El Niño and Winter Weather in the Northeast

By Derek Scott

Every holiday season, millions in the Northeast begin to brace themselves for the impending winter weather that lurks around the corner. Even though cold temperatures and snowfall are inevitable, the question that always hangs in the air is whether this year is going to be the coldest or the snowiest. Year after year, predictions are made - some are met, and some fall short, but this year could shape up to be one of the wettest winters of late. What’s the reason for this bold prediction? It has to do with a natural phenomenon occurring thousands of miles away…

Most people at some point in their lives have heard of the natural phenomenon known as El Niño. By its most basic description, an El Niño event is when surface ocean temperatures off the western coast of South America (near the equator) raise 0.5°C for at least a 3 month period. These events happen irregularly every 2 to 7 years, and can last upwards of several months.

Under standard conditions (also known as La Niña) easterly winds push warm coastal surface waters along South America east towards Asia. Colder water from deep in the ocean rushes up to replace the warm surface water creating a cyclical motion within the Pacific. Because of the presence of the easterly winds, sea level is actually about a meter higher near Asia than off the coast of South America. When these easterly winds begin to slacken, the surface water follows gravity and moves back towards South America – this marks the beginning of a possible El Niño event. As it does, surface water temperatures spike where cold water is usually rushing upwards from below along the coast. The result is a further decrease in easterly wind patterns which leads to even more warming of surface waters. Eventually, internal wave cycles within the oceans reset the cyclical motion in the Pacific, ending an El Niño event.

By now you’re probably wondering what all of this change in ocean temperatures has to do with our winter weather patterns. Even though El Niño takes place near the equator, the shift in wind
Message from the Executive Director

We are looking forward to an exciting and busy winter season at PEEC. In addition to our normal winter weekend activities, we will be expanding our Bridge the Gap program. I am thrilled to announce that the William Penn Foundation has renewed and expanded PEEC’s grant to run our Bridge the Gap outdoor adventure and stewardship program for two more years. The programs are aimed at encouraging more active use of the trails along and connected to the Delaware River, as well as the river itself. For the next two years, in addition to more free biking, hiking, and paddling programs, we have been able to add free cross country skiing programs and snowshoeing programs along the McDade trail.

The 35 miles of the McDade Trail along the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River provide some of the most spectacular winter scenery in this area. Watching the ice flowing down the river and the wintering eagles soaring overhead, while sipping a steaming mug of hot chocolate at the mid-point of your cross-country ski—what could be better. Cross country skiing and especially snowshoeing are fairly easy to learn and are phenomenal aerobic exercise. My only concern is that I have revealed one of my favorite places to go in the winter, but you are all PEEC people, so I look forward to seeing you out there. Also, your help breaking the trail after a fresh snowstorm is greatly appreciated — I’m not getting any younger.

Jeff Rosalsky
Executive Director

SUGAR SHACK SCRAMBLE
SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2016 • 9:00AM – 12:30PM

CALL PEEC
570.828.2319
$12 PER PERSON

A SWEET ALTERNATIVE TO SNOW
Take an orienteering expedition to the “Two Saps” Sugar Shack. Use a map and compass to reach the sugar shack and then enjoy hot cocoa and pancakes with fresh maple syrup!

For more information:
Contact PEEC, 570-828-2319, pEEC@pEEC.org
538 Emery Rd • Dingmans Ferry, Pennsylvania 18328

Sign up for a 9am or 9:30am start time! Spaces limited!

Call now to make your reservations
peec@peec.org • www.peec.org
With winter coming upon us, there are only a few trees still green around PEEC. A favorite is the white pine tree, *Pinus strobus*. The white pine tree goes by several different names – sometimes named the eastern white pine tree and the soft white pine tree. In the United Kingdom it is known as the Weymouth Pine tree, as it was brought to England by George Weymouth in 1620.

The white pine tree has several very distinct features. The needles of the white pine tree are long and very soft-looking as compared with many conifer trees. They are usually arranged in fascicles with five needles in each. Fascicles are bundles of needles that attach to the branch of the tree. The needles last for approximately 18 months—they are produced by the tree in springtime and last until the following fall, when they will turn a yellowish-brown and fall off. The tallest white pine tree is 186 feet tall and located in North Carolina.

