

FORGET-ME-NOT

Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve
& Biological Research Station
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Volume 26, Number 1

Huyck Director Attends International Science Forum

E.N. Huyck Preserve Executive Director, Dr. Richard Wyman, has recently returned from London after attending a meeting of significant scientific importance at the Royal Geographic Society. Dr. Wyman accepted the invitation to speak on behalf of the International Organization of Biological Field Stations (IOBFS), of which he is the founding chairperson.

Ten guest speakers from across the globe came together at the event held Feb. 12 to discuss the creation of a World Register of Field Centers, a goal that both parallels and intersects that of IOBFS. Among those present at the meeting were representatives from Earthwatch, the United Nations, the Global Terrestrial Observing System, the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh and Heads from Field Centers around the globe.

In 1991, the Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS) created an International Committee to explore the potential of creating an international chapter. Recognizing that field stations on Earth share many of the same goals, objectives, and problems, OBFS deemed that an international organization would facilitate the exchange of information and ideas on a global scale.

Dr. Wyman believes that the creation of an international network is essential for integrating information over large distances and time and that data sharing is essential for answering global scale questions.

"The problems we face," says Dr. Wyman, "are earthly problems, not just local or in the United States. We need to support research and education for global studies."

Currently, there are about 200 member stations in the OBFS, mostly from North and Central America and the Caribbean. Established to ensure the advancement of biological sciences through the development of research and teaching programs at field stations, the organization also aims to facilitate cooperation among those field stations.

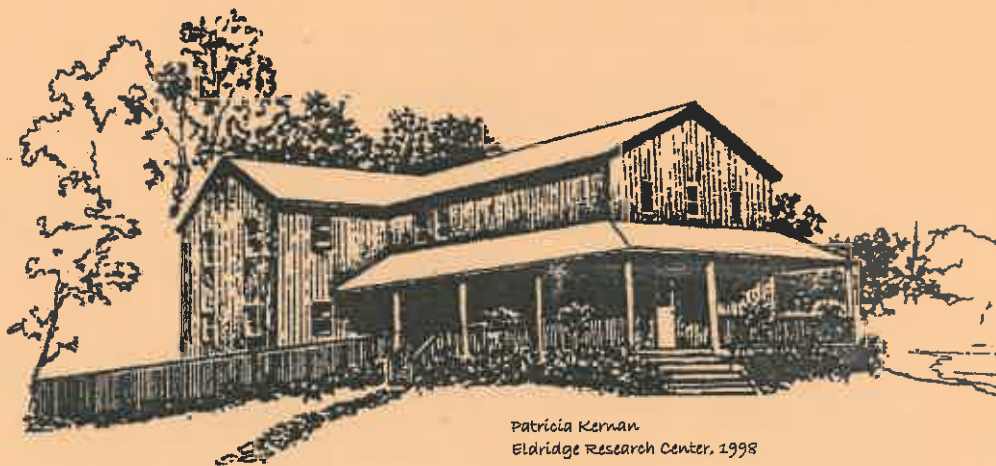
The E.N. Huyck Preserve and Dr. Wyman have achieved the first of the goals of IOBFS in the creation of an international directory of field stations aimed to assist in establishing global communication. A second goal

was reached with the establishment of a web page. To pursue the remaining goals, greater funding, and other support mechanisms are needed, to move this project into the future.

Recognition of the need for this organization was recently reiterated in the January 2002 issue of *BioScience* magazine.

"...ongoing efforts by the Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS) to create an international organization should be supported (see the IOBFS website at www.huyckpreserve.org). Such an association could foster greater communication, linkages, and partnerships between field stations and other organizations..."

Following his presentation at the meeting, Dr. Wyman was invited to become a fellow of the Royal Geographic Society in London, which may be a small but significant first step in bridging the international connection.



Patricia Kernan
Elbridge Research Center, 1998

2001 Summer Camps A Big Success - New Plans for 2002

The Huyck Preserve hosted 12 students at their two annual summer camps, the Environmental Education and Science Education camps in 2001. Both camps proved to be very successful with students learning more about



their environment, through a wide variety of activities.

Students had the opportunity to discover their natural world using the scientific method of exploration, writing and publishing, musical creation, recreating a habitat in a controlled environment, photography and

building their own birdhouses. There was plenty of fun to be had at the sleepover and cooking lunch for the parents the next day proved to be a fantastic success!!

