

Nature Niche

Nature By The Yard – Fostering a Natural Sense of Wonder

Summer, 2004

Volume 1, Issue 2

Calendar of Events

Please call the hosting organization for reservation information.

Tues., June 29 10-11am
Tiny Tot Walk.
Buttinger Nature
Center. Kids 18-36
months (609)737-7592

Wed., June 30 3-4pm.
Cotsen Children's
Library. Nature Inside
Out Series (609) 258-
2697. 3-5 year olds.

Thurs. July 1. 8-9:30pm
Full Moon Walk
Bowman's Hill
Wildflower Preserve
(215)862-2924 Families

Fri., July 2 6:30-
8:30pm Fireflies
Cotsen Children's
Library. Families. (609)
258-2697.

Tues. July 6 2pm
Nature Detectives
Ewing Library (609)
882-3130 Families

Wed. July 7 3-4pm.
Cotsen Children's
Library Princeton (609)
258-2697. 3-5 year
olds.

(continued)

Nature's Night Lights

One step outside during a warm June evening shows a tell tale sign of summer. Fireflies light up the night sky, flashing their light signals in search of a mate.

Fireflies or lightening bugs, are not flies or bugs. They are actually beetles with hard outer wings covering soft inner wings. Males fly as the females wait in the grass, perched and patient. When a male of the same

species flies by, signaling the correct flash pattern, she flashes back. This flash dance continues as he approaches, until the two beetles can mate.

There are tricksters in the firefly world though. Some perched females mimic the flash pattern of another species. When a male flies by flashing his light pattern, she

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To Feed Or Not To Feed...

The question of whether to continue feeding the birds through the summer seems to plague many homeowners. Feeding the birds in the winter is a rewarding experience, but continuing to feed them in other seasons may offer other incentives as well. New species of birds may visit your feeders in summer that you won't see in winter. And many of the common winter feeders are now dressed to the nines in their summer plumage.

One common visitor to the thistle feeder in winter, the American Goldfinch, is now

electric yellow with black wings and forehead. These beautiful birds can feed upside down, so offering thistle seeds in a feeder that has the holes under the perch can be a fun way to watch them.

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks spend the winter in South America, but migrate north to nest. By setting out a hummingbird feeder, especially one that is near a window, you can watch these acrobats of the sky drink the sugar water while they hover beside the feeder.

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Nature By The Yard

(Calendar continued)

Wed., July 14 3-4pm
Cotsen Children's Library.
Nature Inside Out Series.
(609) 258-2697 3-5 year olds.

Fri. July 16 10-11am Tiny Tot Walk Kids 18-36 months Buttinger Nature Center 737-7592

July 19-23 **NEW...** Nature Camp for kids entering grade 2-4. Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve. (215) 862-2924

Wed. July 21 3-4pm
Cotsen Children's Library
Nature Inside Out Series.
(609) 258-2697 3-5 year olds

Wed. July 28 3-4pm
Cotsen Children's Library,
Nature Inside Out Series
(609) 258-2697 3-5 year olds

Sat. July 31 8-9:30pm
Full Moon Walk Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve
(215) 862-2924 Families

We're on the Web

See us at:

www.naturebytheyard.com

Fireflies (*continued*)

copies it. This continues until he is close enough to mate, but instead, she eats him.

There are nearly thirty species of fireflies in the north east. Take your family out on a warm evening and watch these slow moving insects. Each flash pattern and color is a different kind of firefly. See how many different species are in your

yard.

Feel free to contact me at <pam@naturebytheyard.com> or at (609) 610-6292 to suggest a topic for a feature article or if you have a specific question.

If you know of anyone who may be interested in receiving **Nature Niche**, please share the contact information.

Feeding (*continued*)

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are cardinal-sized birds with a large conical bill designed for cracking the shells of nuts. Males are black and white with a vibrant splash of red on their chest. Females are brown and cream colored with the same heavy bill. Common woodland residents in the summer, a rose-breasted grosbeaks should be a welcome site to your backyard.

Whether you decide to feed or not, a great way to help the birds out in any season is to offer clean water. You can provide a birdbath, pond or mist system. Regardless, the birds will love it and reward you with hours of viewing wildlife in your backyard.

About Our Organization...

Nature By The Yard was started in January, 2001. We deliver fun, hands-on, educational programs to schools, scouts, camps, libraries, birthday parties, garden clubs, nature centers, wildflower preserves or any organized group. We also

provided in-service trainings for teachers on using the outdoors as a classroom as well as offer advice and expertise on designing school yard habitats. For details on our services visit www.naturebytheyard.com