White pine trees have a variety of uses in our modern society. The lumber is used for construction, furniture, coffins, matches and wood paneling. White pine trees are often sold as ornamental and landscape plants. White pine trees are also commonly used as Christmas trees. Depending on where you are, it may seem like there are white pine trees all around. In fact, only one percent of white pine trees remain from before European settlement of the Northeast, at which time many old-growth forests were clear-cut for farming and lumber.

White pine trees are coniferous trees, meaning they bear cones. The cones of a white pine tree are between four and eight inches long. The seeds of white pine trees are hidden in the pinecones. The seeds are food for squirrels, chipmunks, voles, white tailed deer, and a variety of birds. In the winter, black-capped chickadees, pine warblers, yellow belly sapsuckers and nuthatches can all be seen enjoying white pine seeds and grubs found on the tree bark.

The white pine tree is historically an important tree to the Iroquois Nation. The Iroquois Nation called the white pine tree the “Tree of Peace”. To seal a peace agreement, both sides of a disagreement would bury their weapons under the roots of a white pine tree. The five Iroquois Nations are represented by the five needles of the white pine tree, all stemming from a common bundle.

In colonial times, tall, straight white pine trees with high quality wood were claimed as property of the British Royal Navy. They were branded with the “broad arrow,” which was the royal emblem of the Crown of England at the time. The Navy used these tall, straight pines for the masts of their ships.

White pine needles contain a lot of vitamin C—five times more vitamin C than lemons! White pine tea was often used as a preventative for scurvy. Next time you are at PEEC, check out some of the large white pines we have around – one can be found right by the bench at the beginning of Fossil Trail and Tumbling Waters (trail entrance by the lodges).
Tis the season of consumer consumption that not only drains our wallets, but also our planet’s natural resources. But hark the angels sing, it doesn’t have to sting.

Here are a few pointers to reducing your impact on the planet:

- Go ahead and buy that artificial tree. That’s right I said it. A third party study in 2010 found that artificial trees, when used for 10-15+ years, are only slightly more of an impact than real trees. Finished with the artificial tree? See if family or friends would like it. It’s a nice feeling to step back after you’ve decorated your Grandmother’s tree and think back to when you decorated it with her some thirty years before. Or you can cut off the branches and make wreathes, garland, table centerpieces and mantle decorations. Also a good number of artificial trees can be recycled as long as they are not “pre-lit”.

- Buying real trees has benefits too. You’re supporting local farmers and, most likely, you are also supporting the small business that may be reselling those trees. This lessens the fuel consumption from buying an artificial tree from overseas, as well as the air pollution associated with shipping. Many birds and wildlife take refuge in the growing trees during the year. Young, fast-growing trees, like Christmas trees, release more oxygen than mature forest trees. After you are finished with your holiday, you can put the tree upright in a snow bank for the wildlife to use for shelter and even decorate it for the birds using ‘pine cone’ feeders. Many communities have Christmas tree mulch days where, in turn, the town may allow its residents access to the mulch to reuse in their gardens.

- Reduce your light display size and switch to LED lights as your incandescent strings die. Incandescent lights can use as much as 7 watts while LEDs use .04 watts. Make use of electronic recycling days or look for Home Depot’s Christmas Light Trade-in Event which occurred this year from Nov 5th-15th, 2015. Lowe’s also accepts light strings for recycling, as well as charity foundations like www.lightsforlifeinc.com

- Use the past months of your wall calendar to wrap gifts. Also consider wrapping gifts in a useful household cloth that is part of the gift such as a napkin, tablecloth, or bandana. Use natural fibers and objects as ribbons such as jute, hemp, raffia and use pine cones as adornment.

- Make your own Christmas card by reusing or repurposing paper and paperboard products from packaging materials like shoeboxes or magazines.

- Give less stuff. Instead give things that have purpose and meaning. Handmade gifts show the time, care, commitment, thoughtfulness and financial giving that goes into the effort. Of course it comes with the risk of unwittingly becoming Aunt Claire who gives Ralphie the bunny union suit in ‘A Christmas Story.’ But for the receiver, it may become his or her favorite gift of the season and may be cherished for years to come.

Battery Solutions

In November 2013, PEEC learned about Battery Solutions, a Michigan-based company that uses state of the art technology to reclaim materials from dry cell batteries (AAA, AA, D, 9-volt, etc.). Since that time, PEEC has had a box on the front counter where employees and visitors can deposit used batteries. After sending our large box of batteries to Battery Solutions, we received the Confirmation of Reclamation below.

