

**Sunday, Oct. 19**

**1–3:30 PM**

@ Gungywamp

**Members: \$25.50**

**Non-members: \$30**

[Register](#)

Gungywamp is an archaeological site of distinct natural and cultural interest. It has rocky ridges, glacial erratics and swamps along with enigmatic stone shelter and structures whose use and origin are open to interpretation. Walk with us through the woods and absorb the mysteries of Gungywamp. This program is suited for adults and families comfortable walking two miles over uneven terrain. Pre-registration is required. Meets at Shepherd of the Sea Chapel parking area at 231 Gungywamp Road, Groton.



# GUIDED HIKES & WALKS



*All hikes require pre-registration.*

## Gungywamp Hike

**Sunday, Nov. 16**

**1-3:30 PM**

@ Gungywamp

**Members: \$25.50**

**Non-members: \$30**

[Register](#)

Gungywamp is an archaeological site of distinct natural and cultural interest. It has rocky ridges, glacial erratics and swamps along with enigmatic stone shelter and structures whose use and origin are open to interpretation. Walk with us through the woods and absorb the mysteries of Gungywamp. This program is suited for adults and families comfortable walking two miles over uneven terrain. Pre-registration is required. Meets at Shepherd of the Sea Chapel parking area on Gungywamp Road, Groton.

## Full Beaver Moon

**Wednesday, Nov. 5**

**4-5 PM**

@ the Peace Sanctuary

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Celebrate the full Beaver Moon with an evening hike at the Peace Sanctuary. With a DPNC educator as our guide, we'll wander the trails and watch the moon to rise over the Mystic River. This hike is of moderate difficulty over uneven terrain.

## Coogan Natural Heritage Hike

**Saturday, Nov. 8**

**1:30-2:30 PM**

@ Coogan Farm

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Join us for a guided walk meandering through the Coogan Farm to learn what the lands tells us about the people who have been there. From quarries to old farm roads, this New England landscape is full of clues to the past just waiting to be discovered.

## Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve

**Sunday, Nov. 23**

**1:30-3:30 PM**

@ Oswegatchie Hills N.P.

Free for both members and non-members

[Register](#)

Ready for a challenge? Bring the family and join us for a hike through Oswegatchie Hills, where rugged trails, unique habitats, and scenic views await! This hike is great for those who enjoy a more vigorous outdoor experience and want to explore a local gem—including lots of hills! Meets at 8 Memorial Park Drive Niantic, CT.

*Special events require advance ticket purchase once tickets go on sale. Keep at eye on DPNC Facebook, Instagram, website, or Chickadee newsletter to find out when tickets go on sale.*

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Open Spaces, Wild Places: The Green-Tie Celebration

**Friday, Sept. 19**  
6–8:30 PM @ Coogan Farm

**Individual ticket: \$130**  
**Sponsor ticket: \$200**

*\$45 of your Individual ticket or \$115 of your Patron ticket qualify as a charitable donation to the Nature Center.*



[Purchase tickets](#)

Join us for our signature gala filled with nature, camaraderie, and celebration. Enjoy an evening of cocktails, delicious hors d'oeuvres, and lively fun—all in support of protecting the wild places and open spaces that make our community so special. The Maggie Jones Environmental Hero Award will be presented to Sidney Van Zandt, in recognition of over 60 years of land conservation advocacy and leadership. Join us in recognizing her contributions to our community. This year's celebration will benefit DPNC conservation and environmental education programming.



### Wild Mushroom Festival

**Saturday, Oct. 18**  
1–4 PM  
@ Deans Mill Farm

**Tickets on sale soon!**



We put the fun in fungi at our Wild Mushroom Festival, sure to delight foragers and food enthusiasts alike! Enjoy free lectures by local experts on foraging and cooking mushrooms, identification walks, and sampling the flavors of the forest in dishes from some of the area's best eateries. Don't miss festival favorites like candy cap mushroom ice cream and live music.



