



# THE EDMUND NILES HUYCK PRESERVE

Connecting people to nature through education, recreation, conservation, and research

Celebrating 80 Years of Biological Research ~ 1938-2018



Conservation  
Excellence

AUTUMN 2018 | VOLUME 42; EDITION 1

# Myosotis Messenger



# LETTERS TO OUR MEMBERS

The Huyck Preserve enjoyed another exciting and productive summer, thanks to your support and participation and to the efforts of our excellent staff. We wish Emileigh Tanner the best as she leaves our office to embark on her new career as an Ayurvedic health counselor. We will miss Emileigh's warm smile and thank her for her many contributions to the Preserve. At the same time, we welcome Laura Potter as our Outreach Coordinator. Laura is a native of Gilboa, and, before moving to Rensselaerville, she most recently worked in film and television production in New York City. Laura has a life-long passion for environmental work and is thrilled to be part of our community. Please stop in the Visitors' Center to greet Laura and welcome her to our town.

We are also delighted to welcome Lynn Love and Chris Schiralli to our Board of Directors. Now a full-time resident of the Hilltowns, Lynn's background as a writer, media strategist, editor, and founder of *Rowdy of the Meadow*, a farm and rural life diary, makes her a welcome and important addition to our group. Chris is a long-time volunteer and member of the Preserve. You may have experienced one of his wildflower walks, or accompanied him on birding excursions. We are most fortunate to have Chris join our group as he continues his career with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.

I owe deep words of gratitude to our staff, Anne Rhoads, Ph.D., Leah Waldron and Adam Caprio, who have done a superb job of managing our operations. They are truly extraordinary. As always, I thank our Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication. To all our members, please know how grateful we are for your continued support.

-Susan Kessler, President, Board of Directors

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Many of us close to the organization know what a whirlwind of activity spring and summer are at the Huyck Preserve! May roared in with school field trips and the arrival of this year's researchers, and the pace kept up full tilt through the Annual Benefit Gala in August and the celebratory and quiet end of the beach season on Labor Day. Things have picked up again with fall field trips, but you'll hear about those next time.

This past season, I had the pleasure of working with two interns. Kate Martin, who is a long-time friend of the Preserve and came to us from Wheaton College, and Kerri Moran, who had worked with me on our phenology program during her last semester at Siena College and who stayed on after graduation. Our team was pleased to work with a great group of teachers from across our region who were motivated to connect their students with ecological science through hands-on field trips. A goal in education at the Preserve this year is to expand our reach in area schools to support more of the lessons taught in classrooms. As a result, we have begun to host more K-12 grades and have developed a range of new lessons. We are supporting teachers by bringing Next Generation Science Standards-based lessons to life and are fostering a love of and curiosity for science, exploration, and nature that we hope will reach beyond the school-aged years. See Kate's full description of our field trips on p.3.

Summer education programs included Nature Study, Natural History Day Program (NHDP), and Wildlife Ecology Research (WER). Despite often rainy weather, our younger students enjoyed hiking, science lessons, crafts, and games all with a focus on ecosystems and the organisms they contain. Our high school students tackled a variety of research subjects and had their first taste of independent studies from hypothesis to final product.

Observing the interplay of our four mission areas - conservation, recreation, education, and research - has been tremendous. Some of these connections are intentional like when our Huyck Research Grant recipients, here to do summer field work, taught skills to our WER students, or when those researchers and members of our Research and Scientific Advisory Committees presented at our public education events like the August Science Symposium and Environmental Monitoring Workshop and weekly summer Thursday Night Lectures. More remarkable, though, is when these overlaps happen organically. Our WER class, for example, discovered water chestnut, a serious invasive species, while walking along Lincoln Pond Trail - a finding that will be integrated into our invasive species management plan, a major conservation project now underway. It was also not unusual for school field trips to interact spontaneously with researchers, like when students were treated to impromptu lessons by the UAlbany research team on the use of drones in studies of phenology and tree dynamics. School classes would also occasionally stumble upon researchers in the woods as happened when we came across Jim Runkle beginning his 40th year of hemlock research. One fourth-grade student, having just learned about Jim's work, declared her new goal to someday work with me at the Preserve so she could help protect nature and do environmental science. This shows just how significant these "accidental" interactions can be. Thank you for your support in helping us with this important and potentially life-changing work.