Instead of being tossed in the trash to corrode in landfills, over 36 pounds of batteries are now in the process of being recycled. Battery Recycle Kits, in various sizes, are available at http://www.batteryrecycling.com/newiRecycle+kits.
Ticket to Ride

By Sheri Bone

This fall, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA) and PEEC again partnered to execute the latest round of the “Ticket to Ride” grant program awarded by the National Park Foundation (NPF). Charged with giving the local program a name that fits the program, “Over the River and Through the Woods!” was chosen.

Six schools representing four area school districts sent more than 500 fourth graders to PEEC for a day. The students learned about Pocono animals and habitats when they took a tour of the EcoZone, PEEC’s Exploration and Discovery room. Then, armed with clipboards and pencils, they hiked a trail, looking for similar things in the woods to what they saw in the EcoZone.

In the woods, they investigated bear scratches on trees, looked for a variety of nests, and discovered actual beaver chews. Around the ponds, fish and other aquatic animals were observed. They learned that, during summer days, bats may sleep under the bark of some of the hickory trees. Before the students came to PEEC, National Park Service (NPS) and PEEC staff members visited them at their schools. It was then that the students learned the long name of the park located in their backyard and they were introduced to why national parks were created and were shown a large map of the park. They were also taught the “Over the River and Through the Woods” song, with the lyrics changed to fit the program.

In early winter, a post-trip visit to the schools by NPS and PEEC staff will occur. At that time, a review ‘quiz’ will be administered, and information will be distributed about what families can do in the DWGNRA, including activities at PEEC. “Pocono Pony” pamphlets will be given to each student so their families can plan summer weekend activities using this free shuttle. And, they will review the song that described their earlier visit:

“Over the river and through the woods – discovering the park –
There’s so much to do for me and you from morning until dark!
Over the river and through the woods, we’ll go to the EcoZone!
We’ll take a nice hike in the outdoors we like, ’til the buses take us home!”
The Mystery of the Rogue Gourd

By Andrea Ace

It was a chilly Thursday morning in mid-October when I walked into PEEC’s hoop house to put an apple core into the composter. In one of the raised garden beds, I noticed an anomalous gourd that looked like the love child between an acorn squash and a butternut squash – it was beige, oblong, and had deep ridges running lengthwise. Moving closer, I noticed “normal” acorn squash were also peeking out from a different vine. The longer I looked at the garden bed, the more of these squash I saw growing among the watermelon.

This beige squash was unlike anything I had seen in a grocery store or farmer’s market. I will be the first to admit that my gardening skills and knowledge are dismal, so I turned to other sources to help answer the question of the mystery squash.

Derek, PEEC’s Public Program Manager, maintains PEEC’s hoop house and coordinates most of the gardening that happens there. I asked him about the mystery squash, and he told me that he had only planted watermelons and cantaloupes in the raised beds, so the presence of squash in any variety, much less two kinds, was truly a mystery.

We picked one of these mystery squash from the vine to cut in half and see if that could give us any clues. The inside looked and smelled like pumpkin, but then again, most uncooked squash looks and smells like pumpkin to me. The dark green acorn squash growing simultaneously was on a separate vine from the beige squash, and there were no young squash of either kind that looked like anything other than a smaller version of itself.

We gathered all the factors that may have contributed to the appearance of this slightly obscure squash.

First theory: Inside the hoop house is a compost tumbler that decomposes organic matter, mostly a combination of garden waste and coffee grounds from the main building. The compost tumbler has been in the hoop house for a little over a year. Could a few rogue squash seeds have found their way out of the composter and into the soil of the corner garden bed in the hoop house? We hadn’t used any soil from the composter yet, so I wasn’t convinced on this logic.

Second theory: Last fall, staff members placed a few pumpkins outside the hoop house, where they festively sat and eventually decomposed without any human interference. This year we discovered pumpkin vines growing in front of our hoop house. These accidental pumpkins have been more productive than the intentional pumpkin plants one of our staff member attempts to grow every year. Could the pumpkins have somehow pollinated with the acorn squash to produce the oblong squash before us? This theory seemed possible – I decided to look into it further.

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Third theory: Could these squash have been from a few rogue seeds from a melon packet? This seemed like the most likely option. Later on, Derek discovered that the solution was not too far off from this theory. The seed packets for melons and squash were stored near one another and may have gotten a bit mixed up in their communal seed tin.

