



Rice Creek Associates Newsletter

Fall 2017



Science at Rice Creek:

Two butterfly migrations observed

At the time this newsletter was being prepared, two butterfly migrations are being observed at the field station: the expected annual fall migration of Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus*) and the unexpected population explosion and migration of Painted Ladies (*Vanessa cardui*).

Although Monarchs typically migrate in the late summer and fall, these migrations have seen great fluctuation in numbers at the field station in recent years. In 2015, for instance, 45 Monarchs were counted on the field station grounds Sept. 16 and 57 on Sept. 22. Last year (2016) during that

same general mid to late September period, fewer than a handful were observed at any given time.



Monarchs

This year, I have observed at least a few Monarchs almost every day, no matter where I

was in central and western New York, as early as mid-June.

One possible factor for more Monarchs this year may be that Mexico and the southern U.S. had milder weather last winter. This would help more Monarchs survive the winter and enable more to migrate northward in the spring.

During this year's migration, 71 Monarchs were counted on field station grounds on Sept. 21; Sept. 27, 29 were seen; Oct. 3, only 5 were spotted.

Painted Ladies on the other hand have been scarce on the field station grounds for years and went through a population explosion that is now being observed throughout central New York and beyond. On Sept. 21, I counted 483 individuals and probably missed an equal amount! On Sept. 27, 313 were observed; October 3, they were down to 71. Clearly, they were well on their way.



Painted Lady, dorsal view

Klots (1951) writes in *A Field Guide to the Butterflies* that Painted Ladies have “strong migratory periods of great abundance that may be

followed by periods of great scarcity.” Cech and Tudor (2005) dispel the long-held belief that Painted Ladies hibernate as adults at northern latitudes. They go on to say “... each year's North American crop can actually be traced to the Mexican Plateau, from which hordes of individuals stream north in spring.” These migrating hordes have been known to literally stop traffic!

There are times when none of these migrating individuals reach the east, accounting for their scarcity in those years. Again, Cech and Tudor write that “Isolated sightings in such lean years may be of escapes, since pupae are widely available through the mail for science projects and commercial breeders sell adults for release en masse at “special events.””



Painted Lady, ventral view

The Painted Lady is found on all continents except Antarctica. For this reason, Painted Ladies have also been named “the Cosmopolitan.”

Individuals that are migrating generally have fast, straight determined flights, rising above trees and buildings. They have also been observed at sea.

- Article and photos by Mike Holy

*Nature Education Programs at
SUNY Oswego's Rice Creek Field Station*

**FALL
2017**



***Rice Creek Rambles* 11 o'clock
October 14, 21, 28 November 11, 18, 25
December 9**

Explore the trails and wetlands at Rice Creek to see fall changes. Join us for these family-friendly naturalist-led fall walks. Those planning to attend are asked to call 315-312-6677 on the morning of the hike to check trail conditions. Since program size is limited, we are not able to accommodate groups to these free Saturday programs. An adult needs to accompany children.

***Story Hour* 11 o'clock
November 4 December 2**

Join us as we share tales of nature, animals' wild ways, and how we relate to our world around us. These programs are designed for elementary aged children though all are welcome. Since program size is limited, we are not able to accommodate groups to these free Saturday programs. An adult needs to accompany children. SUNY Oswego's Rice

Creek Field Station offers Story Hour in support of SUNY's partnership with the Read Aloud 15 Minutes national initiative.

Homecoming Weekend 2017

Rice Creek welcomes all to Homecoming Weekend 2017. Plan to visit Rice Creek from 9 to 4:30 on Friday October 13 and 9 to 3 on Saturday October 14.

Celebrate Family and Friends Weekend 2017

Rice Creek welcomes all to Family and Friends Weekend 2017. Stop by Rice Creek from 9 to 4:30 on Friday October 20 and 9 to 3 on Saturday October 21.

- ◆ The building hours are: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm and Saturdays 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
CLOSED Saturdays September 2 & December 16, 23, 30
Mondays September 4 & December 25,
Thursday November 23
- ◆ FREE programs most Saturdays
- ◆ Trails are open during daylight hours.
- ◆ Parking is available by the main building and near the gate.

Programs administered by **Dr. Diann C. Jackson**

Rice Creek
FIELD STATION



**www.oswego.edu/rice-creek
315-312-6677**

Rice Creek Reflections

Appalachian Trail Thru-Hike

Saturday, Sept. 23 at the field station, **Emil and Meghan Christmann** reflected on their hiking the full length of the Appalachian Trail in 2016. Complete with slides and equipment, their vibrant and passionate discussion of the extended travel by foot in the wilderness in a Huntley-Brinkley fashion was informative, energizing, enthusiastic and entertaining.



Meghan and Emil are introduced by RCA Board President Robert Foster

Hiking 2,191 miles through 14 states, the experiences they related lasted well over two hours with much more that could have been shared.

Here is just a small tidbit of the information they shared:

- A number of groups and organizations are involved in maintaining sections of the trail. Some are better organized and have more resources than others.
- Harper's Ferry is considered the psychological midpoint of the trail.
- The main trail is called the White Blaze. The Blue Blaze consisted of off trails and tangents to the main trail. The yellow Blaze is the road! Hikers use any combination of these when traveling the trail's length.