Thanks to everyone who helped in making these camps great fun, especially Ally Wyman, who was a big help throughout the two weeks. The camps have proven to be such a success that a new and improved format is in the making for 2002.

August 19-23 is scheduled for this year's camp, again aimed primarily at middle school students. This year, a residential program will be offered with the choice of attending as a day student if preferred. Students will be accommodated at the newly refurbished Bullfrog Camp, located on the beautiful Lincoln Pond for the four night, five day experience which will include a schedule of nightly activities, as well as the usual full program offered during the day. A maximum of 12 students will be accepted for this experience in order to maximize our teacher-student ratio and allow personalized learning to take place. A full cross-curriculum of activities will be slated, including art, music and writing, all within the science discipline framework.

Mark your calendars and call early for reservations and further information.

Deb Monteith

Sounds at Night

It was night,
I could hear the frogs having a conversation of some sort,
Like a big party.
I could also hear the crickets,
It sounded like they were singing a tune
But, all at different times.
The owl, with its sound of prey made me shiver at the sound.
The wind at night was rough,
It sounded like someone screaming in the distance for help.
There are so many sounds at night.

By Anna Paige Nadin



Fills my ears of noises of nature all around.

Oh so many different trees and animals

Relaxing

Entertaining

Streams flowing

The forest is a great place to be.

By Erica Catalano

Camp Fires

Camp Fires are fun.

Hot and glowing in the night,
With red orange and white.

By Erin Mansir

Something fun for everyone

Understanding nature

Many animals to see

Memories to keep

Enjoying everything

Remembering things

Continuous fun

Awesome teachers

Many new friends

People to meet

By Ann Henry

Focus on Community

Several new initiatives help to illustrate the value of the Huyck Preserve. One of these is the Hudson River Valley Ramble. It highlights points of interest in the Hudson Valley, especially those that illustrate its natural beauty.

On Sunday September 23, I lead a group of 25 up the Rensselaerville Falls and talked about the Huyck family's connection to the Preserve, and its history, geology and land-use patterns. We also discussed the research conducted here at the Biological Field Station. This year, the coordinator of the Hudson River Ramble chose the Preserve as one of the



Hudson River Ramble participants

locations she visited. This year over 90 different locations were part of the 2-day event. Afterward, she said we had provided an A+ ramble.

Another event we participated in is Environmental Awareness Days, coordinated through Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County. Over a 2-day period, 300 sixth graders met outdoors and visited various stations learning about watersheds, animal rehabilitation, the value of trees, and the red backed salamander. The Preserve's station focused on amphibians (salamanders and frogs) as indicator species of environmental stress. As they proceeded to their next station, many migrated off the trail to turn over rocks or logs in pursuit of the red-backed salamander.

Kelly Martin,

animal rehabilitator and Huyck educator, talked to students about properly dealing with injured wild animals. She also brought several of her charges to share with them.

While we provide in-depth programs for many, these 2 programs are significant because they introduce the general public to projects and organizations involved in monitoring the natural world. As one Hudson Valley Ramble participant said while leaving, "I'm really glad to know you're doing this kind of work. And what's better is I understand it".

Marilyn Walters Wyman

...&...&...

Mill House gets a Makeover

This year I've been focusing my time on sprucing up the Mill House. What began as a floor-refinishing project has grown into a whole makeover. One thing I try to do at the Huyck Preserve is make improvements to the facility that make it more welcoming to the public. After brightening up the office, I've begun to revamp our Visitor's Center.

In the past few years, the area behind the office has gone from a visitor's center, to an office, to storage. An area where visitors can go to get trail maps, brochures and learn about what we do here at the Preserve will be great. We're working on having displays of plants and animals found here, as well as, display boards about the history, research, educational programs and other programs that take place on the Preserve.

We're hoping work will be completed by early spring so that by the time good weather comes around we'll be open.