To solve the mystery of what kind of squash we were looking at, I conferred with my friend Google, who always seems to have the answers. A few minutes later I had pinned my mystery squash: Fordhook acorn squash. Hello, gourd-geous!

The Fordhook acorn squash was first introduced in 1890 by W. Atlee Burpee at Fordhook Farm in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Fordhook Farm was the first of several farms Burpee ran across the United States to test experimental varieties of vegetables, flowers, and seeds. Several other unique varieties of vegetables were developed at Fordhook and bear its name. Fordhook lima beans grow in bushes instead of in a vine. The Fordhook hybrid tomato was developed during WWII as a high-yield vegetable to grow in victory gardens but was soon overshadowed by the Burpee Big Boy tomato, which needed little fertilizer and was tolerant to disease. Fordhook Farm was also the birthplace of the vegetable we now recognize as iceberg lettuce, originally called crisphead lettuce. Because of his creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, WA Burpee perfected his seed game and made Burpee Seeds a well-known company that is still in existence today.

I proclaimed my decision to keep some seeds and replant them for next year. Lea, PEEC Program Coordinator, whose green thumb is evident in her resplendent and prolific vegetable garden, told me that the next generation of squash might not be true to the variety because it was grown next to a different variety of acorn squash. Because acorn squash and Fordhook acorn squash are so genetically similar, if the flowering plants were right next to one another (they were), the resulting plants would have combined DNA from pollination. Thanks, bees!

I’m still going to plant the Fordhook acorn squash seeds, in the spirit of WA Burpee himself. The seeds in this brave new squash will have traits from both squash parents and I can’t wait to see what they turn out like. And in case you remembered the watermelon that was growing side by side with the squash, I did look into it and am fairly sure their genetics are separate enough that no unholy melon-squash offspring will be created. The pumpkin vines growing outside the hoop house were hopefully far enough away from the squash growing inside the hoop house to not affect the next generation of seeds. Only time will tell!

The best part about growing squash is cooking and eating it! Squash is a versatile vegetable and great comfort food on a cold day. Many people incorporate squash into soups and casseroles, but I prefer to bake them in the oven and add flavorings or fillings.
El Niño and Winter Weather in the Northeast

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patterns has global impacts. Warmer waters in the middle of the Pacific cause the Jetstream (the wind most associated with our weather patterns here in the US) to move further north on the west coast and plummet south on the east coast. This stark change from the usual movement of the Jetstream results in warmer weather patterns for places like California and Oregon, and cooler weather for states like Virginia and the Carolinas. Traditionally, these events usually bring increased precipitation to most southern states during the winter months.

When you get to the Northeast though, things start to get a little less straightforward. Even though the states to the south of us receive cooler temperatures, places like New York and Pennsylvania can actually see milder winter temperatures during El Niño years. If there’s a strong enough event, parts of the Northeast can also see the increased precipitation that our southern states see. The 1998 ice storm that wreaked havoc on the Northeast was actually partly to blame due to that year’s El Niño. With this year’s event forecast to be one of the strongest on record, it’s safe to say we could be looking at quite a bit of moisture. Combine this with the fact that milder temperatures from last year’s winter would be in the upper 20s, and you’ve got a perfect recipe for a whole lot of snowfall.

Even with all the predictions about this year’s El Niño, we may not see the wet winter that people seem to be anticipating. While these events usually have similar results each time they occur, scientists are still trying to figure out why exactly El Niño occurs and what impacts it has. By now we’ve been able to figure out how things usually shape up but that doesn’t mean we truly know what’s in store for this winter, especially in an area that seems to get varied impacts during El Niño years. So if you’re the type of person who loves winter, snowfall looks promising for this year; if you’re not, just cross your fingers that we only see that milder weather instead.

Who Knew… Caribou

By Mariann Oswald

When I started out looking for a story for the winter newsletter, my first thought was “winter myths and legends” in our locale. I looked up Pennsylvania under this category and found that “the Jersey Devil” and Sasquatch never roamed our fertile lands. However, reindeer did. Well, to be more precise, caribou, but they are the same animal, literally. And, we all know there are plenty of myths and legends about reindeer. Rudolph, for instance, joined Santa’s team in 1939, a whopping 116 years after Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, and Blitzen—little whipper snapper.

I have heard that there is controversy over the gender identity of the original eight reindeer. It is a fact that male reindeer shed their antlers in the winter and females do not. It is also a fact that Christmas in the Northern Hemisphere takes place during the winter. BUT… and don’t tell the reindeer this… castrated males do not shed their antlers. Ah ha! So now what’s the answer?