### Spooky Nature Trail

**Friday & Saturday, Oct. 24–25**  
First admission 5 PM  
Final admission 7:30 PM  
@ DPNC

\$10/adult  
\$25/child

[Register](#)



What will spook you in the woods? Our annual Halloween festivities are sure to haunt your senses as darkness falls. Explore the Nature Center trails on a self-guided tour with weird and wild animals, glowing jack-o-lanterns, and frightful and delightful creatures of all kinds. Enjoy spooky-themed crafts and games for children, as well as close encounters with cuddly and creepy creatures. For a mild scare, join us between 5 and 6:30 PM. For a medium scare, come between 6:30 and 7:30 PM.



# BEFORE & AFTER CARE



## Neighbors & Nature

Ages 5-12 years

@ Coogan Farm

Dates follow Stonington Public School calendar

**Morning:** 7 AM until bus pickup

**Afternoon:** End to school day until 6 PM

**Before-school only:** \$18/day

**After-school only:** \$22/day

**Before & after:** \$35/day

Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center and Precious Memories Place (our neighboring day care center) collaborate on our Neighbors & Nature program to offer create a unique school-aged child care program, where nature is our playground. Each day before and after school (and for full days for most school vacation days and summer vacation days), our program participants spend time in outdoors, be it in our nature playground, on the trails or in the Giving Garden. From improved concentration to agility, confidence and coordination, nature play is proven to have lasting benefits for children.

Each day, children will spend time appreciating the natural world, developing social skills and enjoying activity through exploration of Coogan Farm, playing games, crafting, hiking, fort building, dramatic play, gardening and much more!

For questions or to enroll, please contact our Neighbors and Nature Head Teacher at [neighbors@dpnc.org](mailto:neighbors@dpnc.org) or 860-536-1216 ext. 151.



# SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, GROUPS, & MORE

*DPNC offers year round opportunities for children, adults and families to connect with nature. Whether you come to us or we go to you, DPNC educators help expand understanding and appreciation of the natural world and foster scientific capability. In the classroom or in the field learn with live animals, mounted specimens, monitoring and natural objects.*



For questions or to set up a program, please contact Tessa Stuart, Outreach Director, at [tstuart@dpnc.org](mailto:tstuart@dpnc.org).

## SCHOOLS

We have decades of experience educating students of all grade levels about the diverse ecosystems of southern New England. Whether in class, online, or at one of our locations, we help students of all ages learn about the natural world, while meeting Next Generation Science standards.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

## LIBRARIES

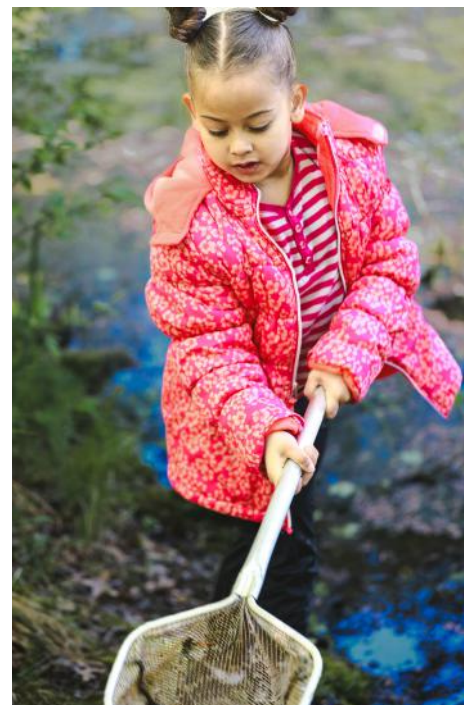
Our Nature Center educators are ready to deliver high-quality, interactive, nature-inspired programs tailored to a mixed-age library audience. We work with all ages (and adults, too!) and can customize each of our nature programs to best suit your needs of your location, timing and audience.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

