

Wading through the Wappinger Creek

By **ARVOLYN HILL**
Staff Reporter

MILLBROOK — Thursday, July 7, the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (CCEDC) brought an environmentally-friendly and cost-free event to the public. In celebration of Dutchess County Watershed Awareness Month, the two entities hosted a celebratory walk for Wappinger Creek Week.

People of all ages gathered at the Cary Institute's Gifford House for a hike along the Wappinger Creek Trail. Participants hiked down to the Wappinger Creek with boots on their feet and nets in their hands, led by volunteers from the Cornell Cooperative.

The participants then sampled macro-invertebrates in the river. Jen Rubbo, volunteer and counselor at the Cary's Ecology Day Camp, led the walk and gave a brief lecture about macro-invertebrates.

Rubbo said that macro-invertebrates are visible creatures without backbones. There are a variety of macro-invertebrates in the river, including different types of insects yet to become fully grown, said Rubbo.

CCEDC volunteers provided charts of the different types of macro-invertebrates that can be found and participants were able to identify them in petri dishes. Those who were at the hike got down and dirty, even wading through the river to catch macro-invertebrates before identifying them.

"I got an email about the event and the kids were excited to come," said Darlene Riemer, an Amenia resident who participated in the event. "They have a lot of great events here and it helps the kids be closer to nature, which is really nice."

For more information on events and activities in honor of Dutchess County Watershed Awareness Month, go to www.dutchesswam.com.



PHOTOS BY ARVOLYN HILL

There was a good turnout for the Ecology Day Camp's hike along the Wappinger Creek. Those who attended learned about macro-invertebrates from volunteer and counselor Jen Rubbo.