- Anne Rhoads, Ph.D., Director of Conservation and Education

# Inspiring Local Youth through Science and Conservation

By Kate Martin, Huyck Preserve Education Intern

In keeping with long-standing tradition, during the months of May and June, almost 500 local students visited the Huyck Preserve for school field trips. The students ranged in age from kindergarten to eleventh grade and came from Greenville, Voorheesville, Grapeville Christian, Schoharie and Middleburgh schools. Each year, teachers and students alike eagerly await this chance to spend a day immersed in nature, learning science through hands-on lessons and exploration.

A typical visit consisted of an indoor educational lesson, ecological fieldwork, data analysis, a picnic lunch, and a hike. In short, students did “real science” and applied what they had learned at school to a real-world assignment. This spring, two lessons were taught focusing on aquatic ecosystem health using macroinvertebrates (mostly insects and crayfish) and invasive species biology using rusty crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*).

All field trips ended with a hike around Lincoln Pond or along the lake trails where students looked for examples of things they had learned earlier in the day. A tour along Lincoln Pond trail also encouraged a discussion of the long history of research here and gave glimpses into the life and work of field scientists. These connections are very meaningful since they are often the students’ first contact with real scientific research.



School field trips at the Preserve have typically focused on elementary students, but this year the Greenville High School International Baccalaureate biology students visited for the first time, pursuing their interdisciplinary, collaborative studies with guidance from their teacher, Erin Sharkey, and Director of Conservation and Education, Anne Rhoads. Rhoads said she was “pleased to see the students engaged in science at this level and was impressed by the projects that the students designed and executed.” The students from this group were also impressed by the program. One IB biology student said it was “...amazing to be able to collect real data in a place other than a classroom or school grounds.”

The Preserve's education staff, school teachers, and students all called this season of field trips a great success. Many students claimed their visit was the best field trip they had been on. A fourth-grade student from Schoharie declared it to be, “the best day of all of fourth grade,” a sentiment echoed by a Greenville third grader. A Middleburgh student was excited by her trip saying, “I’ve never done anything like that before.” Brian Hostash, a Greenville Elementary School teacher said, “The best part, in my opinion, was the hands-on work the kids were able to do at each of the stations.” He said the activities were “a great learning experience for the students...and the trip was awesome and super worthwhile!” Mollie Burgett, the Middleburgh High School biology and environmental science teacher who accompanied her daughter on the trip, said, “As a teacher, I loved that the day perfectly modeled real science.” Ms. Burgett added that the hike was “a fantastic introduction for students and a memorable experience that will help them connect with the Preserve as older students, perhaps bringing them back in the future for their own independent research.” Ms. Burgett was not alone in this feeling; many students and adults took an interest in returning for recreation or for summer education programs. As we had hoped, the field trips piqued interest in the environment, the Preserve, and science. We cannot wait to see these students return, inspired to take on bigger roles as leaders in environmental science and conservation. ♦



SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION



## RENSSELAERVILLE RAMBLE



Left and above: Each year, the Rensselaerville Library and Huyck Preserve team up to create a day of fun and recreation for all ages!

## EVENTS

### SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM AND ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING WORKSHOP

The Science Symposium and Environmental Monitoring Workshop was a discussion of local and regional environmental monitoring priorities for conservation partners, educators, and the general public.



## THURSDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES

Our summer-long Thursday Night Lecture Series provides opportunities for the greater community to learn from Huyck Research Grant recipients and others about their research.



Thursday Night Lecture Series presenters pictured: Charles Burgess (left), Jacob Suissa (above), Clare Gaffey (right)



Above: Dr. Charles Ver Straeten of the New York State Museum leading a geology hike in August

## GUIDED HIKES



Left and below: Local fungus enthusiast, Derek Mabey, and local birder, Philippa Dunne, leading hikes on their favorite topics



## SPRING AND SUMMER 2018...



## RECREATION

Left: Another wonderful and fun-filled season of kayaking, canoeing, swimming, bird-watching, children's swimming lessons, and picnicking at Lake Myosotis



# EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## NATURAL HISTORY DAY PROGRAM



Left: Director of Conservation and Education and curator of the Huyck Preserve Education Programs, Anne Rhoads, Ph.D. (right), living her "dream job" of teaching students about ecology and the natural world around them



Above: Wildlife Rehabilitator, Kelly Martin, removing fishing line from the leg of a Canada goose with the help of an NHDP student



## NATURE STUDY



Above and right: Nature Study is an introduction to nature through the exploration of the Preserve's flora and fauna. Nature Study was in such high demand this year, another week was added.

## ...AT A GLANCE

### WILDLIFE ECOLOGY RESEARCH



Left: Nicole Campbell (left), SUNY Cobleskill assistant, examining macroinvertebrates with a WER student

Right: Kristopher Williams of Capital Mohawk PRISM, taking WER students out on Lincoln Pond to survey aquatic invasive species





# FOUR TIPS TO HELP SAVE THE BEES

By Meghan Barrett, Current Huyck Research Grant Recipient

## SPOTLIGHT ON CONSERVATION

We have all heard that bees are in trouble. From colony collapse disorder, to exposure to excessive pesticide usage, honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are facing significant threats. However, honey bees are only one of 4,000 species of bee that live in North America. The other 3,999 species are our own native bees (unlike the honey bee, which was introduced from Europe). The majority are solitary, have no queen or hive, do not make honey, and live in the ground. They are just as impacted by habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change, and, importantly, they are often the best pollinators of both our natural ecosystems and many of our crops.

What can we do to help save these vital but vanishing native bees?

### 1. Plant native trees and flowers that bloom throughout the year

The biggest struggle for bees is to find nectar and pollen year-round; we can help by planting native flowers and trees (that our bees often prefer over exotic plants) that bloom at different times during the year. Serviceberry and crabapple are good for early spring; coneflower, black-eyed susans, milkweed, lupine, and bergamot provide summer sweetness; and sunflowers, asters, and goldenrod can help round out the fall. Check out the Xerxes Society website for more regional planting guides to help native pollinators (*a PDF version of the Xerxes Society's Pollinator Plants: Northeast Region can also be found on our Newsletter Resources page on the Huyck Preserve website*).

### 2. Leave the debris

Many bees nest in fallen stems/twigs, cracks between stones, and wood stumps, making the “litter” that we often clean from our flower beds a critical nesting habitat. Consider leaving the debris in the fall as it may already contain bee eggs and can provide new nesting material for early spring bees. You'll get bonus points for leaving undisturbed dirt patches between garden stones and elsewhere for bees to nest in or use for making mud to line their nests.



The face of one of the most common native bees in the Northeastern United States: *Augochlora aurata*. This species can come in multiple shades of jewel, from emerald to sapphire to amethyst.

### 3. Mow less

Lots of bees dig small tunnels in the ground for their homes. Mowing disturbs these nests, can kill bees, and makes it difficult for mothers to find the entrance to their nests upon returning with food for their young. In addition, our lawns are often populated with small “weeds” like clover and dandelion that are essential snacks for pollinators traveling through flower-poor areas. Reducing the amount of chemicals you spread on your lawn is also critical for keeping it pollinator friendly.

### 4. Spread the message

Native bees are underappreciated, since the honey bee so often steals their spotlight. This means native bees often get left out of #SaveTheBees campaigns, conservation, research programs, and more – there is a lot we still don't know about

their life histories and populations. Tell your friends about the beautiful native bees that inhabit our backyards and how we can all play a part in protecting our hardworking native bees from decline.

If you want to know more about the fight to save native bees, find *The Bees in Your Backyard: A Guide to North American Bees* by Joseph S. Wilson and Olivia Messinger Carril at your local library. ♦



Another common native sweat bee: *Augochloropsis anonyma*



Meghan Barrett is working on her Ph.D. in Biology and Master's degree in Undergraduate STEM Education at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. Her research focuses on the impact of increasing environmental temperatures on bee behavior, the neuroanatomy of sociality, and what factors influence the evolution of social behavior. We look forward to learning more from Meghan during her second field season at the Preserve next summer.



# WINTER READING LIST

Cozy up with a mug of something warm and dive into a great book!

The scientists and leaders of the Preserve's 2018 events recommend their favorite reads for the coldest season. You will also find a bonus list of staff selections! These recommendations and more are on our website at [www.huyckpreserve.org/newsletter-resources](http://www.huyckpreserve.org/newsletter-resources).