- Mount Washington in the White Mountains in New Hampshire is the windiest location in the world, with speeds up to 200 mph.
- They considered Mahoosuc Notch in Western Maine to be the most difficult mile to hike due to its deep gap.
- There was a strong sense of family with others who were walking or meeting along the way.
- Sections of the trail actually go through small towns, where the White Blaze could be a sidewalk on Main St.
- Animals they encountered on the trail included bears, ponies, butterflies, ticks, Eastern King Snake and Rattlesnake.
- Many stories of people along the way were shared. They were particularly moved by the friendliness and hospitality of townspeople.
- They preferred Soloman hiking shoes for their lightness of weight and ease at which they dried when wet.

After a question and answer session and a break, Emil and Meghan took those interested into the Pine grove section of the Blue trail to demonstrate how they set up their tarp and tent (which were home-made) and obtain water for cooking. Their backpacks weighed only about 20 pounds each.



Setting tarp cover before netted tent

-Article and photos by Mike Holy

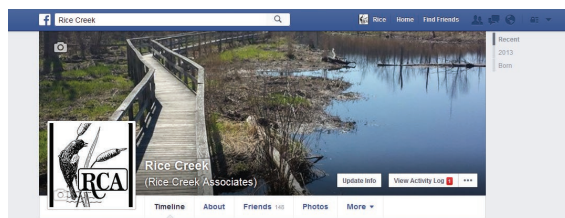
Save the date!

Our annual RCA Social will be held on Saturday, November 4. The 2017 Small Grant awardees will share their experiences and data collected over the past year. Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 2 p.m. and the program will begin promptly at 3 p.m. The event is free and open to all.

At this event, you will see how students, faculty, and members of the community experience Rice Creek, you will experience the passion we have for training the next generation of scientists, and meet the Rice Creek Associates and SUNY Oswego community that supports these opportunities. Come **Experience** Rice Creek!

Rice Creek Associates (RCA) is on Facebook

To connect with RCA on Facebook, sign up for Facebook by visiting www.facebook.com/ or sign in using your existing account. When linking to RCA as an added friend, search for Rice Creek like you would search for a new friend. You will know you have the right link to add RCA when you see this RCA logo as a profile picture along with the Green Trail's boardwalk as its cover page, like so:



Rice Creek Field Station

Rice Creek Field Station is a part of the State University of New York at Oswego. While its primary function is to provide facilities for field-oriented research and courses in the natural sciences taught at

the college, facilities are also available for public education and recreation.

The field station houses superb collections, field equipment, and laboratories. It is surrounded by several hundred acres of forest, fields, trails and wetlands, including Rice Pond. School children visit the field station and many individuals and groups use the area for hiking and cross-country skiing.

Rice Creek welcomes dogs. However, to protect sensitive natural features and as a courtesy to other visitors, dogs should be on a six foot leash. Also, please be kind and clean up after your pet. Thank you.

Directions: To get to Rice Creek Field Station take Route 104, turn south on Thompson Rd., located 100 yards west of the College's main entrance. The field station is 1.4 miles on the right.

Hours:

Monday to Friday 9:00 am -- 4:30 pm

Saturday 9:00 am -- 3:00 pm

Trails are open dawn to dusk daily.

When visiting Rice Creek, please sign in and out at one of the brown registration boxes.

Memorable moments at Rice Creek

Please share with us a special experience you've had at Rice Creek. It will appear in a future newsletter. Send it to **Mike** at fordlep@yahoo.com.

Rice Creek Associates

(RCA) is a support group that was formed in 1986 for the purpose of furthering the goals of Rice Creek Field Station (RCFS). It is the intent of RCA to expand the scientific, educational, and recreational opportunities at the station through community involvement. Over the years, RCA has continued to increase its membership making it possible to fund improvement projects that benefit the station and the community at large.

RCA Board Elections

Rice Creek Associates Board of Directors Ballot

Three positions are up for election. All are three-year positions. Both Paulia Bates and Dick Kaulfuss have decided not to run for another term. Please consider serving on our Board. Indicate your choices and return by November 15.

___ Mike Holy ___ Write-in
___ ___ Write-in
___ ___ Write-in

Complete and send to Rice Creek Associates,
Bldg #23 SUNY Oswego, Oswego, N.Y. 13126
or forward to rcfs@oswego.edu.

Current RCA board members

Robert Foster, President
Peter Rosenbaum, Vice President
Don Artz, Secretary/Treasurer
Michael Schummer, Small Grants Chair
Paulia Bates
Alan Harris
Michael Holy
Pat Jones
Dick Kaulfuss
Andrew McElwain
Sheri Morey
Cayla Taylor

Rice Creek Field Station Staff

Kamal Mohamed, Director
Diann Jackson, Assistant Director
Wendy Fragale, Secretary
Alan Harris, Groundskeeper

Join Rice Creek Associates

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

___ New Membership (Calendar year)

___ Membership renewal

Level:

___ Student	5.00
___ Individual	10.00
___ Family/Couple	15.00
___ Contributing	25.00
___ Sustaining	50.00
___ Life	250.00
___ Corporate	500.00

I/We would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the

___ General Fund
___ Trail improvement
___ Exploring Nature Program for Children

in the amount of \$ _____.

Total enclosed (membership + contribution)

\$ _____ Date _____

Please make checks payable to:

Oswego College Foundation/RCA

Return to:

Rice Creek Field Station #23

SUNY Oswego

Oswego, New York 13126

Rice Creek Associates
RCFS #23
SUNY Oswego
Oswego, NY 13126

TO: