



Happy New Year 4th grade LINKS students & families!

As we ring in 2012, the environmental education team here at the Nature Center is pleased to inform you of some exciting and adventurous upcoming LINKS programs. Though the next round of school day visits to the Nature Center don't take place until the end of March, we have some non-school day programs to keep you connected through this down time. These unique programs allow for some extraordinary winter habitat investigations while reconnecting with Norwalk/New Canaan buddy partners from the fall. Students will even get to challenge each other and themselves on exciting new elements of our Adventure Challenge Course. Best of all, these sessions are FREE as part of your child's class participation in the 2011-12 LINKS program!

Please take a few moments to review the upcoming programs listed on the reverse page. To confirm or decline your child's attendance, simply ***fill out the attached RSVP form and return it to your school teacher by February 3, 2012.***

If you have not yet attended a non-school day LINKS program, please make sure to *fill out an Emergency Release & Information Form.*

In case of emergency, students must have a LINKS Emergency Release & Information Form on file with the Nature Center prior to participating in non-school day LINKS programs.

Copies of the Emergency Release & Information Form can be obtained online at <http://www.newcanaannature.org/LINKS/4th.php> or from your school teacher.

We are looking forward to exploring winter & early spring with you!



Sincerely,

Geoffrey McCann
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ADAPTATIONS LAB & WINTER DISCOVERY DAY

This program will meet at the New Canaan Nature Center **from 9:00am – 1:00pm on Friday, February 17, 2012**. Parents must provide transportation for their child to/from the New Canaan Nature Center. Due to budgetary constraints we unfortunately are unable to provide transportation on this day. The Nature Center will provide a healthy snack during this program; however, please pack a peanut-free lunch for your child.

Activities for the day include:

- Hands-on participation in the LINKS Adaptations Lab, where students will get an up close look at animal and plant artifacts while they explore and test a variety of adaptive traits such as bird beaks, body coverings, seed dispersal, and more.
- Examining tracks in the wild while exploring the frozen landscape of the pond, forest, and field habitats.
- Playing Tic-Track-Toe to hone tracking skills.
- Meeting a live owl and conducting an owl pellet dissection

WHAT TO BRING

- Water bottle
- Winter coat
- Gloves
- Hat & scarf (as needed)
- Good sneakers or boots
- Peanut-free lunch

ADAPTATIONS & ECOSYSTEMS AFTERSCHOOL SERIES

Each afterschool program will meet at the New Canaan Nature Center from 3:45pm – 5:15pm on the following dates:

March 1

March 15

March 29

Limited transportation for Norwalk students will be provided via coach buses and Nature Center vans. If your Norwalk child requires transportation please indicate transportation needs on the attached RSVP form. As space is limited due to limited funding, we must know how many students require transportation.

During each day of the afterschool series, LINKS students will have the opportunity to:

- Engage in hands-on experiments
- Personalize investigations of the pond, forest, and field habitats with sampling equipment and nets of their own
- Meet live animal ambassadors from our collection of 40+ species

WHAT TO BRING

- Water bottle
- Winter coat
- Gloves
- Hat & scarf (as needed)
- Good sneakers or boots
- Peanut-free snack (if riding bus)

Directions to the New Canaan Nature Center

From the Merritt Parkway (Route 15), Exit 37:

- Make a LEFT at the end of the ramp onto Route 124.
- Pass over the parkway heading north along South Avenue into New Canaan.
- Follow Route 124 through town.
- At the fourth traffic light turn RIGHT onto Cherry Street.
- At the next traffic light turn LEFT onto Main Street, which becomes Oenoke Ridge.
- Continue about 1/4 mile north of town to NCNC on the LEFT, just past St. Mark's Episcopal Church (on right).
- Follow the drive to the end; park in the lower lot.



LINKS RSVP FORM

(Fill out, detach & return to child's teacher by February 3rd to confirm/decline attendance)

Name of Child's School and Teacher: _____

First & Last Name of Child: _____

First & Last Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

WINTER BREAK – ADAPTATIONS LAB & WINTER DISCOVERY DAY

(February 17th from 9:00am to 1:00pm)

No transportation provided. Please dress appropriately to be outdoors & bring a peanut-free lunch for the day.

Will child be attending the Adaptations Lab & Winter Discovery Day? **Yes** **No**

If not attending for duration, please indicate time of arrival/departure: _____

MARCH ADAPTATIONS & ECOSYSTEMS AFTERSCHOOL SERIES

(from 3:45pm – 5:15pm on March 1, March 15 & March 29)

Limited transportation provided for Norwalk students. Please dress appropriately to be outdoors & bring a peanut-free snack to eat while in transport.

Please circle afterschool series dates attending: **March 1** **March 15** **March 29** **Not attending**

Norwalk students only: Limited transportation will be provided from Brookside, Columbus, Fox Run, and Marvin schools. A coach bus or Nature Center van supervised by Nature Center staff will shuttle students starting at each school's normal dismissal time and will make a return drop off back to each school according to the schedule below.

Brookside : 5:30-5:45pm

Fox Run: 6:00-6:15pm

Columbus : 5:45-6:00pm

Marvin: 5:45-6:00pm

Does your child need transportation to & from the Nature Center? **Yes** **No**

Does your child only need transportation to the Nature Center? **Yes** **No**

(This means you will pick-up from the Nature Center at 5:15pm)

Does your child only need transportation from the Nature Center? **Yes** **No**

(This means you will drop off at the Nature Center for a program starting at 3:45pm)

If you marked "Yes" for needing any transportation, a Nature Center staff member will be in direct contact via phone/e-mail in late February to confirm transportation logistics and relay any updates that are needed.