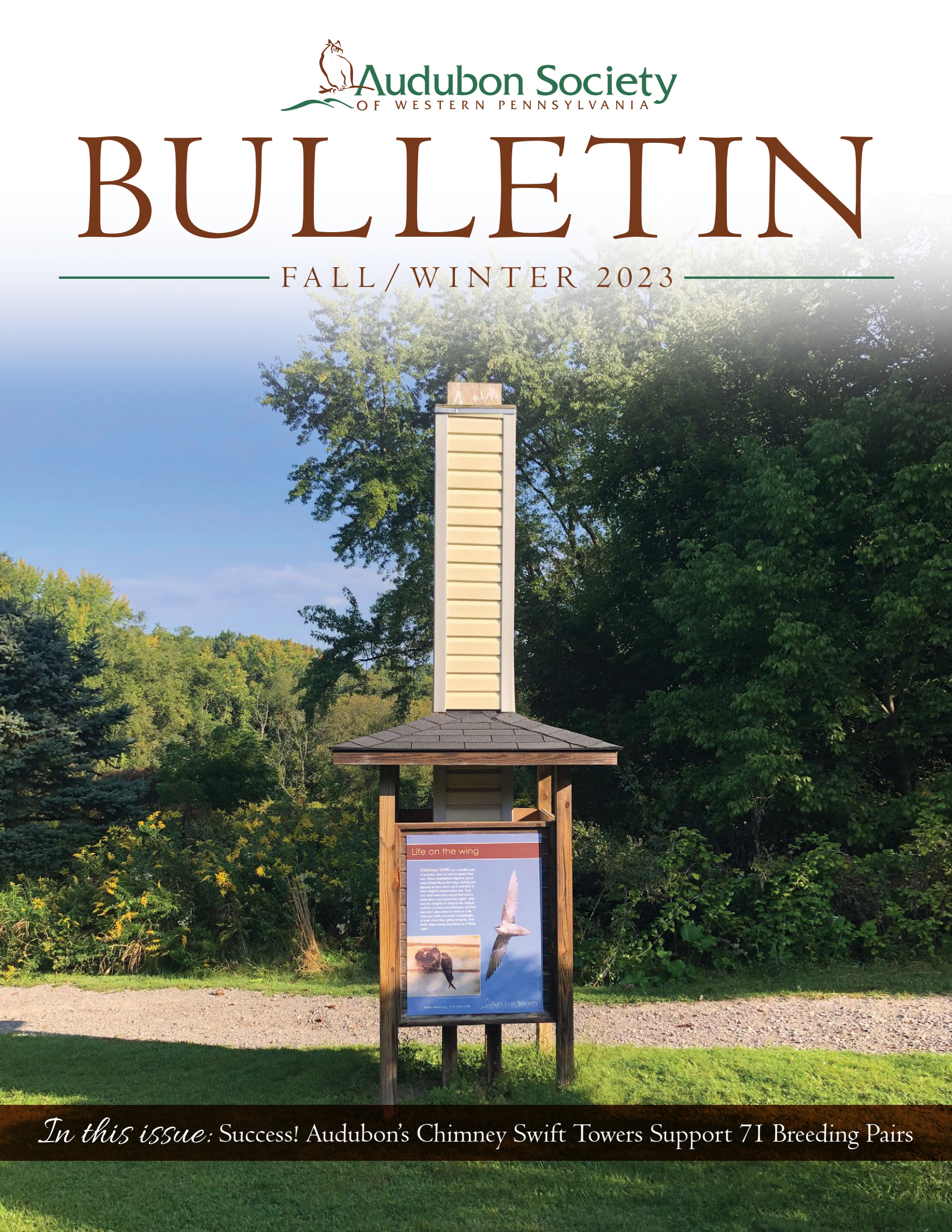


# BULLETIN

FALL / WINTER 2023



*In this issue:* Success! Audubon's Chimney Swift Towers Support 71 Breeding Pairs

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Brian Shema, *Operations Director*  
Rachel Handel, *Communications Director*  
Chris Kubiak, *Education Director*  
Sarah Koenig, *Conservation Director*  
Betsy Monroe, *Finance & Administration Director*  
Karen Stein, *Butler Centers Director*

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Nick Stahlman, *Backyard Habitat Coordinator*  
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# BULLETIN

FALL / WINTER 2023

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Audubon's commitment to conservation includes building and monitoring Chimney Swift towers to support breeding of this acrobatic species.



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# This Audubon View

If you've visited Beechwood in the past four decades or so, received a membership card or renewal letter from us, or ever called us on the phone on the phone, there's a good chance that you have interacted with Elizabeth "Betsey" Owens. This month, after over 40 years of service, Betsey has announced she will be retiring.

Betsey was one of the first people I met when I started at ASWP almost 20 years ago. She was seated in the administrative office at a desk where I would see her almost every Tuesday and Thursday morning, week after week, ever since.

She was instrumental in my orientation, bringing me up to speed on things going on around the organization, helping me to know who our members and supporters were, and filling me in on the history of Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve—so much of which she was a part of. I can't count the number of times I've gone to her and asked, "What do you know about this member?" She would know who they were, where they lived (and used to live 2 homes ago!), and who they were related to.

One thing I tried to count was how many envelopes she stuffed for us. Between renewal letters, membership cards, and donation acknowledgments, hundreds a month over 40 years, it easily topped a quarter million, and could realistically be twice that amount. In addition to her office work, Betsey was a buyer for our Nature Store in its early years, has served on the ASWP Board of Directors, and is currently a Director Emeritus. Throughout it all, she has been a tireless advocate for Beechwood and a good friend to me.

In honor of her long-time service to ASWP, the Board of Directors is dedicating the entryway to the farmhouse at Beechwood as the Betsey Owens Welcome Gateway so that people will continue to be greeted by her even when she is not here.

Thank you, Betsey,

—Jim



## OUR RESERVES, NATIVE PLANT NURSERY, AND NATURE STORES

**BEECHWOOD FARMS NATURE RESERVE**  
614 Dorseyville Road in Fox Chapel, Pittsburgh, PA 15238  
*Audubon Nature Store & Native Plant Nursery / Dogs not permitted on trails*

**BUFFALO CREEK NATURE PARK**  
154 Monroe Road, Sarver, PA 16055  
*Audubon Nature Store / Dogs on leash are welcome*

**SUCCOP NATURE PARK**  
185 W. Airport Road in Penn Township, Butler, PA 16002  
*Audubon Nature Store / Dogs on leash are welcome*

**TODD NATURE RESERVE**  
367 Kepple Road, Sarver, PA 16055  
*No restrooms or other facilities / Dogs not permitted on trails*

**ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION:** For accessibility needs or questions about any of our sites, please contact Brian Shema at (412) 963-6100 or at [bshema@aswp.org](mailto:bshema@aswp.org). For accessibility needs or questions about any of our programs, please contact Chris Kubiak at (412) 963-6100 or [ckubiak@aswp.org](mailto:ckubiak@aswp.org). All other questions regarding accessibility or inclusion can be directed to Jim Bonner at (412) 963-6100 or [jbonner@aswp.org](mailto:jbonner@aswp.org).