Good news for reindeer lovers: the species thrives in Finland and Norway, Siberia, Greenland, Alaska, Scotland, and Canada. They are NOT endangered, except possibly south of the equator. They seem to stick to the north and leave the south to the penguins.

More fun facts, not myths:

• Female reindeer are smaller than males, 220 pounds average vs. 260 (or 700 if you believe some historians). They stand about four feet high at the shoulder. Their antlers are three feet tall!

• Although usually quiet, reindeer do occasionally grunt, especially to their offspring.

• Reindeer have very short tails; they don’t have much use for swatting flies.

• In the winter, a reindeer’s hair turns a light color, because winter hair is hollow for insulation. In the summer, it is dark on top and lighter underneath.

• Reindeer migrate hundreds of miles to find food supplies of lichen and plants, although the few who hang with Rudolph snack on an occasional cookie.

• Reindeer have a great sense of smell. Good for finding lichen under the snow, and cookies.

• Reindeer are great swimmers, like Mark Spitz and Johnny Weissmuller. Can you imagine? Well, not really, but they are great long distance swimmers. They can swim about five miles per hour.

• Reindeer have big feet, like snowshoes on skinny legs. Big feet with tendons that click as they walk. Needless to say, they don’t sneak very well. They do run up to 50 miles per hour, though. And, interestingly enough, reindeer can change the temperature in their skinny legs to near freezing levels to keep their core body heat even.

• Reindeer’s hair grows long and thick in the winter to keep them warm. Take heed from the reindeer; cover up head to toe to keep warm.

• Reindeer eyes change from gold to blue in the winter. Really! It helps them see in near darkness, according to the Proceedings of the Royal Society B. The University College London recently discovered that reindeer are the only known mammals that can see ultraviolet light.

So, as the winter solstice approaches and the sun seems to shine less and less, the cold permeates every room and the dark magically comes to life in bright colors and fanciful designs, enjoy reindeer stories (some as old as 3000 years!) and look up. Let me know if you see any reindeer flying.

“Why We Do What We Do”

The class trip to PEEC was awesome! It was very enjoyable. I liked learning about eagle nests, the data project, fossils from prehistoric animals, bears, beaver dams, bats, caves, and much, much more.

My favorite part was the Ecos Zone. I love the bat cave and build-a-bear. The lady wasn’t very nice because I’ve been on sunny lakes and it was still cold.

Thank you for the amazing trip.

The class trip to PEEC was amazing. I learned that Pennsylvania was called what it was today because it was dark and spooky. Thank you for the best time ever.

The class trip to PEEC was fantastic. I learned that you can use water to plant stuff. My favorite part was the hike. Thank you for the trip there.

The class trip to PEEC was very interesting. Sometimes I learned that bears wash their tails in the water when there’s danger.

My favorite part was the bat cave because it was really dark and the way in and out was really long. Thank you for letting us go on a hike on the top.

The class trip was fun. I learned that a poisonous and not poisonous smoke. My favorite part was the hike. I do not know how the bear stuck together but it was really nice. Thank you for being our guide.

This class trip to PEEC was amazing. I loved the hike and seeing the dam. It looked like the bears took moth to build it. I loved so much from you. Thank you for taking all around PEEC. I hope you like better.
Special Donations to PEEC

As a 501(c)(3) organization, PEEC depends on the support of friends & members. Special donations to PEEC can be made In Memory of or In Honor of a person or event. During 2015, PEEC received the following special donations:

In Memory of Lori Dalton
Heather L. Rosborough Campershio Fund
In Memory of Michael Mann / Scouting Programs
In Honor of Flo Mauro’s Retirement / Summer Camp
In Memory of Glenn Simpson

If you are interested in making a donation to PEEC made In Memory of or In Honor of, please include a note with your donation or call 570-828-2319 with any questions.

It is with much sadness that we share with you news that our coworker and friend, Glenn Simpson, passed away unexpectedly at home earlier this fall. In memorial, we are planning to plant a tree, add a memorial bench to one of Glenn’s favorite trails, and add a BMX bike to our EcoZone bike generator display. The bench and tree memorial is tentatively planned for the next PEEC Alumni weekend in September 2016.

If anyone would like to contribute to the Glenn Simpson Memorial Fund, please include a note with your donation.
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Unless otherwise indicated.