John McGuiness



*Susan Caumont
COM. EN. ART, 1998*

OPEN HOUSE

at the Huyck Preserve

Sunday
April 21, 2002

1:00-4:00 PM

Mill House
Main Street, Rensselaerville

Guided hikes of the
Rensselaerville Falls Trail
at 1:30 and 3:30 PM

Check out the changes in the
Visitor Center

Learn about:

- Educational programs for schools
- Summer youth programs

Live Animals
and
Refreshments



An Argument for Keeping Your Cats Indoors

I would like to educate the public about the problems associated with allowing cats outside; both the risks to cats and the toll taken by cats to our native wildlife. Unfortunately, it is not just a feral (wild or stray) cat problem because our much-loved pets also catch, maim and kill birds, small mammals and reptiles. There are many reasons to keep domestic pets confined, not the least of which is their own welfare. Outside cats are subject to vehicle collisions, poisons, disease exposure, fights with other animals, cruelty, and abduction, or straying. Though these are serious concerns for the cat owner, an equally serious problem is the damage caused by cats to our native animals. As a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for over 20 years, I have personally witnessed the damage caused by cats.

Infections caused by *pasteurella* bacteria transmitted in cat saliva are often fatal to wild animals. Cat bites and claws deliver serious punctures, not always visible, that tend to cause subsequent swelling and infection. Wild animals mask pain well as an effective predator escape mechanism but, they do feel pain. People rescuing animals from the jaws of cats often just release the animal. This may or may not be the correct thing to do. Often, there is enough damage to render the animal handicapped and unable to escape predation or to forage for food. And this means a lingering death.

Allowing cats outside is an ethical and philosophical dilemma. Consider the following:

- There are at least 65.8 million pet cats in the United States; about half of them are outdoor cats. Add to that the millions of strays and feral cats, and there is certainly a sizable population of free-ranging cats in our country. One survey estimates that 15.3 million people feed 35.9 million stray cats in the U.S.
- In this country, 35,000 kittens are born each day, and one female and her kittens can produce 420,000 cats in seven years.
- Studies have indicated that 60 to 70% of a cat's prey is small mammals, 20 to 30% birds, and 10% other animals including reptiles, amphibians, and insects.
- If each outdoor cat only killed one bird per year, it would equal close to 40 million birds annually. (In fact, a study conducted by the University of Wisconsin estimates that rural cats kill 39 million birds every year in Wisconsin alone!)
- Rural cats kill many more wild animals than do urban, or suburban cats. Several studies found that up to 90% of free-ranging rural cats' diet was wild animals. Nationwide, rural cats probably kill over a billion small mammals and hundreds of millions of birds each year. Urban and suburban cats add to this toll. Some of these kills are house mice, rats and other species considered pests, but many are native songbirds and mammals whose populations are already stressed by other factors, such as habitat destruction and pesticide pollution.
- Worldwide, cats may have been involved in the extinction of more bird species than any other cause, except habitat destruction. Cats are contributing to the endangerment of populations of birds such as Least Terns, Piping Plovers and Loggerhead Shrikes. In Florida, marsh rabbits in Key West have been threatened by predation from domestic cats. Cats introduced by people living on the barrier islands of Florida's coast have depleted several unique species of mice and woodrats to near extinction.
- Not only do cats prey on many small mammals and birds, but they can outnumber and compete with native predators. Domestic cats eat many of the same animals that native predators do.

Free-ranging domestic cats may also transmit new diseases to wild animals. Domestic cats have spread feline leukemia virus to mountain lions and may have recently infected the endangered Florida Panther with feline panleukopenia (feline distemper) and an immune deficiency disease. These diseases may pose a serious threat to this rare species. Some free-ranging domestic cats also carry several diseases that are easily transmitted to humans, including rabies and toxoplasmosis.

If you are interested in learning more about the problem there are several websites dedicated to this issue.

Kelly Martin



Margy O'Brien
COM. EN. ART. 1999

April 21, 2002

Open House, 1:00-4:00 pm

April 27, 2002

Project Wet Workshop

April 28, 2002

Story Time in cooperation with the Rensselaerville Library featuring British Nursery stories.
1:00-3:00 PM, Refreshments will be served.

May 9-10, 2002

Biodiversity Workshop with Cornell University

May 12-23, 2002

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) at the Preserve

May 18, 2002

Trail Day with BTCV, 9:30 AM-1:30 PM
Community Barbeque to follow

May 21 & 23, 2002

MindsOn Workshops

June 2 - 14, 2002

Residential Field Ecology Course with SUNY Albany

Calendar of Scheduled Events and Programs at The Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve in 2002

All activities, events and programs meet at the
Eldridge Research Center, Pond Hill Road, Rensselaerville, NY
unless otherwise noted.

February 24, 2002

Story Time in cooperation with the
Rensselaerville Library featuring Winter stories.
1:00-3:00 PM, Refreshments will be served.