*Dark-eyed  
Junco*

# Success!

## AUDUBON'S CHIMNEY SWIFT TOWERS SUPPORT 71 BREEDING PAIRS

You've heard the tales—birds described as “flying cigars” that can dive into chimneys alongside hundreds of their friends, creating the illusion of reverse smoke. These aerial acrobats, Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*), spend nearly their entire lives in the air. Their long claws don't allow them to land and perch like other birds. Instead, they cling to the walls of chimneys and vertical surfaces.

But their numbers are in decline. According to the North American Breeding Bird Survey, Chimney Swift populations have gone down by 72% over the past 50 years.

A major reason for this decline? People are putting caps on their chimneys. These nimble birds nest in chimneys both large and small—including single-family dwellings. Changes in chimney design over the years have resulted in chimneys being capped and rendered inaccessible to the birds. New furnaces no longer use traditional chimneys for venting. This means that fewer chimneys are available to Chimney Swifts, who require a vertical surface to cling to and build a nest. There's also been a significant decline in their only food source—aerial insects.

### DID YOU KNOW?

*ASWP has created the largest concentration of “purpose-built Chimney Swift habitats” on the continent? Learn about our conservation work by visiting [aswp.org](http://aswp.org).*

Because Chimney Swifts are labeled as a “Yellow Watch List” species (conservation underway to prevent decline and increase species numbers), ASWP has taken the lead regionally in creating breeding towers for the birds. These structures—I46 of them—have made a huge impact in supporting local Chimney Swifts. During the 2023 breeding season, 71 of the towers had birds nesting in them.



Many other towers had birds nearby—meaning that they could use the location in subsequent years. The towers are used by only one pair of birds who lay 3–5 eggs per season.

Audubon's Chimney Swift towers are spread out across our region, from Millvale to Deer Lakes and White Oak to Cabot. The towers are monitored by staff and by volunteers who are committed to helping collect data on this important and acrobatic species. Report your Chimney Swift sightings at [aswp.org](http://aswp.org).

After a summer spent consuming air-borne insects like flies, wasps, and beetles, Chimney Swifts prepare for a migration to the upper Amazon—Peru, Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador. Their wintering grounds were only discovered in 1944, when bands from birds that had been previously banded in North America were recovered in Peru. An indigenous Peruvian had been wearing the bands as a necklace!

It's during migration that most people notice the birds when large numbers of them roost together in chimneys at dusk. The birds' chattering signals that it's almost time for the dive into an open chimney—they then plunge downward in the familiar and awe-inspiring reverse-smoke formation.

Wondering how you can support these amazing birds? Consider allowing them to “rent” your chimney from you during the summer months. Leave your chimney cap off or construct a Chimney Swift tower in your yard. You can also garden with native plants and reduce or eliminate insecticide use. While Chimney Swifts may not pay their rent in dollars, you can't put a price on helping the species to build back its numbers.

*Birds Diving into Chimney Photo Credit: Ben Cvengros / Audubon Photography Awards*

## CHIMNEY SWIFT FAST FACTS

Prior to European settlement, Chimney Swifts used caves, cliff faces, and hollow trees to roost and nest. The introduction of masonry chimneys to buildings, with their rough hollow surfaces proved to be a wonderful replacement habitat as those hollow trees were cut down. It also provided them with the name we now use for the birds.

Chimney Swifts are among the most aerial of birds, flying almost constantly except when roosting overnight and nesting.

Chimney Swifts never sit on perches like most birds. Instead they cling to the walls of chimneys and other vertical surfaces.

Swifts even bathe in flight: they glide down to the water, smack the surface with their bodies, and then bounce up and shake the water from their plumage as they fly away.

Large numbers of Chimney Swifts roost together in a single chimney during the nonbreeding season. There's warmth in numbers: during cold nights, the temperature inside a chimney roost can be 70°F warmer than outside.

Unmated swifts continue roosting together in the summer, sometimes in large groups.

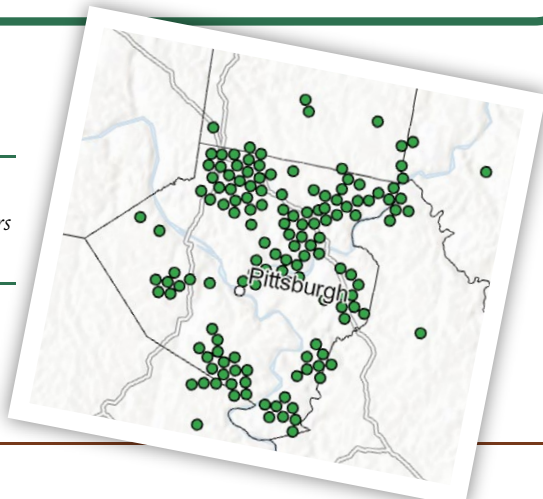
The Chimney Swift uses glue-like saliva from a gland under its tongue to cement its nest to the chimney wall or rock face. The young outgrow the nest after about two weeks and have to cling to the nearby wall, in many cases even before their eyes are open.

The oldest recorded Chimney Swift was a male, and at least 14 years old when he was recaptured and released during banding operations in Ohio in 1970.

He was banded in the same state in 1957.

