



Rice Creek Associates Newsletter

Winter 2016-2017



Science at Rice Creek:

Rice Creek Associates Annual Social showcases 2016 Small Grant recipients

Our annual RCA Social was held on Saturday, November 19 at Rice Creek Field Station. Nine grant recipients presented their findings before an audience of 35 attendees.

An impressive variety of studies were conducted at Rice Creek by SUNY Oswego faculty and students. Funding for these studies was made through Rice Creek Associates, office of the Provost, and office of the Dean.



Standing, left to right: Dr. Poongadi Geetha-Lonanathan, Dr. Peter Newell, Phillip Perriello, Jessica Gibbons, Jaclyn Lovell, Kimberly Anderson, Miranda Nelson, Zachary Bennett, and Kaitlyn Tkachuk.

The researchers and their studies, in order of presentation, were:

Kimberly Anderson: *Correlating MHC IIB diversity to susceptibility to Bd and Ranavirus in Green Frogs.*

Zachary Bennett: *Effects of phenolic compound concentrations on the winter foraging behaviors of mammals and birds on Staghorn Sumac.*

Jaclyn Lovell: *Host-Parasite coevolution and the Parasite Spillover and Spillback Hypotheses: Final report.*

Dr. Peter Newell: *Waiting for Godot, Act I: A small survey of the spotted-wing Drosophila in Oswego County*

Phillip Perriello: *Quantifying stands of ash (Fraxinus spp.) in anticipation of the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (Agrillus planipennis) and subsequent forest succession.*

Dr. Poongodi Geetha-Loganathan: *Isolation and Characterization of microbial colonization in Snapping Turtle (Chelydra serpentine) eggs.*

Jessica Gibbons: *The ultrastructure of Painted Turtle (Chrysemys picta) egg shell and shell membrane.*

Miranda Nelson: *Effects of seasonality on the foraging behavior of the Northern Flying Squirrel (Glaucomys sabrinus) at Rice Creek Field Station.*

Kaitlyn Tkachuk: *Environmental DNA techniques to detect the presence of Sea Lampreys in Rice Creek.*

Rice Creek Associates' Small Grant Program was established over 20 years ago to promote and encourage original research by students, principally on Rice Creek Field Station grounds.

Copies for the 2017 annual Small Grants Program "Call for Proposals" may be obtained by contacting the Rice Creek Field Station at 315-312-6677, Field Station Director Dr. Kamal Mohamed (kamal.mohamed@oswego.edu), or RCA Small Grants Chair Dr. Michael Schummer (Michael.schummer@oswego.edu).

Nature musings from our incoming RCA Board President

It's November 17th and 4:00 PM. Rice Creek's Weather Station says it is 50.4° F with 2 mph winds out of the west, a mild day for Oswego in the middle of November. My weather station at home on West 6th off Bronson Street says it's 50.5° F with 50% humidity.

Most of our trees have shed their leaves, though both Norway Maples still have lots on them. There's a plaque beneath our White Oak dated May 6th 1989 that commemorates the 175th anniversary of the battle of Oswego and that this tree is the last living witness of that battle. As you can see from my picture it has shed almost all of its leaves.