## SPEAKER SELECTIONS

***Where the Animals Go: Tracking Wildlife with Technology in 50 Maps and Graphics* by James Cheshire and Oliver Uberti**

"A beautiful collection of the remarkable stories and challenges of wild animals all over the world as revealed by state-of-the-art tracking technologies and cartographic imagery" - Scott LaPoint, Ph.D., Black Rock Forest, Current Huyck Research Grant Recipient

***A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold (published in 1949)**

"I generally reread this collection of achingly beautiful essays, a cornerstone of the conservation movement, as I wait for the skunk who opens the first essay, 'curled up in his deep den,' to uncurl himself, venture forth, and 'prowl the wet world, dragging his belly in the snow,' in the first mid-winter thaw." - Philippa Dunne, Leader of the birding hike this past June

***Citizen Science: How Ordinary People Are Changing the Face of Discovery* by Caren Cooper**

"I just finished reading [*Citizen Science*], which thoughtfully challenges who can conduct research in a way that collectively contributes to our understanding of the natural world." - Kelly Knutson, Audubon New York

***Our Native Bees: America's Endangered Pollinators and the Fight to Save Them* by Paige Embry**

"Embry combines excellent storytelling with a naturalist's passion for beauty in the world to tell the fun, mysterious, and sometimes heartbreaking stories of our native bees, their place in the world, and the researchers that strive to understand and save them." - Meghan Barrett, Drexel University, Current Huyck Research Grant Recipient

***Walden Warming: Climate Change Comes to Thoreau's Woods* by Richard Primack**

"A good intro to climate change biology for a general audience, with emphasis on phenology and the value of historic data, in this case going back to Thoreau" - George Robinson, Ph.D., SUNY Albany

***For Love of Nature: Exploration and Discovery at Biological Field Stations* by Thomas Eisner\***

"[This essay], in large part, discusses the insights and inspirations Eisner got from exploring nature at one particular field station, namely the Huyck Preserve. He was an extraordinary and inspiring scientist, and, from this essay, you can appreciate the importance of getting out into the field and simply observing nature." - Jonathan Rosenthal, Ecological Research Institute

\*Find a PDF version of this essay and two other essay recommendations from Jonathan on the Newsletter Resources page on our website.

## STAFF SELECTIONS

***Woodswoman: Living Alone in the Adirondack Wilderness* by Anne LaBastille**

"A passionate Ph.D. ecologist and defender of the wilderness, LaBastille shares her inspiring story of life in the Adirondacks and her determination to live close to the land she loved." - Anne Rhoads, Ph.D., Director of Conservation and Education

***Taking the Lead: Women and the White Mountains\****

**Museum of the White Mountains | Plymouth State University**

**Marcia Schmidt Blaine and Cynthia Robinson, Exhibition Co-Creators**

"This exhibition documents the changing role of women in the outdoor experience of the White Mountains of New Hampshire from nineteenth century to present and includes some logical but still surprising revelations on the causes of these changes. Having done my doctoral research in the forests of the White Mountains, I was especially interested to learn about the women who came before me, but anyone interested in environmental history or hiking will enjoy the subject."

-Anne Rhoads, Ph.D., Director of Conservation and Education

\*Find a PDF version of this essay on the Newsletter Resources page on our website.

***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer**

"As a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Environmental Biology at SUNY ESF and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Kimmerer presents the importance of understanding and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into our culture's current scientific paradigm, as well as presenting the possibilities that occur when living in reverence for the land."

- Leah Waldron, Administrative and Financial Manager

***Wilderness Empire: A Narrative (Winning of America Series)* by Allan W. Eckert**

"An excellent view of the European settlement of the Northeast out to the Mississippi River. Be warned: there are some very savage accounts of wilderness life." - Adam Caprio, Building and Grounds Supervisor

***The Revolution Where You Live: Stories from a 12,000-Mile Journey Through a New America* by Sarah Van Gelder, Cofounder of Yes! Magazine**

"An antidote for the overwhelming feelings often associated with climate change and social justice issues, this book serves as a reminder that small and local actions are our best hope for change." - Laura Potter, Outreach Coordinator



# Upcoming Fall and Winter Events

For more details and updates on our events, or to RSVP, visit our website:  
[www.huyckpreserve.org/coming-events](http://www.huyckpreserve.org/coming-events). Huyck Preserve news and event information are also available  
through our e-newsletter. Sign up today by emailing [info@huyckpreserve.org](mailto:info@huyckpreserve.org).