*Source: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; All About Birds Website*

Locations of  
Chimney Swift Towers  
Across our Region



# Memorials AND Honors

## Memorials

Maxine Bruhns

Maryann Sivak

George Creighton

Michelle Creighton Salopek

Joyce Dombroski

Phyllis Bobeck

Nicole Hill

Melanie Whittington

Carly Ann George Voigt

Regina George

Linda A. Huhn

Judy Matijevich

Phyllis Mae Jennings

Joyce Markosky

Linda M. Kuehn

Margaret Addis

Cynde Degelman

John Heck

John Hostert

Grier Kuehn

Jeff Madden

Amy Marchlen

Jennifer Puleo

Joseph Sanko

Carol Smith

Marlene Spine

Daria Svaline

Philomena Scanga

Kristine Cassano

Susan Sphar

Frederick K. Beard

Philip Davidson

Jean Harbeck

R. John Wean

Deborah Sudran

Nancy Hagen-Liddle

## Honors

Charles Bowen

Sarah Bowen

Steven Hember

Jackelyn Jones

Chris Kubiak

Edwin F. Scheetz

Corey Nagle

Glenn Nagle

Madeline Quigley

Ashley Olinger

Kirsten Russitano

Kevin Weir

Charles & Chelsea  
Succop

Augustus E. Succop

Tom & Jo Ann Succop

James E. Mauch

Judy Trupin

Felicia Seidel



# Fall/Winter

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

REGISTER FOR PROGRAMS ONLINE AT [ASWP.ORG](http://ASWP.ORG)  
OR BY CALLING (412) 963-6100.



Events take place at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve (BFNR), Succop Nature Park (SNP), Todd Nature Reserve (TNR), Buffalo Creek Nature Park (BCNP), or online via Zoom.

Select programs take place at Renziehausen (Renzie) Park, Eden Park Boulevard off of Walnut Street, McKeesport, PA 15132; Winfield Community Park, 194 Brose Road, Cabot, PA 16023; and Freeport Community Park, 115 Community Park Road, Freeport, PA 16229.

Register for programs online at [aswp.org](http://aswp.org) or call (412) 963-6100.

### SOME EVENTS WE JUST CAN'T PLAN IN ADVANCE!

If you're interested in getting on a list to be notified about pop-up events, please let us know by contacting us: [register@aswp.org](mailto:register@aswp.org).

 AudubonWesternPA  AudubonWesternPA

## Special Events

### CREATURES OF THE NIGHT FAMILY-FRIENDLY HALLOWEEN PROGRAM

*Weekends: October 13, 14, 20, 21 / BFNR*

*Friday, October 20 / BCNP*

*Saturday, October 28 / SNP*

*(All events have a 6:30, 7, or 7:30 pm start time.)*

Delight in our annual autumn experience as you encounter larger-than-life costumed nocturnal creatures and get some treats, too. Hear stories from a Great Horned Owl, observe the acrobatics of the Flying Squirrel, and go batty with Little Brown Bat. Come in costume for twice the fun. This event takes place outdoors, even if it's raining. Registration required. \$6 member; \$10 nonmember; under 2 is free.

### CROSS POLLINATION: CERTIFIED BACKYARD HABITAT SHOW AND TELL

*Thursday, October 12, 6–8pm / BFNR*

It's an opportunity to show off Certified Backyard Habitats! Everyone is invited to see photos of CBH gardens during an evening of camaraderie, skill-sharing, and show and tell. ASWP's Certified Backyard Habitat program has over 1,000 participants and has created over 1,300 acres of Certified Habitat! Light refreshments will be provided. Registration is required so that we can plan accordingly. Free.

### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Join one of our ASWP Christmas Bird Counts! For a list of local count leaders and to learn about other regional counts, please visit [aswp.org](http://aswp.org).

*Buffalo Creek Valley (includes Todd Nature Reserve and Buffalo Creek Nature Park):* December 16

*Mon Valley:* December 17

*Pittsburgh (includes Beechwood):* December 30

*South Butler (includes Succop Nature Park):* December 31

## Birding & Nature Hikes

### BIRDS & MORE NATURALIST-LED MORNING WALKS

These free walks begin at 9am. Registration is required.

#### Year-Round Walks

*BFNR:* Weekly; every Sunday and Wednesday

*BCNP:* Weekly; every Tuesday

*SNP:* Weekly; every Thursday

*Renzie Park\*, McKeesport:* First Friday of every month

#### Through November Walks

*TNR:* Weekly; every Friday; ends 11/17

*Winfield Community Park\*\*:* First Wednesday of every month; ends 11/1

*Freeport Community Park\*\*:* Last Wednesday of every month; ends 11/29

### HARRISON HILLS BIRD WALK

*Sunday, October 1, 8am–12pm / Harrison Hills Park*

Join us at Harrison Hills Park, one of the region's most popular places to bird. We will meet in the parking lot at the Environmental Learning Center and bird some of the surrounding trails. Email Chris Kubiak at [ckubiak@aswp.org](mailto:ckubiak@aswp.org) for more details. \$6 member; \$10 nonmember.

### WEDNESDAY WATERSHED WALKS

Join us for free walks to learn about the bugs, birds, and plants found at your local parks. Binoculars will be provided. Registration is requested. Free. All walks are from 9–10am. First Wednesdays of the month at Winfield Community Park (October 4, November 1, December 6, and January 3). Meet at the pavilion by the parking lot. Last Wednesday of the month at Freeport Community Park (October 25, November 29, January 31). Meet at the parking lot at Laube Hall.

## FALL FUNGI FORAY

Saturday, October 14, 10am–12pm / BFNR

Saturday, October 21, 10am–12pm / TNR

Sunday October 21, 2–4pm / SNP

Curious about that mushroom growing in the woods? Ever wonder what exactly a Turkey Tail mushroom is? In our beginner fungi forays, we'll scour the trails across our natural areas looking for all sorts of fungi. We will talk about how to identify certain species, the life history of fungi, and what these amazing organisms do to help maintain a healthy ecosystem. Registration required. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

## OWL PROWL

Friday, November 10, 7pm / BFNR

Saturday, November 11, 7pm / BCNP

Learn about our local owls, then search for them on the trails. This evening event is appropriate for all ages. We will meet participants in the parking lot of both reserves. Registration required. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

## FULL MOON HIKE

Thursday, January 25, 6–7:30pm / SNP

There's nothing like a hike on a crisp winter night under a full moon. Join us for a walk along the trails at Succop Nature Park during the full moon. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes that can get wet. We will end the hike around a fire and have some hot cider to enjoy. This program will be held weather permitting. It will be cancelled in the event of rain, heavy snow or total cloud cover. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

## MORaine STATE PARK BIRD WALK

Saturday, January 27, 9am–12pm / Moraine State Park

Meet at McDaniel's Boat Launch

Join us at Moraine State Park as we bird during the height of winter. We will focus on overwintering species, residents and other interesting birds. We will meet in the parking lot at McDaniel's Boat Launch and bird several locations at Moraine. Bring your optics, water, and a snack and dress for the weather. Registration required. Email Chris Kubiak at ckubiak@aswp.org for more details. \$6 member; \$10 nonmember.