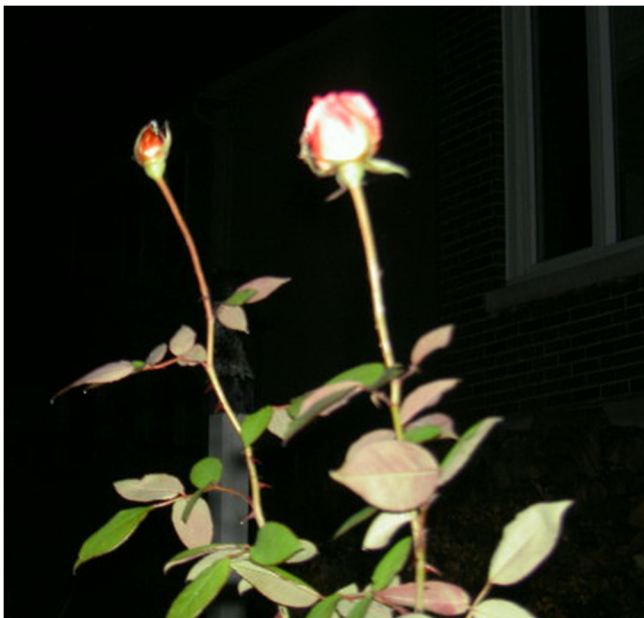


My white oak

I also took a picture of my "Moonlight Magic" Hybrid Tea and not only are there lots of blooms still left on this 6-month old plant, there are three new pink buds just a few days from opening. This Rose is in direct sunlight all day. I took a picture of another Rose, Red Olympiad, that lies beneath a 100-year+ American Elm and gets very little sun. It has several buds that might open in a few days also.



Moonlight Magic Hybrid Tea Rose

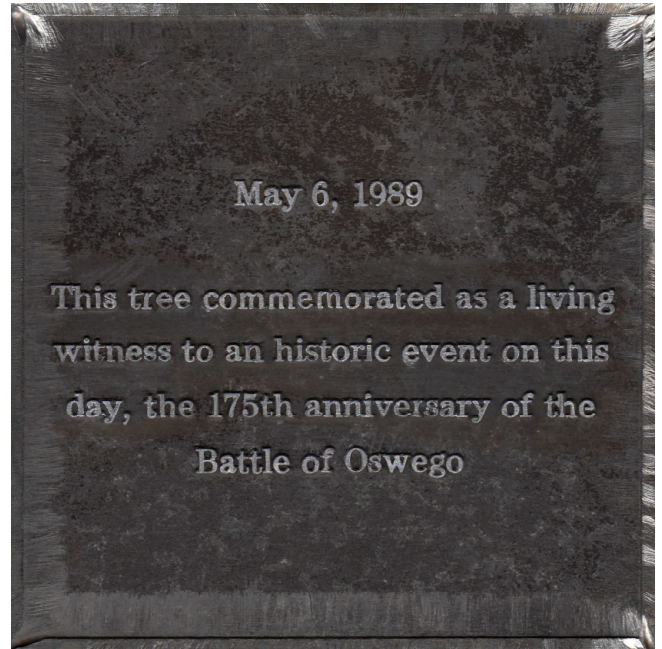


Red Olympiad Rose

According to AccuWeather, the normal temperature for November is 40°F and this year we are 6°F above normal. For the first 10-months of 2016 we are running 4.4°F above normal. In July we had 0.5" of rain and according to Bill Gregway from the PAL Times, August 2016 was our hottest here in Oswego in 162 years.

I moved into a brand new house in Staten Island Memorial Day of 1973. One of the first things I did was plant 10 Jackson & Perkins Hybrid Tea Roses. Over the 40-years that I lived there, the blooming season for my roses got longer and longer. Early on I had blooms into early October,

then into Halloween, then into Thanksgiving, and finally the first week of December.



Elm tree marker

When we moved to Oswego 2013 it was so wonderful to feel and enjoy winter again. Well, here we go again with roses in the middle of November. March of 2014 was a whopper as I used my snow blower every day that month. I do hope this warmer than normal weather is an abnormality from El Nino. Else good grief, I might have to move north to Toronto next!

I love Oswego and for our family moving here was one of those "right" decisions that don't come along too often. Being a part of Rice Creek is another great decision, too. Downstate in Staten Island, there's a rose garden at Snug Harbor on the north shore and a Chinese Scholar's garden [admission charge applies]. If you're willing to travel, there's The Bronx Botanical Garden, The Brooklyn Botanical Garden, Longwood Gardens etc. Here in Oswego we don't have to travel far at all and we don't have to pay. Just visit Rice Creek Field Station. Wonderful manicured gardens, an herbal garden, well-marked trails, a lovely pond, bird feeders

[that attract dozens of kinds of birds] and so much more is available here at Rice Creek.

While I'm looking forward to our first snowfall, the real show for all will begin in the Spring when the large meadow goes into bloom at Rice Creek and the shrubs and flowers bloom on the field station grounds. To help us through winter, RCA has several wonderful reflections planned. Hope to see you all there.