NOVEMBER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17th

## Tree Bark Identification Hike

*with Bill Logan, Urban Arborists  
and Huyck Preserve Board Member*

DECEMBER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7th

## Dessert Under the Stars at Lincoln Pond

*with Helderberg Earth and Sky  
Observatory*

JANUARY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12th

## Winter Tracking Hike

*with David Muska, Wilderness Skills  
Instructor/NYS Guide, Ondatra  
Adventures*

FEBRUARY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd

## Annual Winter Festival and Artisan Market

*Featuring local artists, craftspeople,  
and winter fun!*

MARCH

SATURDAY, MARCH 2nd

## Architecture of Trees Hike

*with Bill Logan, Urban Arborists  
and Huyck Preserve Board Member*

SATURDAY, MARCH 16th

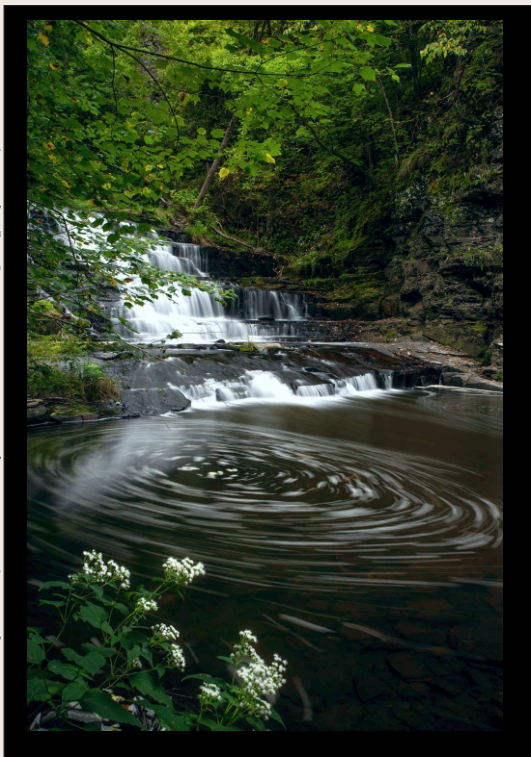
## Owl Prowl

*with Kelly Martin, Wildlife Rehabilitator*



# PRESERVE PHOTOGRAPHY BY OUR VISITORS

*Rhythm of Nature* by Caleb J. Photography @cjstills



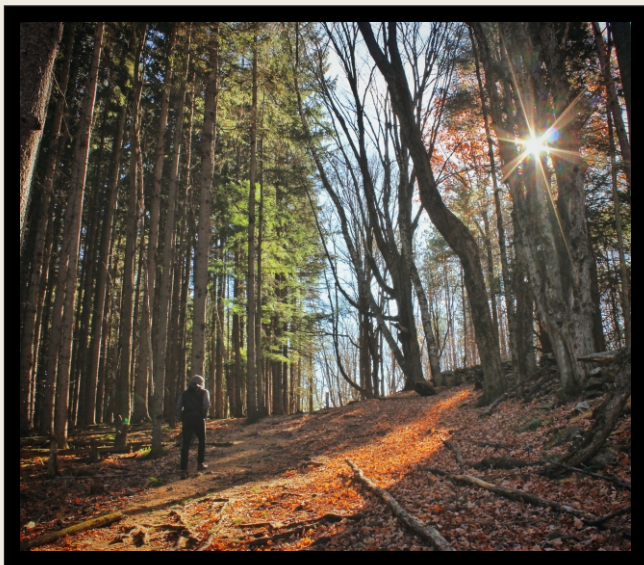
*For the Love of Ancient Trees* by Joy B. Smith



*Sunset Vortex* by Lisa Bohl @lisahikesalot



*Countdown to October* by Jessica Tabora @jessicatabs



*At the Partridge Path Trailhead* by Alan Via



*Mulligan* by Craig Belhumeur @lilmully\_18





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