## SALLYEANDER IS AVAILABLE AT OUR NATURE STORES!

100% hypoallergenic, 100% hardworking. For over 40 years, SallyeAnder has been nurturing sensitive skin, embracing the spirit of the outdoors and infusing everyday life with joy. ASWP Nature Stores carry a wide selection of SallyeAnder products. The best-selling "No-Bite Me" all natural bug repellent makes a thoughtful and practical stocking stuffer!



## Hands-On Projects

### WREATH MAKING WITH INVASIVE BITTERSWEET

Saturday, October 7, 10am–12pm / BFNR

Invasive plant species are a major threat to our native ecosystem. Removing these nature invaders helps preserve our lands in order to make room for native plants to thrive. Disposing invasive plants in compost or tossing them in the landscape will only encourage them to spread but crafting with them can be a fun and interesting way to rid your landscape of invasive plants. Learn the basics of wreath craft, hike to collect materials then take home your creation. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

### PUMPKIN CARVING

Tuesday, October 17, 1–5 pm / BCNP

Tuesday, October 24, 1–5 pm / SNP

Join us anytime between 1–5 pm to carve a pumpkin! We will have pumpkins, some patterns and a few tools on hand. All you need to bring is your imagination. We will use your carved pumpkin to help decorate our welcome table and a few places along the trail. And then be sure to sign up for Creatures of the Night so you can find your pumpkin that night! Free.

### BACKYARD STREAM REPAIR

Saturday, October 21, 9am–12pm / BFNR

Is your stream getting deeper or wider? Are you losing some of your land every time it rains? Have you wondered why your streambanks are changing so rapidly? Join Audubon and Penn State Extension to learn more about backyard stream repair solutions. The program includes a set of pre-recorded webinars that you can view at your own pace, followed by an in-person field day where you can put what you learned to practice—including stream evaluation, and different approaches to riparian buffer and streambank stabilization. Participants in this workshop will receive a copy of the Penn State Extension publication, Simple Solutions for Your Eroding Backyard Stream. *This program (\$30 value) is offered at a discounted rate, with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Five Star and Urban Waters Grant.* Space is limited, registration is required. \$5 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

### WREATHS AND WASSAIL

Saturday, November 11, 3–5pm / SNP

Have you decorated for the fall yet? Using corn tassel for our base and with a walk to gather some other natural materials to embellish our wreaths, you will leave with your own one-of-a-kind fall decoration. As we are being creative, we will have some light seasonal drinks and treats. This program is for anyone aged 21+. \$35 per member, \$45 per nonmember.

## DECORATE A MINI TREE

Saturday, December 2, 10am–12pm / BFNR & SNP

Saturday, December 9, 10am–12pm / BCNP

Get into the holiday spirit by decorating a mini tree using natural materials. \$35 members, \$45 nonmembers. Registration required one week prior to workshop for gathering of materials.

## YULE LOG HIKE AND CRAFT

Saturday, December 2, 10am–12pm / BCNP

Saturday, December 9, 10am–12pm / BFNR & SNP

Hike out into the woods to gather natural materials to decorate a birch Yule log. We will drill candle holes and level your log so that it will stay in proper position when you use it to decorate for the holidays. Registration required. \$4 members, \$10 non-members. Registration required one week prior to workshop for gathering of materials.

## WINTER SURVIVAL CAMP FOR ADULTS

January 10, 11 & 12, 9am–3pm / SNP

For adults 18 years or older. These are the skills you need to know now to survive in the wilderness! Learn to recognize the best plants to use when building proper shelters and fires, then build them! Secure your shelter with knots using natural fibers, and cook over an open fire like a pro. Orient yourself with just nature as your guide. This is a three day camp from 9am–3pm. Participants must provide their own lunches. Members \$125, nonmembers \$150.

## WINTER FIRECRAFT

Saturday, January 13, 12–2pm / BFNR

Saturday, January 27, 10am–12pm / SNP

Saturday, January 27, 2–4pm / BCNP

Cold weather can make it difficult to get a fire going; however frozen conditions make for very dry tinder! In this program we will learn how to find natural fire making materials in winter and make ferrocerium rod fire kits for you to take home. The kit includes a pouch, charcloth, a ferro rod, and a striker. If the sun is out we can use lenses to ignite our fires! S'mores to follow the educational portion. Limit is 12 people, one week advance registration is required. \$20 members, \$35 nonmembers.

# FALL TREE & SHRUB SALE

OCTOBER 1-31 AT BEECHWOOD FARMS NATURE RESERVE

Fall is a great time for planting! During the month of October, an extra 15% discount will be offered on all native trees and shrubs—that's a total of 25% off for members and 15% off for non-members.

## Online Programs

### EXPAND YOUR BIRD & NATURE KNOWLEDGE ON THE WINGS OF A MIGRATORY BIRD

Thursday, October 5, 7–8:30pm / Online

This unique photo-based program takes the participant on a first-person journey across the tropics through the eyes of a Barn Swallow. The story follows the flight of a migratory swallow making its way to its wintering grounds by using photographs from Brian Shema from past ASWP Eco-tours. His photographs of tropical eco-systems in Belize, Costa Rica, and Ecuador will inspire you to imagine the journey our swallow takes, as it wings its way to its winter home. Free.

### BIRDS AND MYTHOLOGY

Tuesday, October 10, 7–8:30pm / Online

Birds have always played a large role in our history and culture. Join executive director Jim Bonner as we go way back to the gods of Greece and Rome and learn how crows and ravens came to be black, where kingfishers came from, how peacocks got the “eyes” on their tail feathers, and much, much more.

### EARLY IRON MAKING IN PENNSYLVANIA

Thursday, October 19, 7–8:30pm / Online

Our state has a rich iron-making history that formed the backbone of early economic success across many regions, and massively changed our landscapes. Due to high quality resources of wood, coal, iron ore, limestone, and sandstone, as well as many sources of running water, this early industry supplied local residents a vast array of products. This program will cover the history and process of this activity and let you know some excellent sites to visit. Free.

### WHAT GALL!

Tuesday, October 24, 7–8:30pm / Online

Just what is that spotty, lumpy, bumpy or otherwise weird growth on leaves, twigs or stems? Plant galls are often seen, but what causes them can remain a mystery. Are they good? Bad? Useful? Let's take a look at these fascinating little bits of plant real estate. Free.

### WINTER FEEDER WATCH

Wednesday, November 1, 6–7:30pm / Online

The leaves have fallen and birds are much more visible this time of year. It's a great time to get into bird watching. Join us as we discuss how to identify some of our common winter birds, and how you can help out with the community science efforts of Project FeederWatch. Free.