- Robert Foster

Save the dates for these Rice Creek Reflections!

We have two programs to announce: First, **Susan Gately** will give a presentation titled "The Environmental History of Lake Ontario" on January 14 at 2 p. m. Also, on March 4 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., **Bill Reilly** from **rivers end bookstore** will describe the latest nature and environment selections at his store. These will include selections for children and adults. Copies will be available for purchase at the field station. We also plan to have a staffed children's activity room while the program is in session.

Member benefit announced

All current members of Rice Creek Associates are eligible for a 20% discount on all items for sale at the field station. This includes any items offered by the field station as well as RCA items. The Board felt that this is one small way we can thank you, our RCA members, for your very much-appreciated financial support.

Please note: Checks for items purchased under promotional items can be made payable to Rice Creek Associates. Checks for items under Nature's Niche can be made payable to Oswego College Foundation, RCFS. If making a cash purchase at the field station, exact change would be appreciated.

RICE CREEK PROMOTIONAL ITEMS (RCA MEMBER DISCOUNT OF 20% APPLIES)

Books	Non-Member Pricing	RCA Member Discount 20%
FIELD GUIDE: Butterflies at RCFS.....	\$2.95	\$2.36
FIELD GUIDE: Invasive Plants at RCFS.....	\$5.95	\$4.76
FIELD GUIDE: Mammals at RCFS	\$7.00	\$5.60
Golden Guides.....	\$6.00	\$4.80
Nature Activity, Sticker or Stencil Books	\$1.50	\$1.20
Peterson First Guides	\$5.75	\$4.60
Pocket Naturalist Guides.....	\$5.50	\$4.40

Rice Creek Logo Items

Bookmarks (set of 4)	\$1.00	\$0.80
Ceramic Mug	\$5.00	\$4.00
Coaster (one of three designs)	\$7.50	\$6.00
Drawstring Bag	\$3.50	\$2.80
Hat (youth size)	\$1.50	\$1.20
Pen	\$1.00	\$0.80
Pin	\$3.00	\$2.40
Stickers [EN/CFS/Oswego Tea] (set of 3)	\$1.00	\$0.80
Suet Feeder	\$0.50	\$0.40
Water Bottle.....	\$2.00	\$1.60

Honorary Items

Ruth Sachidanandan Oswego Tea Note Card & Envelope..... each	\$1.00	\$0.80
John Weeks Note Cards & Envelopes	\$5.00	\$4.00
John Weeks Art Prints [not matted and not framed].....	\$25.00	\$20.00
Joe LeFevre Matted Rice Creek Photos	\$15.95	\$12.76
	\$29.95	\$23.96

NATURE'S NICHE

Science Supplies

Dissecting Kit.....	\$5.00
Insect Storage Box	\$9.00
Magnifier: Bug Box.....	\$0.50
Magnifier: Top and Bottom Viewer.....	\$9.50
Magnifier: 3x plastic.....	\$0.75
Magnifier: 10x metal loupe with case	SOLD OUT
Rite in the Rain notebook	\$6.00

Science & Nature Items

Arrowhead	\$0.50
Balls: Lizard, Snake, Turtle, Frog, Spider, or Flower	\$3.00
Balloon Racer.....	\$1.00
Critters [reptiles, insects, & more] [NOT GLOW IN THE DARK] (set of 3)....	\$1.00
Critter Keeper.....	\$1.50
Dinosaur Ruler	\$0.50
Erasers: dinosaur or pencil top (set of 3)	\$1.00
Flying Stretchy Frog.....	\$0.50
Fossil Shark Teeth	\$0.25
Gemstone Card	\$0.25
Geode	\$1.00
Glow in the Dark Insects, Lizard or Frog	\$0.50
Growing Snake or Sea Life.....	\$0.50
Insect Tattoos (set of 2)	\$0.25
Kaleidoscope	\$0.50
Key Chain: Frog	\$1.00
Magnets: Bird House or Butterfly.....	\$1.00
Mini Puzzle.....	\$1.00
Nature Pencils.....	\$0.50
Necklace Puzzle	\$1.00
Owl Pellet.....	\$1.50
Test Tube	\$0.50
Think Green Stickers	\$0.50
Whirly Birds [with 3 disks].....	\$1.00

((Exact change is appreciated when paying by cash))

--or-- checks payable to: Oswego College Foundation, RCFS

Thank you.