March 24, 2002

Story Time in cooperation with the
Rensselaerville Library featuring Spring stories.
1:00-3:00 PM, Refreshments will be served.



Jessie Blake Salmon
COM. EN. ART. 2000

June 3-5, 2002

Greenville Central Schools Kindergarten classes Fieldtrip at the Preserve



Colleen Lodge
COM. EN. ART, 2001

June 8, 2002

Bird Festival, 1:00-5:00 PM

June 10, 2002

Albany City Schools, School 26 Fieldtrip

June 22, 2002

71st Annual Membership Meeting

featuring Guest Speaker Susan Morse from Keeping Track

June 30, 2002

Lake Myosotis Opens

July 8, 2002 – August 9, 2002

Swimming Lessons begin. Lessons will be held at Lake Myosotis Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 1:00-3:00 PM.

July 9, 2002 – August 6, 2002

Nature Study for K-2 begins. Tuesdays 10:00 AM – Noon at the Jessie Huyck Center on Lake Myosotis.

July 11, 2002 – August 8, 2002

Nature Study for 3-6 begins. Thursdays 10:00 AM – Noon at the Jessie Huyck Center on Lake Myosotis.

July 20, 2002

Science Symposium, Stimson Wilcox, Guest Speaker

August 11-21, 2002

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) at the Preserve

August 19-23, 2002

Environmental Awareness Camp for Middle School Youth

August 31, 2002

2002 Benefit Dance, 7:30 PM

featuring Captain Squeeze and the Zydeco Moshers

September 22, 2002

Hudson River Ramble at Preserve, 2:00 PM; Meet at the Mill House/Rensselaerville Falls Trailhead

October 19, 2002

Burroughs Talk by Zoe Walker, 2:00 PM

October 25-27, 2002

Residential Artist Program at Preserve with local artist Jim Coe

Susan Caumont
COM. EN. ART, 1998



Sick Animal Found on the Preserve

This past August, a Preserve member found a juvenile woodchuck in distress along a hiking path. I suspected the problem was *Baylisascaris procyonis* (raccoon roundworm), which is no more treatable than rabies. Unfortunately, I decided that euthanasia was the best and most humane option, followed by diagnostic testing to determine the cause of the problem.

The animal was taken to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Wildlife Resources Center in Delmar. The animal was humanely euthanized, tissue samples were sent to the NYS Rabies Lab, and the pathologist performed a necropsy (pathology on a species other than human).

The rabies test was negative but the animal's brain tissue was positive for raccoon roundworm. In species other than raccoon, the larval migrans causes damage that is permanent and often debilitating to the point of being fatal (see the information box). In my personal experience rehabilitating wildlife I have seen raccoon roundworm infection in woodchucks, red squirrels and mourning doves. It is a serious health concern and one of many reasons that raccoons should not be kept as pets, particularly around small children. It is imperative that anyone finding a sick, injured or orphaned raccoon seek assistance from someone qualified to handle them and house them appropriately (contact your regional NYS Department of Environmental Conservation office).

Kelly Martin

Baylisascaris procyonis

Description:

This is a common intestinal parasite of raccoons that is dangerous to humans who ingest embryonated eggs. It can cause visceral larval migrans where juvenile larvae wander through human tissues.

Life Cycle:

Adult worms are located in the intestine of raccoons; eggs are released in the feces. The eggs may infect other raccoons which causes little if any damage in the raccoon. The adult roundworms live in the raccoon's small intestine, eggs are passed in the feces, and it takes approximately one month for the eggs to become infective once passed. The next host is infected when it ingests infective eggs. If embryonated eggs are ingested by a human, the larvae invade organs. The eggs of *B. procyonis* can remain infective for many months (perhaps years), so it is quite possible for an area to be contaminated with eggs even though there are no obvious signs of raccoon feces.

Clinical Signs:

Other animals can serve as hosts for *B. procyonis*, often with devastating results. In humans, birds and other mammals, visceral larval migrans may cause CNS disorders and ocular lesions. When eggs are eaten by a host other than a raccoon, they hatch, and the larvae migrate into the host's tissues. An infection with *B. procyonis* larvae is often called visceral larval migrans, and the outcome of the infection depends on the number of larvae in the host and the tissues affected. The larvae often end up in the host's central nervous system (CNS), and the literature contains reports of fatal CNS disease in many species of animals. **Humans can be infected with *B. procyonis* larvae.** It is impossible to determine how often humans are infected with this parasite since these infections are diagnosed only when the migrating larvae result in obvious symptoms (such as CNS disease), or when they are seen in the host's eye during a routine eye examination.