## HOLD YOUR HOLIDAY EVENTS HERE

Three locations to choose from! Call  
(412) 963-6100 to learn more.



## THE CORVIDS: BLUE JAYS, CROWS, AND RAVENS

Thursday, November 2, 7–8:30pm / Online

Corvids display remarkable intelligence and are among the most intelligent birds on Earth. Members of the family have demonstrated self-awareness in mirror tests, possess tool-making ability, and pass information down through generations—skills which until recently were thought to be possessed only by humans. This program will follow some of our local Corvids remarkable skills and what makes them some of the most unique species in the bird world. Free.

## NATURAL MEADOWS OF PENNSYLVANIA

Tuesday, November 14, 7–8:30pm / Online

Meadows are an important part of our ecosystem. In PA, we have three types of naturally occurring meadow ecosystems that developed due to unique geologic conditions. This program will cover natural history of these ecosystems and how they operate today. Free.

## NATIVE PLANTS: WINTER BIRD GARDEN FROM THE WINDOW\*\*\*

Saturday, November 18, 10–11am / Online

When winter sets in what better way to welcome the day than by observing birds from inside. Birds depend on plant resources to provide critical nutrients as insects become scarce. We will discuss how we can help sustain birds during the harsh winter months using bird-friendly native plants appropriate for planting near the home as well as ways to prepare your landscape at the end of the season to support birds through winter.

## WINTER BIRDS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Thursday, December 7, 7–8:30pm / Online

How do birds survive the cold of winter? What species hang around all winter? What do they eat? This program discusses why some birds migrate while others stay all winter, how some can easily survive frigid temperatures, as well as their unique winter strategies of survival. Free.

## BATS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Monday, December 11, 7–8:30pm / Online

Bats are one of western PA's most interesting flying mammals, but many have been suffering steep declines from disease in the past decade. This virtual program discusses the different bat species found in western PA, their ecologies and life histories, as well as updates on White-nose Syndrome. We will also discuss ways to help bats by creating bat boxes and bat-friendly habitats in your own backyard. Free.

**Trail Closure Notice:** Pine Hollow Trail at BFNR will be closed from October 15, 2023 through January 28, 2024 for the fall/winter deer hunting season. Todd Nature Reserve will close at dusk on November 24 and will reopen at dawn December 10, 2023 for the regular deer hunting season.

## IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER: EXTINCT OR EXTANT?

Thursday, January 11, 7–8:30pm / Online

Known as the Lord God Bird because of its massive size, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was presumed extinct after the last confirmed sighting in 1944. But is North America's largest woodpecker truly gone? Or has a small population survived only to be recently rediscovered? This program takes a look at this species' particular ecology, as well as the controversy surrounding its extinction or continued existence. We will discuss recent reports of sightings in the American South. Free.

## OWL ECOLOGY IN WINTER

Thursday, January 25, 7–8:30pm / Online

Our region has a number of interesting owl species. Did you know that a local owl starts breeding in January? How do they hunt and survive the cold, dark winter months? This program will look at several of our local owl species and their ecology, along with discussing the irruptive Snowy Owl. Free.

## NATIVE PLANTS: MEDICINE CHEST\*\*\*

Saturday, January 27, 10–11am / Online

Western PA has an abundance of beneficial plants Indigenous People use throughout history to soothe, heal and nourish the body. Join us for a short lesson to uncover some common medicinal plants with a focus on growing and sustainable collection tips.

\*\*\*These programs are offered free of cost thanks to generous support from the Fox Chapel Garden Club.

## Buffalo Creek Watershed Lunchtime Series

These programs are offered free of cost by Audubon and the Buffalo Creek Coalition with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Environmental Stewardship Fund and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener Fund. The events are open to the public.

## LUNCH AND LEARN: THE SPREAD OF HEMLOCK WOOLLY ADELGID IN PA FORESTS

Tuesday, October 17, 12–1pm / Online

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has been spreading rampantly through Pennsylvania forests targeting canopy tree species of Eastern Hemlocks. Landowners with infested trees on their properties not only experience the loss of a native species but also face property damage if action is not taken to minimize the spread. Join us to learn about the natural history of HWA, their ecological and economic impacts, their importance to the Buffalo Creek Watershed, and actions you can take to aid the restoration of hemlocks in our region.

## **LUNCH AND LEARN: AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES IN PENNSYLVANIA**

*Tuesday, November 14, 12–1pm / Online*

Waterways in western PA face a threat of invasion by many aquatic invasive species such as big head carp, zebra mussels, and water chestnut. Join Audubon and Master Watershed Steward Coordinator, Amber Stilwell from PA Sea Grant to learn about the various organisms considered invasive in our waterways and how boaters/anglers can properly care for their fishing equipment to prevent their spread.

## **LUNCH AND LEARN: SALAMANDERS OF BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED**

*Tuesday, January 16, 12–1pm / Online*

Buffalo Creek Watershed is home to at least 17 different species of salamanders, including PA's state amphibian, the Eastern Hellbender. Salamanders occupy the role of both prey and predator in the food web and are susceptible to small changes in habitat quality, making them excellent bio-indicators. Join us to learn the natural history of some of our more secretive amphibians found in the watershed.

## *CBH Online Lunchtime Programs*

## **IDENTIFYING INVASIVE PLANTS IN THE WINTER**

*November 15, 12–1pm / Online*

This program will cover some of the woody invasive plant species common to Western PA. We will discuss how to identify them, potential confusion between species, and some of the physical control methods you can use during the winter months.

## **WINTER CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS**

*January 18, 12–1pm / Online*

Winter doldrums dragging you down? Do you miss seeing all the activity in your Backyard Habitat? Well then join us as we discuss some of the Citizen Science projects you can do to stay engaged with your yard and the natural world. We will discuss Project FeederWatch and various iNaturalist Projects you can do during the cold winter months.

## **ECO TOURS**

Our Eco-tours connect you with the birds and wildlife of the United States—and the world! From Texas to Tanzania, we are planning for 2024 and can't wait for you to travel with us. Visit [aswp.org](http://aswp.org) for the most updated trip information.

## *Mon Valley Nature Series*

### **BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDENING\***

*Wednesday, October 4, 6–7:30pm / Renzie Park Senior Center, McKeesport*

From patios to big yards, each outdoor space can provide important habitat for birds. This program will explore how you can create a bird-friendly garden by incorporating native plants and reducing threats such as outdoor cats, then highlight some great plants that will help to provide birds with the resources that they need year-round. Attendees will receive native wildflower seed mixes to take home. Free.