Nature Education Programs at SUNY Oswego's Rice Creek Field Station Winter 2017



Rice Creek Rambles 11 o'clock

January 7, 14, 21 February 4, 11, 18
March 4, 11, 18

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 January 28 February 25 March 25

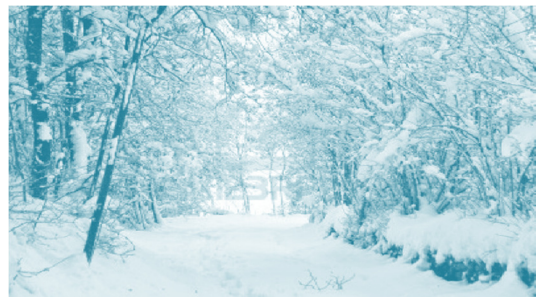
Join us as we share tales of nature, animals' wild ways, and how we relate to our world around us. These programs are designed for elementary aged children though all are welcome. Since program size is limited, we are not able to accommodate groups to these free Saturday programs. An adult needs to accompany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

Winter Bird Study

Drop by most Saturdays and spend a few minutes with our feathered friends. Be a citizen scientist as you count the birds at the Rice Creek feeders from our indoor viewing area. This is a great project for all ages and the entire family.

Registration for *Exploring Nature* summer program for children will be available soon.

Tour Rice Creek Field Station and learn about the sustainability features of our 7640 square-foot energy-efficient main building and facility. View the displays and art inside the building.



- ◆ The building hours are:
Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
Most Saturdays 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- ◆ 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.



www.oswego.edu/rice-creek

315-312-6677

Rice Creek
FIELD STATION
MAKE REVERENCE OF THE TOWN
AS OREGON

Book Review:

A Coming of Winter in the Adirondacks

Written by Brian J. Heinz

Illustrated by Maggie Henry

For those readers who treasure a book that provides not only a satisfying story about life in an Adirondack setting, but also offers beautiful illustrations on every page, this book delivers. Children, especially, will enjoy this nonfiction tale of winter's arrival by howling arctic winds, snow-filled clouds, and resident animals' reactions. Readers of all ages will fall under the book's gentle spell of well-crafted and yet simple narration coupled with enchanting pictures in breath-taking colors. Each page showcases a different animal, from cardinals and blue jays to bears, deer and bobcats. Every page displays the dazzling wonders of winter here in our own New York Adirondack region and reminds us to appreciate the beauty of winter around us.

All 28 pages of this book will delight and charm readers into realizing winter's arrival can be a delight to behold after all. This is something so lovely to be reminded of as we all often dread winter's snow and cold. Many of the same animals of this story live in our own Rice Creek habitat, such as cardinals, chickadees, wild turkeys, deer, squirrels, and even our rare black bears and coyotes. To see them with beautiful backgrounds of snow-frosted pines, ice-glazed streams, and stormy, windswept skies again reminds readers of how unique and resplendent the northern part of our state truly can be during the winter season.

An additional treat found in this book is the smaller background animal(s) in many of the woodland scenes. Upon close examination readers will sometimes spot two or more species

in the same scene only adding to the appeal of the illustrations. Along with the realistic depictions of the trees, leaves, berries, and other vegetation this book captures the silent and yet startling beauty of snow, ice, and winter wildlife accessible to almost all of us.

Reviewed by **Paulia Bates**

A personal comment on your support for RCA

The RCA Board of Directors always appreciates your present and past financial support. Your membership and gifts allow us to produce this newsletter, obtain guest speakers through our Rice Creek Reflections Program, support the Small Grant Research and Exploring Nature for Children programs, produce field guides for the Rice Creek grounds, and many other needs that arise from time to time. None of us receive monetary compensation as Board members. 100% of what we receive goes directly to support our operations.