Several fatalities in humans have resulted from infections with *B. procyonis* larvae, so keeping raccoons as pets or enticing them into your yards is not prudent.



Leash Reminder

All dog owners must have their animals on leash while using our trails.

This will ensure your safety, and that of your pet, other hikers on the trail and the wildlife on the Huyck Preserve.

We thank you for your compliance.



"In winter the stars seem to have rekindled their fires, the moon achieves a fuller triumph, and the heavens wear a look of a more exalted simplicity."

John Burroughs
Snow-Walkers, 1875

Draught for a Winter's Night

It's too bad that winter nights are as cold as a draught of spring water. For someone like me, who finds getting chilled to be unpleasant and interminable, this seriously limits my exposure to the sharp edged glories of a winter's evening. So, bundled in wool, with gloves, hat and thick socks, I stand about stomping the blood into my feet and sucking in lung numbing breaths. To take in the crystalline night in more than short bursts is too painful.

On cold clear nights, the sky takes on a particularly tactile quality. Some evenings, it is deep indigo velvet. On others, it is a luminous expanse of aubergine silk. At times, it seems some petulant queen, in a fit of pique has strewn handfuls of diamonds across the heavens. Occasionally, the Hilltown sky is thick with stars and looks as if kindergarten children have crafted it from blue construction paper and glitter.

Winter is the time when familiar constellations seem especially large and accessible. Orion, poised to the southeast, hoists his sword overhead. His jeweled scabbard is so evident that I imagine the "sing" of cold steel as he brandishes his weapon. Directly to the north, Ursa Major looms. She is truly imposing-almost as if she lumbers across the sky alone in winter, while her sentient cousins sleep. Not always apparent,

but ultimately nearby is her cub, Ursa Minor. Mom is right to be protective-he is precious indeed. Polaris, the fabled guide-star to the north, forms the tip of his tail. Winding between mother and cub is the constellation, Draco. A suitably large and sinuous formation, Draco represents the snake that the goddess Minerva snatched from the giants and flung to the heavens. Austere winter nights lend a kind of grandeur to this otherworldly pantheon.

Not only vision, but sound also, is sharpened in the cold night air. I stopped to pick up some forgotten items at the Eldridge lab one evening. As I stood in the parking lot, the silence resonated. It surrounded Lincoln Pond, the Hemlock forest to the north and the mixed deciduous woods to the south.

Stillness gave way to the low sonorous hoot of a Great-Horned Owl hunting the woods to the northwest. His is a solitary sound-just shy of plaintive. "Hoo-hoo, hoooo, hoooo, hoooo". But what sounds inviting on a balmy summer evening, seems forlorn on this frigid night. I longed to hear the muffled approach of the great owl's silent flight, a sound that hints of the hunter's prowess. It is a soft yet strong sound--a *pianissimo*. Unfortunately, I was too far off.



However, I was not too far off to become aware of another sound. A distant motor insinuated itself into my consciousness. I wondered, "Was a car approaching?" but none materialized. While the sound gradually got louder and closer, it still struck me as intrinsically far away. At first, I was annoyed at the interruption. It intruded on this setting-a setting rendered all the more pristine by the crisp winter evening.

Then, I saw the tiny blinking lights high above. It was an airplane starting its descent to the airport less than thirty miles away. And it hit me, in a way that it wouldn't have, had I not brought my attention to the miles of air above me, that we are all denizens of the same world. The passengers on that aircraft, (in its way as fantastic as the mythical dwellers of the firmament), unaware of the winged predator and the woman listening far below are all inextricably linked.

Gradually, I became aware of another sound permeating the night-the murmur of the nearby creek. Like soft conversation, it is a peaceful, reassuring sound. It is a sound of continuity. I found myself soaking the sound in; it mattered not that it was a winter's evening, etched in blues and gray. I was warmed, as always, by the music of the waters.

There is a thread that binds us to each other and to the natural world as surely as the stream binds the hills to the valley. Nature perseveres and we carry on as well--regardless of season, regardless of want. I listened again to the dancing sound behind me. Innumerable voices seemed to affirm these truths.

Barbara Bolster Barrett

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