### **REPLACING INVASIVE SPECIES IN YOUR LANDSCAPE\***

*Wednesday, October 18, 6–7:30pm / Renzie Park Senior Center, McKeesport*

Our local birds, pollinators, and other wildlife need native plant species to survive. Invasive plants such as barberry, privet, and knotweed have minimal habitat value and can displace native plants. Learn how to identify common landscape non-native invasive species, best control strategies, and native replacement species to boost the habitat value of your yard. Attendees will receive 2 free pollinator plants. Free.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE TREES\***

*Wednesday, November 1, 6–7:30pm / Renzie Park Senior Center, McKeesport*

Native trees are an important component to Pennsylvania forests and parks. They are also vital for native wildlife in our backyard. Learn about some of our native tree species and how they support local ecosystems. We finish the program with an exploration of trees found in Renzie Park and to learn how to properly plant native trees in your yard. Attendees will receive a free native tree or shrub. Free.

\*These programs are offered free of cost with support from Richard King Mellon Foundation and under an assistance agreement from the Environmental Protection Agency's Region III Environmental Education Fund.

\*\*These programs are offered free of cost with support from PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources' Environmental Stewardship Fund.

## *Citizen Science*

### **BETTER BACKYARD BIRD FEEDING**

*Saturday, November 4, 10am–12pm / BFNR & BCNP*

*Sunday, November 5, 2–4pm / SNP*

Ever want to attract more birds to your yard? This program explains the do's and don'ts behind backyard bird feeding, and how the experts get more birds. Participants will also learn about Project Feeder Watch and how it helps scientists monitor bird populations. Appropriate for adults and interested youth. Free.

### **WINTER DENDROLOGY**

*Saturday, November 11, 10am–12pm / BFNR*

*Saturday, November 18, 2–4pm / SNP*

*Saturday, November 18, 10am–12pm / BCNP*

Did you know you can identify a tree species just by looking at the twig?

Leaves are not the only characteristic that defines a tree species; bark, twigs, buds, shape, and even smell can be used to identify a tree during the winter months. Join us as we take a closer look at the diverse species of trees present along our trails. We will discuss the wildlife benefit and historical use of the various species encountered. Free.

### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT WARM UP WITH COFFEE AND BAGELS

*Saturday, December 2, 2–4pm / BCNP*

*Saturday, December 9, 2–4pm / BFNR & SNP*

Want to participate in the world longest running citizen science program? Come enjoy coffee, bagels, and a bird hike as you learn how you can help count birds for science. Learn or review the birds most likely to be seen for Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Counts. Beginners welcome! This includes a classroom session and a short birding walk, conditions permitting. Appropriate for adults and interested youth. Free.

### CLIMATE WATCH

*Saturday, January 20, 10am–12pm / BFNR & BCNP*

*Sunday, January 21, 10am–12pm / SNP*

Climate Watch is a new Citizen Science program that explores how North American birds are responding to climate change. Volunteers collect data that scientists use to document how birds are responding to climate change—including shifts in the birds' ranges. Learn how you can join us in this fight by observing birds in your area, using our specific protocol, and helping us learn about how birds are responding to the changing climate. Free.

*\*These programs are offered free of cost with support from Richard King Mellon Foundation and under an assistance agreement from the Environmental Protection Agency's Region III Environmental Education Fund.*

## Volunteer Opportunities

### TREE PLANTINGS

*Saturdays, October 7 and October 14, 9am–12pm / BFNR*

Help to make Beechwood even more bird-friendly and improve local water quality by planting native trees and shrubs. All materials will be provided and no experience is necessary. Groups are welcome; registration is requested. Special thanks to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Five Star and Urban Waters grant program for its support of habitat enhancement efforts at Beechwood in 2023.

### FALL INVASIVE REMOVAL

*Tuesday, October 17, 10am–1pm / TNR*

Invasive plants degrade ecosystems and displace native species. It's best to get them under control before they're established—and even easier with extra hands! Volunteers are needed to help remove invasive species and replace with native species at Todd Nature Reserve. All materials will be provided and no experience is necessary. Registration is requested.

### WINTER INVASIVE ID AND REMOVAL

*Saturday, December 16, 11am–1pm / BFNR*

Help us remove some of the invasive plant species on the Beechwood trails. During this workday we will discuss how to identify these species in the winter, and what physical methods can be used to remove these troublesome plants. Gloves and tools will be provided.

## Yoga Series – Connect with Nature!

### YOGA IN THE PARK

*Sundays: October 15, 22, 29; November 5, 12, 19; January 21 & 28; and February 4, 11, 18, 25, 4–5 pm / BCNP*

Start your week off with some yoga! Give yourself the space to breathe and stretch so you are ready for the work week. This program is offered through Sol Power Yoga and held in our classroom where you're surrounded by nature, overlooking Little Buffalo Creek. Each session: \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

### WARM AND TOASTY YOGA!

*Sunday, November 26, 4–5pm / BCNP*

It's post-holiday and family is still visiting—invite them to join you for a relaxing yoga session offered through Sol Power Yoga. Enjoy the views of Little Buffalo Creek as you decompress and get ready for the week ahead. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember

### KID'S NIGHT OUT

*December 5, 5:30–7:45pm / BCNP*

Buffalo Creek Nature Park & Sol Power Yoga Sarver have collaborated for a special kids' program featuring hot cocoa, cookies, kids' yoga, and crafts! This event is open for children grades K–5. Parents are welcome to stay onsite or drop off. PS: the Audubon Nature Store will be open during this event so that parents can get some holiday shopping done! \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

## Kids & Scouts

### FLEDGLINGS: PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR AGES 3–5

*Thursdays: October 12, November 9, December 14, January 11 / BFNR*

*Wednesdays: October 11, November 8, December 13, January 10 / BCNP*

*Tuesdays: October 10, November 14, December 12, January 9 / SNP*

*All programs run 10–11:15am*

Give your 3–5 year old a head start on a lifetime of loving the outdoors. Fledglings programs incorporate stories, a walk, and activities to introduce new and fun nature themes to young participants. A parent or caregiver must be present. \$4 member; \$6 nonmember.

## KIDS' CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Saturday, December 16, 10am–12pm / BCNP

Saturday, December 30, 10am–12pm / BFNR

Sunday, December 31, 10am–12pm / SNP

Kids and parents are invited to participate in a family-friendly version of the Christmas Bird Count. Our naturalist will guide you. This event is appropriate for school-age and up. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult and advance registration is required. Free.