## SCOUTS

Scouting and the outdoors goes hand in hand! DPNC will help your group complete badge requirements through hikes, live animal encounters, and engaging, hands-on activities. Programs can be completed at your location or as a field trip to either DPNC or Coogan Farm.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*Volunteers are vital to our mission at DPNC. Take your first step to becoming a part of an amazing group of people while helping DPNC and the environment! Visit [dpnc.org/volunteer](http://dpnc.org/volunteer) to sign up.*



## CONSERVATION & HABITAT RESTORATION

Do you love getting outside and making improvements to the land around you? In this area, volunteers work in teams to help restore native plants, eradicate invasive plant species, and maintain trails around the greenway at both the Nature Center and Coogan Farm. Must be 18 or older to volunteer in this department.

## TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Do you enjoy the great outdoors and working with your hands? DPNC is looking for both experienced trail volunteers and those interested in learning more about trail work to help maintain the various hiking trails around and between the two campuses.



## ANIMAL CARE

Interested in working with our resident animals? In animal care, you can work with a diverse variety of species. This work requires a commitment of time and a period of shadowing before working on your own. We also offer opportunities for high school students interested in working in Animal Care.

## GIVING GARDEN

The Craig Floyd Giving Garden at Coogan Farm educates the public about earth friendly, regenerative gardening practices while growing produce for mobile food pantries. Thousands of pounds of fresh produce is donated to families in need across New London County.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

Are you an outgoing and enthusiastic person who enjoys working with people of all ages? We are looking for volunteers to assist with special events throughout the year. You can help with planning, prepping, event day duties such as supervising art projects or manning a food or ticket table, photography, video and content creation, and more!

## CAMP ASSISTANT

Volunteers in our Summer Nature Camp program assist with daily activities like hiking, pond dipping, exploring, art projects, animal encounters, sharing stories, and playing games. We have half-day and full-day volunteer opportunities within this program. Must be 13+ years.



See how your gifts directly benefit the Nature Center programs and operations in our annual impact report [here](#).



## MEMBERSHIP

Your membership does more than provide access to the Nature Center. Member support ensures that we can maintain our facilities, care for our sanctuary, continue to provide quality environmental education programs, preserve our valuable nature resources, and rehabilitate injured animals and return them safely to the wild.

DPNC members enjoy:

- Free admission to the museum, facilities, and live animal exhibits
- Discounted programs, events, and merchandise
- Discounted early registration for Summer Nature Camp
- Member rates for birthday parties at DPNC and Coogan Farm

[Click here to learn more about our membership levels.](#)

## GIVING

Your gift to the Nature Center supports our environmental education programs, nourishes our resident and rehabilitating animals and helps us steward hundreds of acres of land. We accept one-time and monthly gifts, planned gifts, gifts of securities, donations via our Amazon Wish List, and more. [Click here to learn more about the ways you can give to DPNC.](#)

