CLAY PIT PONDS
STATE PARK PRESERVE

GROUP PROGRAMS GUIDE

NEW YORK
STATE OF OPPORTUNITY.
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation
You are invited to bring your group on a field trip to Clay Pit Ponds! We teach hands-on environmental education programming for NYC schools, camps, clubs, scouts, and other groups in order to connect people to nature and foster stewardship of our local environment.

Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve is a 275-acre forest containing habitats unique to New York City and over 160 species of birds. Nestled amongst this urban greenspace is the Nature Interpretive Center which provides an indoor area for conducting a wide variety of programs and classes. The building is located at 2351 Veterans Road West, Staten Island, NY 10309.

“...environmental education has led to a number of positive impacts, from improving academic performance, to enhancing critical thinking skills, to developing personal growth and life-building skills including confidence, autonomy, and leadership.” —North American Association for Environmental Education

“Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the stars and the mountains above. Let them look at the waters and the trees and flowers on Earth. Then they will begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education.” —David Polis

Any group leader can book a private program with us; including classroom and homeschool teachers, scout and club leaders. We can accommodate groups of up to 60 participants at one time. To ensure that all NYC residents have equal access to a guided forest experience, our programs are free of charge.

Programming is offered year-round. Our hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays, 8:30 am—5:00 pm. During the school year, Tuesday through Friday mornings from 10:00 am—1:00 pm are reserved for school trips using the DoE bus service. Classes with 15 or fewer participants may only book on Tuesday mornings. Classes with 16 to 60 participants may book Wednesday through Friday mornings. All other groups may book afternoon programming from 2:00 pm—5:00 pm on weekdays or any time during open hours on Saturdays.

Contact Emily Becker, Environmental Educator at Emily.Becker@parks.ny.gov or call 718-605-3970 ext. 201.
**Programs**

**Nature Explorers**
Get outside and experience the forest!
- April—October
- Grades K—2; ages 7 & younger
- Outdoor, up to 1 mile hike

**Animal Detectives**
Search for clues that wildlife leave behind. What do animals need to survive in the forest?
- Year-round
- Grades K—2; ages 7 & younger
- Indoor/outdoor, up to 1 mile hike

**Maple Syrup Science**
Learn about the entire process of creating maple syrup, from tap to table, and help us to make some of our own!
- Last two weeks of January through February
- Grades 2 & up; ages 7 & up
- Indoor/outdoor, up to 1/2 mile hike

**Navigating Naturalists**
Hunt for treasure and learn to navigate our trails using various types of maps.
- March—November
- Grades 3—8; ages 8—13
- Indoor/outdoor, up to 1 mile hike

**Adapt to Survive**
Why do roses have thorns? Why do ducks have webbed feet? Discover these answers and more in this adaptation-focused lesson.
- Year-round
- Grades 3—5; ages 8—10
- Indoor/outdoor, up to 1/2 mile hike

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**CANCELLATION POLICY:** We reserve the right to cancel a program in the event of emergency, weather-related or otherwise. Outdoor programs will be cancelled for the following reasons: temperatures below 25°F, heavy rain, lightning, thunder, high winds, or other extreme weather emergencies. If your program must be cancelled due to inclement weather, you will be offered an alternate date in June to bring your group OR you may choose to participate in an indoor Eco-Heroes class, which teaches about recycling and composting.

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**Farm Tour**
Tour the historic Gericke Farm and learn what it takes to grow food. Includes a 1/2 acre vegetable patch, greenhouse, orchard, and chicken coop.
- April—October
- Grades 3–12; ages 8 & up; limit 30 participants
- Outdoor

**Pond Investigators**
Become a citizen scientist! Conduct a field study to test the health of our ponds.
- May—July
- Grades 8–12; ages 13 & up
- Outdoor, up to 1/2 mile hike

**Oh, Deer!**
The deer on Staten Island love our Park! Observe the effects of overpopulation.
- Year-round
- Grades 6–12; ages 11 & up
- Outdoor, 1 mile hike

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- April—October
- Grades 3–12; ages 8 & up; limit 30 participants
- Outdoor

**TEACHER OPPORTUNITIES:**
- We offer teacher development workshops every Election Day and Anniversary Day
- If you would like to know which NYS learning standards your program meets, ASK US!

**CAN’T FIND THE RIGHT PROGRAM FOR YOU?**
We can help! Contact the Environmental Educator with a description of your program needs and we can tailor a private program for you. Some examples in the past have included tiger scout hikes to gain particular badges, volunteer clean-ups, pollinator focused lessons, and more!