## BEECHWOOD AFTER-SCHOOL SERIES

Wednesdays: January 10 & 24, 4:30–6pm / BFNR

Want to get your child or student outside into nature this winter? This after-school program at Beechwood Farm Nature Reserve serves as the perfect respite from an overload of screen time. Winter at Beechwood has its own unique features and fascinating encounters with nature. Explore our meadows, forests and ecosystems for animals and their homes with an Audubon educator all the while having fun! Ages K–3rd grade. \$20 members, \$35 nonmembers.

## Scout Programs

### CUB AND GIRL SCOUT BADGE DAY

Saturday, November 4, 10am–12pm / BFNR & SNP

Saturday, November 11, 10am–12pm / BCNP

Choose your nature-related badge or activity! This program is for Cub Scouts and elementary Girl Scouts and is booked by group or den. Contact Scott Detwiler at (412) 963-6100 to make your reservation. \$7.50 per scout; one adult chaperone (free) required per den. Other dates are available by arrangement, subject to minimum fees.

## Audubon Nature Store Events

### LIVE HIVE AND HONEY TASTING WITH BEEKEEPER JOE

Saturday, November 4, 11am–2pm / BFNR

Sunday, November 5, 12–3pm / BCNP

Master beekeeper Joe Zgurzynski from Country Barn Farm in O'Hara Township will be onsite to discuss honeybees and beekeeping. He will have a live honeybee observation hive set up for the day and local honey for you to taste. Beekeeper Joe is happy to answer all your questions about beekeeping and honey! PLUS: Make your own rolled beeswax candle to take home for a \$1 materials fee.

## BOOK READING AND COLLAGE-MAKING

Saturday, November 4, 11am–1pm / BCNP

Look! Listen! There's a show going on in your backyard! Join local author Lisa Donovan and illustrator Dee Paras to talk about the feathered friends featured in their children's book *Birds in My Backyard*. Create a bird collage with Dee, enjoy a reading with Lisa, and guess which bird sings which song! Free and fun for the whole family! All materials provided. Signed copies of *Birds in My Backyard* will be available for purchase through our Nature Store.

## LOCAL VENDOR SPOTLIGHT: CRABAPPLE HOLLOW CANDLES

Saturday, October 14, 11am–2pm / BCNP

Saturday, November 4, 11am–2pm / SNP

It's Autumn in the Hollow. Join the folks from Crabapple Hollow to learn more about their all natural, soy, hand-poured scented candles and other natural products. Crabapple Hollow is truly dedicated to focusing on the simple, honest, and wholesome things in life through handcrafted products that evoke the true experience of life at the Hollow. Free gift with every candle purchase!

## LOCAL VENDOR SPOTLIGHT: CARTER JOEY

Saturday October 14, 6:30–8:30pm / BFNR

Meet carter joey™, a Pittsburgh-based outdoor lifestyle brand for kids! Founded with the mission to inspire you and the children in your life to be intentional with your time, make memories, and be active, not busy—carter joey™ makes products that enhance kids' experiences in the outdoors and create lifelong outdoor enthusiasts. \*Special visit during Creatures of the Night!




# HOLIDAY SHOPPING

## KICKOFF & MEMBERS' SALE

Saturday, November 4th, 9am–5pm  
All three Audubon Nature Stores

Audubon Nature Stores have you covered this holiday season! Find the perfect gifts for all the nature lovers on your list—and maybe an item or two for yourself! During the sale, ASWP members receive 20% off\* merchandise in any of our three Nature Stores, located at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve, Succop Nature Park, and Buffalo Creek Nature Park. We'll have special programs running in all three nature stores on November 4!

\*20% discount excludes optics, birdseed, and select artwork.



# AUDUBON News

## WINGS, WATER, AND WILDLIFE FESTIVAL SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED WORK

For the third year, Audubon and the Buffalo Creek Coalition showcased the work being done in the Buffalo Creek Watershed during our Wings, Water, and Wildlife Festival. The late-September event helped people to connect with local waterways through fishing demonstrations, hands-on activities, and fun programs for people of all ages. Recent highlights from our work in the Buffalo Creek Watershed and Important Bird Area include:

### Completion of the Buffalo Creek Coalition Website

ASWP is thrilled to launch a new resource for people, partners, and municipalities in Buffalo Creek—[buffalocreekcoalition.org](http://buffalocreekcoalition.org). This website has been designed to connect people with resources to conserve, restore, and enjoy the rich biodiversity of this unique region and to help facilitate collective action.

### Municipal Workshops

Over 70 municipal officials, staff, conservation partners, and local advocates attended a Funding workshop in May and a Stormwater workshop in August. Additional workshops are planned for 2024 as well as a day-long summit that will be held in November of this year.

### Buffalo Creek Coalition

Quarterly Buffalo Creek Coalition meetings are held to promote collaboration and information sharing. Partners and the public are invited to join together to find shared solutions and address concerns. We hope to see you at the next meeting on December 13 at 6pm. You can attend online or at Buffalo Creek Nature Park.

## IT'S TIME...2024 CALENDARS ARE IN STOCK!

Wall calendars, desk calendars, engagements books oh my! Don't miss Vicki Sawyer's celebrated annual art calendar—it's even printed in Pittsburgh!



### Education

Through educational programs, landowner workshops, field days, the Wings, Water, and Wildlife Festival, naturalist-led walks, and much more—over 1,200 people have been engaged in the watershed this year. By connecting people with nature and the knowledge to help make a difference for the environment, we are working towards a better future for Buffalo Creek and beyond.

### FUNDING AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT STREAMSIDE PLANTINGS IN ALLEGHENY, ARMSTRONG, AND BUTLER COUNTIES

Audubon has funding to plant up to 4 acres of trees and shrubs along streams and rivers—called forested riparian buffers—in Allegheny, Armstrong, and Butler Counties. Forested riparian buffers are an easy way to improve water quality, habitat, and prevent erosion. After working with you to select the most suitable high-wildlife value native species for the site and your goals, Audubon staff will plant the trees for you.

To learn more, contact Sarah Koenig, Conservation Director, at [skoenig@aswp.org](mailto:skoenig@aswp.org) or (412) 963-6100. Sites need to be ½ acre or more and have a narrow (or no) existing riparian buffer.