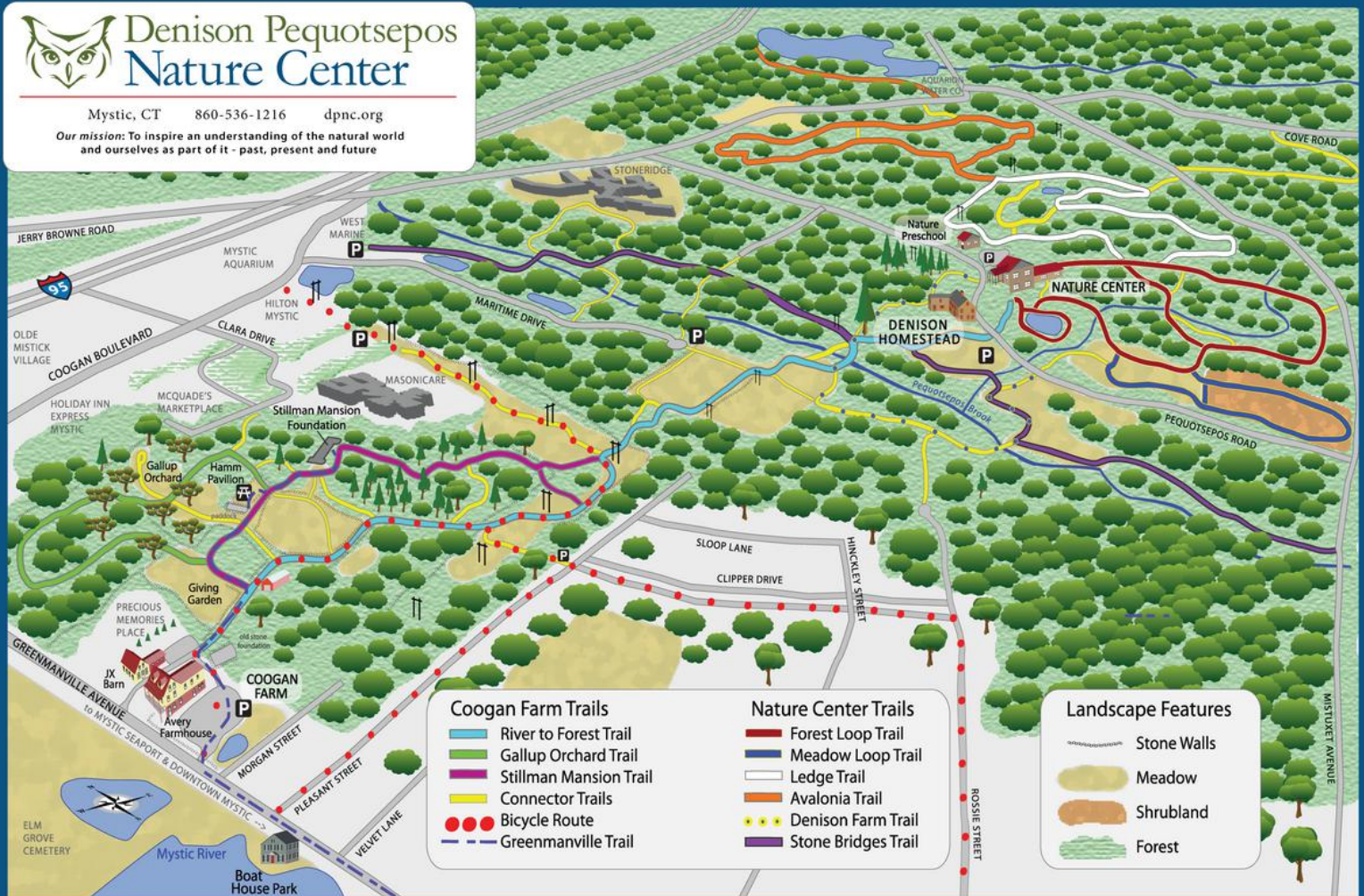
## ADOPT AN ANIMAL

As a federally licensed wildlife rehabilitation and education facility, we regularly take in, rehabilitates and cares for native creatures. Our goal is to release healthy animals back into areas of good habitat, but some are unreleasable due to the nature of their injuries. The animals remaining in our care become Animal Ambassadors, and a part of our education programs. Your purchase of an Adopt-an-Animal gift package helps offset the costs of our rescue and rehabilitation efforts and supports our resident animals and their care. While you can't take Mr. Bill home with you, your gift directly makes a difference in his life and the lives of countless other wild animals.

Adopt-an-Animal packages range in cost and can include anything from a photo of the animal to a unique piece of animal-created art! [Click here to check out the Animal Ambassadors available for "adoption."](#)

# HIKE OUR TRAILS!

While we hold free guided hikes regularly, sometimes you might want to strike out on your own. DPNC stewards 10+ miles of trails between the Nature Center and Coogan Farm campuses. Visit [dpnc.org/trails](http://dpnc.org/trails) to see our full trail map, information about each route, and download a copy to bring with you on your hike!