TO REGISTER:
Call PEEC at 570-828-2319

JANUARY

Cross Country Skiing
Every Saturday (10am-12pm) and
Sunday (1pm-3pm)
(EXCEPT 9th & 10th)
$20 adult / $10 child
Free – Bridge the Gap: McDade Trail
(9am-12pm): 2nd, 16th, and 30th
Enjoy the winter woods with beginner ski
lessons. Learn the basics of cross country skiing
and practice on an old logging road loop. You
decide how many loops to ski. McDade Trail
dates funding provided by the William Penn
Foundation. Skis, poles & boots provided -
register w/shoe size to guarantee a spot.

Christmas Bird Count
Sunday, January 3 - 8am start
Cost: Free
It’s the National Audubon Society’s 116th annual
Christmas Bird Count! The longest running
Citizen Science survey in the world, the Christmas
Bird Count provides critical data on population
trends. You can register for the area around your
house and participate from the comfort of your
living room, or you can venture out into a different
part of the count circle. If you’re a beginner, we’ll
pair you up with a more experienced birder. Pre-
registration is required for this event.

Ecozone Discovery Room!
Saturday, January 2 - 10am-12pm
Cost: $5
Learn how different plants and animals survive the
winter. Join us on a hike and experience PEEC in
the wintertime. All ages welcome.

Intro to Snowshoeing
Every Saturday (1pm-3pm)
and Sunday (10am-12pm)
(EXCEPT 9th & 10th)
Cost: $10
Learn the basics of snow shoes and enjoy a
winter stomp through the woods. No experience
necessary – we provide the equipment and teach
you everything you need to know. Register early to
guarantee a spot.

Eagle Watch
Saturday, February 6
9am-3pm
Cost: $20
Join us on a trip north in search of eagles and
other rare wintering
birds such as ravens.
Visit the Mongaup Reservoir, the Delaware
River, and the Eagle
Institute to look for
winter residents and nesting pairs. Bring a lunch, camera, and warm clothes.
Call to reserve a seat in van.

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**FEBRUARY**

“Winter Wonderland” Family Nature Getaway Weekend
President’s Day weekend: February 12-15
Adults $225 / 25% off ages 7-10
50% off ages 4-6 / free under 3
Bring your friends and family to experience PEEC in the wintertime. Cross country skiing, animal tracking, nature hikes, crafts, campfire and more! Price includes three nights of lodging and meals from Friday dinner to Monday lunch. Join us for a wonderful winter weekend! Commuter and day rates available – call for details.

Little Eco Explorers: Eagles
Saturday, February 20 - 1-3pm
Cost: $5 per child
A fun hands-on program for young children! Join us for a story, craft, and activity focusing on a particular critter. Call for details.

Ecozone Discovery Room!
Saturday, March 5 - 1-4pm
Cost: $2 per person
Climb into a bald eagle’s nest, crawl into a bat cave, and dig in a fossil pit! Explore this indoor discovery room and enjoy hands-on exhibits on natural history, sustainability and the local environment. No registration required.

**MARCH**

Sugar Shack Scramble
Saturday, March 5
9am-12:30pm
Cost: $12
Join us for a hike through the woods out to the “Two Saps” Sugar Shack and enjoy hot cocoa and pancakes with fresh maple syrup! Sign up in advance for a 9am or 9:30am start time. Spaces limited!

Ecozone Discovery Room!
Saturday, March 5 - 1-4pm
Cost: $2 per person
Climb into a bald eagle’s nest, crawl into a bat cave, and dig in a fossil pit! Explore this indoor discovery room and enjoy hands-on exhibits on natural history, sustainability and the local environment. No registration required.

Food for Singles
Sunday, March 6 - 1-3pm
Cost: Free
Enjoy a guided hike on a PEEC trail. This program is all about exploring nature and meeting new people.

“Spring Cleaning” Volunteer Day
Saturday, March 12
10am-12pm
Cost: Free
Come lend a hand with some springtime projects around our campus. Call for details. Pre-registration required.

Fire Building
Saturday, March 26 - 10am-12pm
Cost: $5
Learn some primitive and modern fire making skills. Try your hand at a flint & steel fire and more! Ages 10+ please.

The “Easy Does It” Hike
Saturday, March 26 – 1:00-3:00pm
Cost: Free
Enjoy a nice leisurely walk through the woods. Join us for easy hikes, slow paces and interpretive natural history.