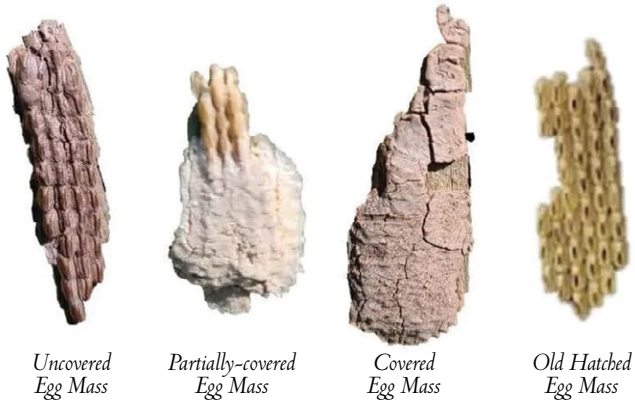
# Ask the NATURALIST

## THE CONTINUED BATTLE AGAINST INVASIVE SLF

While the numbers of invasive Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) adults in our area have abated, they're about to leave behind their legacies in the form of eggs—lots of them. The egg masses begin appearing in fall and remain through winter, emerging when the weather warms up.

### WHAT DO THE EGG MASSES LOOK LIKE?

- They're about 1.5 inches long and colored brown/grey. The masses contain rows of small eggs, roughly the size of a sharpened pencil.
- After the female lays the eggs, she covers them with a substance that's initially white and glossy but dries to a grey/brown color.
- Each egg mass is equipped with a top "hatch door" that nymphs use to escape out of in the spring.



### WHERE WILL I FIND THEM?

- Eggs are usually laid on trees, beneath picnic tables, and even on cars.
- Most egg masses will be up high and unreachable. Do your best but don't climb ladders or potentially injure yourself to get to them. Every squish is a success—every egg mass killed can remove up to 50 SLF from next year's generation.

*Egg mass photo courtesy of Heather Leach.*



### WHAT'S THE SQUISH/SCRAPE PROTOCOL?

- Use an old credit card or paint scraper to scrape the egg mass off of the tree (or other location).
- Place the mass inside of a sealable plastic container so that any eggs that escape squishing have nowhere to go.
- Squish the egg mass against the side of the plastic.
- Yes—we mention using disposable plastic here—try to use plastics, like bread bags, that are not currently recyclable; they'd be thrown away into the trash and this gives them a purpose!

Report SLF egg masses to the Penn State Extension online or by calling 1-888-422-3359.

## ADVENTUREKEEN BOOKS AT OUR NATURE STORES!

AdventureKEEN is an independent nature book publisher which was founded over 40 years ago. AdventureKEEN is guided by the sense of wonder and discovery made possible by spending time recreating outdoors in beautiful places. ASWP Nature Stores carry many titles including the ever-popular Birds of Pennsylvania.



# SHARE AUDUBON WITH YOUR FRIENDS: GIFT THEM AN *Audubon Membership*

Give the gift of birds and nature with a yearlong membership to Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania. They will enjoy a 10% discount on Nature Store purchases and bird seed, advanced notice of sales and events, discounts on the nature programs they love, a subscription to our quarterly Bulletin, invitations to members-only events, and updates on important scientific, conservation, and legislative issues, all while you get the 100% good feeling of supporting the birds and environment of our region! Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP) is a nonprofit organization supported in large part through membership dues. You can also join or renew your membership at [www.aswp.org](http://www.aswp.org).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New or Renewal Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Membership        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual: \$35          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ecologist: \$250       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household: \$50           | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservationist: \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalist: \$100         | <input type="checkbox"/> Steward: \$1,000       |

Go online now or mail this form with payment to:  
ASWP Membership, 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employer (for matching gifts): \_\_\_\_\_

IF THIS IS A GIFT MEMBERSHIP, PLEASE COMPLETE ABOVE SECTION & THE FOLLOWING:

Recipient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: Gift memberships will be sent directly to the recipient.*

How to list your recognition on the recipient note:

\_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT BY:

Check Enclosed       Credit Card  
Credit Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

*A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

## *We Want to Thank You!* FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JIM BONNER

But sometimes we don't know who you are! We receive a number of gifts each year through donor advised funds at The Pittsburgh Foundation, Schwab Charitable, and other organizations without the donors' names listed. Some people have names for their funds that don't include their personal names (my personal favorite was one named after the donor's first pet!). Many of these financial institutions have strict privacy rules and unless the donor has opted-in to have their name shared, they cannot tell us who made the gift. We see more and more people using donor advised funds. All the time. If you are one of them, please make sure to tell your financial institution that it's ok to let us know who you are.

The same thing can happen with gifts of securities. We have members that opt to donate shares of stocks to us instead of cash—donating stock that has gone up in value can have tax advantages over donating cash. The brokerage transaction does not normally include the name of the donor, just the number of shares. While we can sometimes go back and request the donor information, it may not always be available, accurate, or timely. People who regularly use either of these methods to support ASWP often give me a heads-up about the contribution. If you plan to start supporting ASWP via a donor-advised fund or would like information on how to make a gift of securities to us, please give me a call or email me at [jbonner@aswp.org](mailto:jbonner@aswp.org). Next to the thrill of an unexpected gift, being able to thank you is one of my favorite things.



614 DORSEYVILLE ROAD  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15238

## SHOP AUDUBON NATURE STORES

FOR EVERYTHING YOU  
NEED TO ENJOY THE BIRDS  
THIS FALL AND WINTER!

**BEECHWOOD FARMS NATURE RESERVE**  
614 Dorseyville Road in Fox Chapel · 412-963-6100  
Tuesday-Sunday from 9am-5pm

**BUFFALO CREEK NATURE PARK**  
154 Monroe Road in Sarver · 724-295-3589  
Tuesday-Sunday from 9am-5pm

**SUCCOP NATURE PARK**  
185 W. Airport Road in Butler · 724-586-2591  
Tuesday-Sunday from 9am-5pm

The poster for "Creatures of the Night" features a dark blue background with several white, stylized owl eyes scattered around. At the top center, the Audubon Society logo is present above the text "CREATURES OF THE NIGHT" in a large, white, serif font. Below this, the text "A Family-Friendly Halloween Adventure" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, following the curve of a circular graphic. At the bottom, a white, stylized smiling mouth is visible. The event dates and locations are listed on the right side of the poster.

**CREATURES  
OF THE  
NIGHT**  
A Family-Friendly Halloween Adventure

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve  
**OCTOBER 13, 14, 20 & 21**

Buffalo Creek Nature Park  
**OCTOBER 20**

Succop Nature Park  
**OCTOBER 28**

Join us for an all-outdoor non-scary Halloween trek and meet nocturnal animal characters who tell you their story of life beneath the moonlight. **Register now at [aswp.org](http://aswp.org) or by calling (412) 963-6100.**