## TRAIL ETIQUETTE

- Trails are open from dawn to dusk.
- Please stay on trails to avoid trampling delicate plants and ground-nesting animals.
- Fires, camping, hunting, and motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- Bikes only on designated paths (see map).
- Pack out your trash.
- Removing, picking, collecting, or otherwise disturbing plants and animals is prohibited.
- No smoking in DPNC buildings or anywhere on DPNC grounds.

## WHAT ABOUT MY DOG?

We love seeing your leashed dogs on the trails at Coogan Farm! Please help us protect delicate plants and habitats by keeping your dog leashed and on the marked trails. For the health and safety of our resident animal ambassadors, pets are prohibited on the trails around the Nature Center (east of Pequotsepos Road).

**SEE [DPNC.ORG/TRAILS](http://DPNC.ORG/TRAILS) FOR OUR FULL TRAIL MAP, INCLUDING DESCRIPTIONS AND LENGTHS FOR EACH TRAIL**



## HOW TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM OR EVENT

### Online

Visit our events calendar at [dpnc.org/events](https://dpnc.org/events).

### Over the phone

Call us at (860) 536-1216 and we can sign you up via phone.

### In person

Visit us at 109 Pequotsepos Rd in Mystic and we can register you at the front desk.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Pre-registration allows DPNC to secure staffing and materials for programs so that we may best serve you and your family. We require pre-registration and pre-payment for all DPNC programs in order to reserve a space. If the DPNC cancels a program, you will receive a full refund. If you withdraw from a program more than four days in advance, you will receive a refund less a 15% administrative fee. Withdrawals within four days of a program are not refundable.

## THE CHICKADEE NEWSLETTER

DPNC sends out quarterly e-newsletters with the release of seasonal program catalogs, as well as monthly newsletters highlighting upcoming programs, news, and Nature Notes. To sign up to receive the Chickadee newsletter, [click here](#).

## ABOUT DPNC

DPNC offers educational programs, exhibits, live animals, and trails at our woodland sanctuary and trailside museum at 109 Pequotsepos Road in Mystic. Meet our rehabilitated animals, including owls, hawks, turtles, and snakes, experience a “Night in the Meadow” in our small theater, and explore exhibits all about Connecticut’s natural world. The museum features antique mounted bird specimen, rotating seasonal exhibits, murals, skulls, and more.

After checking out the exhibits and meeting animals, hit the trails! DPNC maintains 10+ miles of trails winding through forests, meadows, wetlands, glacial erratics, ponds, and streams. Take advantage of our Borrow a Backpack program and hit the trails with all the supplies you need for an adventure focused on insects, birding, forest exploration, and more.

## VISITING DPNC

### Museum Hours

Sunday–Friday: 10 am–4 pm  
Saturday: 9 am–4 pm  
*Open 7 days a week except New Years Day, Easter, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.*

### Admission

Children (3–12): \$7  
Adults: \$10  
Seniors: \$7

### Trails

Trails at DPNC, Coogan Farm, and the Peace Sanctuary are open to the public from dawn to dusk, free of charge.

## DPNC Locations

### Denison Pequotsepos

**Nature Center:** Main campus with museum, trails, programming & public events, private events, Summer Nature Camp, Early Childhood, and Homeschool.

**Coogan Farm:** Trails, Craig Floyd Giving Garden, Neighbors & Nature, Nature Preschool, event site, and administrative offices.

**Gungywamp:** CT State Archaeological Preserve stewarded by DPNC. Closed to public; access via public or private guided tours.

**Peace Sanctuary:** 30-acre preserve owned by the Mary Jobe Akeley Trust and stewarded by DPNC; open to public dawn to dusk

## FIND US ONLINE

[f](https://www.facebook.com/DPNatureCenterMystic) facebook.com/DPNatureCenterMystic

[@dpnaturectr](https://www.instagram.com/dpnaturectr)

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[in](https://www.linkedin.com/company/denison-pequotsepos-nature-center) linkedin.com/company/denison-pequotsepos-nature-center

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