Unfortunately, we have seen a noticeable decrease in membership renewals that will have a dramatic impact on what we can offer in the near future. There are a few ways you can help us overcome this shortfall.

- If you intend on remaining a member, please make sure to renew your membership by the beginning of the calendar year. We are now processing memberships for 2017.
- Consider upgrading your membership to the next level, if you are able.
- As you renew, consider a gift membership to someone who appreciates nature and nature education, or talk a friend into joining our organization as members.
- Let us know what type of programs you would be interested in attending. We will do our best at obtaining speakers to address those interests. A recent example of this was

requests to hold another “wild edibles” Reflection, which we did this July.

And please, if there is something on our part that made you to decide not to renew, we’d like to know. Email me personally at fordlep@yahoo.com or leave a message for me at the field station (315-312-6677), and I personally will do what I can do address that concern.

Again, thank you for your support. We wish to provide a multitude of experiences for you and others here at Rice Creek.

- Mike Holy

Wild Edibles

Brought back by member requests, **Lytton Musselman** gave a Reflection talk on July 30 at the field station. The major difference between this one and his previous one was that the attendees were able to walk the grounds with Lytton looking for edible plants.



Lytton Musselman (second from right) illustrates the edible value of cattail near Rice pond. Field station director **Kamal Mohamed** stands to his right.

A few comments worth noting during the indoor presentation:

- Wild plants are not uniform and should be used as emergency food only.
- Red pine bark is edible
- Native Americans ate the inner bark of the Ponderosa Pine early in the spring with the sap still inside the tree. The sap gave it a better taste.
- Poison Ivy is rare in the Adirondack Park.
- Sassafras adds nice flavor to soup and Jambalaya.
- Good-tasting greens include White Pine (tea), Basswood (salad), Chicory (coffee), Glassworts, and Nettle.
- Curly Dock is a good source of starch.
- All parts of Cattail are edible all the time.

Warning!

Just because a plant is edible does not mean it is safe to eat. It may be growing in polluted water or soil or may have chemicals on it.

There are old mushroom hunters,
There are bold mushroom hunters
But there are no, old bold
mushroom hunters

One of Lytton’s books, “The Quick Guide to Edible Plants,” has great color pictures to help with identification.

- Notes submitted by **Robert Foster**

Wildlife Rehabilitation

On Saturday, Oct. 29, **Gabe Whitman**, a federal and state licensed wildlife biologist from Second Chance Wildlife in Martville, gave a presentation on animal rehabilitation.

Unlike most Refection programs here at the field station, this one could be characterized more as a “fireside chat” than formal presentation. With 23 in attendance, Gabe took a seat, and after a brief description of her wildlife rehabilitator qualifications and licensing, began to solicit questions from the audience.



Gabe Whitman, right, offers information to an attendee.

Located in Martville, she cares for approximately 400 animals per year. The majority of these are orphans or injured.

Her vehicle is equipped with a blanket, box with holes, and heavy gloves. On occasion she does work with veterinarians. Vets will only accept animals brought in by a rehabilitator (There is a network to transport wild animals to a rehabilitation site if necessary.). Although the cost is borne by the rehabilitator, some pro bono work is offered. For this reason, rehabilitators are dependent and appreciative of any charitable donations from the public.

Some facts that were shared as a result of the exchange with the audience:

- Bunnies and fauns that appear to be deserted should be left alone.
- A call to a rehabilitator should be given before picking up any animal.
- Contrary to popular belief, it is ok to touch birds- birds cannot detect small.
- The largest animal Gabe has cared for was a full-grown deer.
- Gabe typically works from 6 a.m. to dark. May and June are the most intense months.
- Porcupines should be picked up with paper because their quills have burdock-like tips.
- Gabe’s success rate is 95% for babies, 90% for adults.
- There is a fine line between torture and rehabilitation. Always consult with an expert before caring for any wild animal.
- An opossum does not “play dead.” When frightened, an opossum will faint, appearing as if it were playing dead.
- Leave baby animals alone; do not remove them from their home area or family.

Gabe can be reached at 315-754-6208. She rarely can come to pick up animals because she has so many animals to care for. Wendy at the field station front desk has a list of rehabilitators, and can locate the one closest to you.

We thank Gabe for spending time with us, and are appreciative of her informal presentation style and comforting words.

Lifetime Honorary Membership announced

The Rice Creek Board of Directors, at the recommendation of Field Station Director Kamal Mohamed, has awarded **Wendy Fragale** Honorary Lifetime RCA membership status. As the Field Station’s secretary, **Wendy** has given

tremendous support to RCA through the years in numerous ways, including room reservations, program mailings, processing membership renewals, and record keeping. Our organization would be greatly affected without her selfless support.



Voluntary work at Rice Creek reaches new heights

To begin with, we want to acknowledge the efforts of our volunteers and work study students in helping with maintenance and grounds work at the Field Station. Our voluntary program at the Field Station is meant to provide opportunities for students to meet their requirements for experiences in leadership and various community service obligations.

We reached out to students through various means, including college publications directed to students' employment, flyers, job postings, networking and word of mouth to the public. As a result, our program has grown tremendously in recent years, and this has been the best year since the program started. We have gone from a few volunteers per year to over 40 this year. The total hours of labor for these volunteers has reached just over 1050 since January of this year, mostly contributed during this last semester. **Alan Harris**, groundskeeper at the Field Station, coordinated the program.

The program has been an amazing help in accomplishing a multitude of tasks at the Field Station. Here is a list of some of the completed projects this year:

- Maintenance of all four trails, which were then blazed by their appropriate colors and marked with new signs for easy navigation. Other trail improvements include clearing of trees, culvert installation, coverage of low areas with

woodchips, and improvement of drainage systems in all of the trails.

- Labeling many common trees, shrubs, and some annuals with their names along the green trail for public education.

- Completion of 4 acres of successional and seasonal mowing.

- Completion of most of our entrance beautification that included about 100' of perimeter drain and 18 yards of crushed stone installed for the parking area, lawn leveled and grass planted, flower beds improved and created around new and existing signage as well as raised beds created with plantings at the trail head.

- Ground leveling and addition of crushed stone to an area behind the garage for grounds equipment.

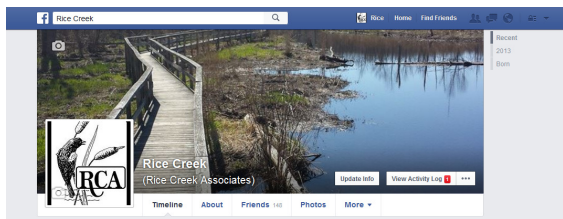
- Creation of a new 10'X35' raised bed for an Iris garden that will be used for research.

To conclude, the staff at Rice Creek Field Station greatly appreciates the efforts of our volunteers. They helped us accomplish our goals to maintain the grounds and trails in their best shape ever. Also, we would like to acknowledge the effort of **Alan Harris** in leading this program on behalf of the Field Station.

-Kamal Mohamed, Director
-Alan Harris, Groundskeeper

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:



Memorable moments at Rice Creek

Local family attends Wildlife Rehabilitation Reflection on October 29

Mike, Wendy and their three teenage children learned three major guidelines regarding wildlife rehabilitation at a recent Rice Creek Reflection: what to do, what not to do, and whom to call. The children especially enjoyed learning examples of animal behavior and that at times animals do need our help.



Photo left to right: Jeff, Makayla, Wendy, Michael, and Kyle Fragale

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.

Help us improve our newsletter!

There are many things that you as members can do to assist us in improving the quality of our newsletter.

- **Share** your experiences of Rice Creek with us.
- **Write** a short review on a nature book that you enjoyed.
- **Send** a digital picture you took at Rice Creek that you think we may enjoy.
- **Suggest** ideas that we may include, or programs that you would like to see offered to our members and public.

Send these and any other ideas to Mike Holy at fordlep@yahoo.com, or call him at 315-622-1774. We look forward to providing information that would inform and entertain our members.

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
 Sheri Morey

Rice Creek Field Station Staff

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

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.

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.

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: