

THE EDMUND NILES HUYCK PRESERVE

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



SPRING 2019

Myosotis Messenger

Huyck Preserve and Biological Research Station

I hope that you all enjoyed a peaceful and joyful winter, and I imagine that you join me with great excitement in seeing the early signs of spring.

Our staff has been very busy making preparations for the coming season and hosting winter member events: our recent Architecture of Trees walk and lecture and Owl Prowl hike were both extremely well-attended. We owe thanks to Bill Logan and Kelly Martin for leading these events and extend a special thank you to the barred owl who delighted everyone on the prowl by making an appearance.

We are proud to announce the upcoming installation of a new weather station, which was purchased in partnership with the Department of Geography and Planning at SUNY Albany, along with matched funding from three board members and a generous community member. At the 2018 Science Symposium and Environmental Monitoring Workshop, a state-of-the-art weather station was identified as a critical need for the strength of the research program, especially in this time of a changing climate.

This winter, we instituted a new staffing model, which is marked by a Co-Directorship. Dr. Anne Rhoads will continue in her role as Director of Conservation and Education. Leah Waldron has been named the Director of Administration and Finance. We are extremely grateful to our entire team who could not be more dedicated; their excellent work ensures successful day-to-day management of the Preserve.

As always, I have deep gratitude for our board members who selflessly dedicate their time and resources to the Preserve.

I wish all of our members, friends, board, and staff a glorious spring and am looking forward to seeing you on the trails!

-Susan Kessler, President, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

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WINTER AT A GLANCE **Events**



Above: Dave Muska of Ondatra Adventures and participants of his Tracking Workshop piecing together stories of animals on the Preserve by examining the tracks they leave behind



Left and below: Author and arborist, Bill Logan, leading participants into the world of trees on his two hikes discussing tree architecture and bark identification



Left: Wildlife Rehabilitator, Kelly Martin, with a short-eared owl at the Owl Prowl

Winter Festival and Artisan Market



Left: Kelly Martin's assistant, and fellow animal lover, Emily, holding a kestral

> Right: Director of Conservation and Education, Anne Rhoads, Ph.D., leading youth through an upcycling workshop



Above: BeGolden Farms adding extra flavor to Winter Festival with their pizza truck! Catch them again for pizza parties at the beach this summer (see p.6).





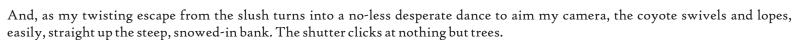
Above: With their work cut out for them, the Rensselaerville Fire Department and Huyck Preserve Building and Grounds Supervisor, Adam Caprio, cut through the 20+ inch thick ice for their annual ice rescue demonstration on Lincoln Pond.

TREES WILL BE OUR EYES: FIELD NOTES FROM WINTER RESEARCH

When I first set foot in the Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve (or, more precisely, set ski) it is on a clear day after several days of steady snowfall.

After a steep and woolly ascent along the waterfall and some bobbing through hardwoods, I find myself cutting across a lake towards yellow cattail stems poking through the ice on the northern shore. Near the bank, my ski suddenly sticks, and – after a brief moment – I feel cold fingers of water tickling my ankles. Trying to steady myself, I topple, and now my gloved hand is firmly shaking hands with the water below. It turns out the north end of the lake is where the feeder creek flows in, and it hasn't frozen quite as solidly as the rest of the lake.

At this moment, I glance up into the trees onto the bank above me and lock eyes with a coyote! Larger than any I have ever seen, its mane is broad, coat thick – pale grey blended with tan – ears turned forward, body more still than the trees.



Now, two years later, I am back in the Huyck Preserve, setting out with Scott LaPoint (an expert in the mesopredator fauna of New York State) and Anne Rhoads (an expert in everything Huyck Preserve) from the Research Center on Lincoln Pond to find a suitable site for a winter field study.

Our plan is to find a patch of woods, strap 54 cameras onto trees in a dense grid, track animals in the snow, match the tracks to photos, and, thereby, learn what we can about the coyotes and the fishers and the foxes (and if they don't show up, about the squirrels and the deer). But, between the lines of our scientific plan is a simple, selfish desire to tromp around the woods in winter. If we cross paths with my old friend the coyote, so much the better.

There are no deep drifts this bright mid-December morning, just a dusting of snow. The Preserve is like an overly powdered sugar donut in a glowing display case, the dusting slowly crusting and fading in the bright sun.

Even still, the snow has stories to tell.

Here, for example, along the creek by a bridge, an otter is betrayed by the wide splay of its feet, the furrow of its tail, and an eventual belly slide into an exposed riffle. Along the wood railing of that bridge, the tidy tracks of several mice reveal tiny clusters of feet, each foot a cluster of four round-looking toes. Just below, the small, close predatory steps of a weasel can be seen entering the rushes at the pond's edge.

Nearby, a foot-wide boulder is topped with a tidy toupee of snow. In the middle sits a perfect squirrel imprint - rear haunches wide,

the front feet prim and forward. There are no tracks leading to it or away, just a nearby birch

creaking lightly in the breeze.

Tucked between remnants of centuries old, stone pasture walls, we find a stand of slender sugar maples. The area is flat, neatly delineated, open to sky and snowfall. The trees are almost uniform in their layout. A coyote has been here recently, slicing the field diagonally, northeast to southwest, straight as an arrow, not pausing to sniff or mark or tarry amid the sparse and naked maples.

We have found our site.

Conditions are perfect for dragging stakes, tying bright pink ribbons to trunks, measuring distances between trees that will soon be strapped with cameras. The day is long and wholly satisfying. By the time we are done, the snow is also very nearly gone. All the life in the forest that scurries and hops and saunters and trots and sniffs at this and snorts at that now leaves no imprint on the bare ground. It is as if a great civilization has lost the art of recording its own history.

In the sturdy laboratory, we camp on cots next to sample cabinets of small mammal skulls, beetles and damselflies pinned to frames by ecological collectors past. At the end of this long day, I jot down some preliminary "findings":

Creatures - abundant. Snow - unreliable. Soon - the trees will be our eyes.

Outside, the night is dark and moonless and silent, except for the occasional owl.

Elie Gurarie, Ph.D. is a wildlife ecologist based at the University of Maryland. Among other species, he has studied sea lions and fur seals in Russia and Alaska, wolves in Finland and caribou in Canada. This inexplicable affinity for the cold has brought him to the Huyck Preserve, where he has been working on a winter field project with Scott LaPoint, Ph.D. of Black Rock Forest on snow-tracking and camera-trapping fishers and coyotes, both important predators in our ecosystem.



Invasive Species: How You Can Make a Difference

The Preserve will expand its invasive species management this spring and summer after receiving funding from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program and Cap-Mohawk PRISM*. To help our readers learn more, **Anne Rhoads, Ph.D.**, Director of Conservation and Education, recently spoke with Invasive Species Biologist, **Jennifer Dean, Ph.D.**

*This project was supported with funding from the NYSCPP and New York's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). The NYSCPP is administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the NYS DEC. Other aspects of the project were contracted by the Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management using funds from the EPF as administered by the NYS DEC.

AR: Why should we be concerned about invasive species?

JD: By definition, invasive species are organisms that are not native AND are causing harm. The degree and type of impacts vary greatly depending on the species and what we are trying to protect.

Invasives lack the natural enemies that would normally keep their populations in check in their native range. Many invasive plants can grow into thick monocultures and outcompete native plants. Because most native insects are specialists and cannot feed on non-native plants, areas dominated by invasive plants support less insects, which, in turn, provide less food for birds. Invasive insects can be a problem for our native plants. For example, our native ash trees have no evolutionary history with, and, therefore, no defenses against, the invasive emerald ash borer. We will lose most of our ash trees to this pest, which will also threaten the nearly 100 native invertebrate species that specialize on ash. In addition to negative impacts to our natural resources, there are invasive species that cause problems for farmers as crop pests, such as the spotted lanternfly, and other species that imperil human health, such as giant hogweed.

AR: What are the top invasive species to be on the lookout for and to remove from our own backyards?

JD: An important first step is to evaluate your yard and determine what your goals are. If you have a lot of trees, identify them to know whether there are specific insect pests to watch for. Hemlock trees are at risk from the hemlock woolly adelgid, oak wilt is threatening oak trees, the Asian longhorned beetle has a voracious appetite for many hardwoods.

There are widespread invasive shrubs such as bush honeysuckles, Japanese barberry, and multiflora rose that are difficult to eliminate and keep out, but you can work to suppress them a bit each year if you want to encourage native plants and insects. Japanese barberry thickets are correlated with higher tick populations, so reducing them can be a health benefit. It is also a good idea to watch for invasive vines like oriental bittersweet that grow high into the canopy and damage trees.

If you have a pond or lake, get to know the plants and animals that live there. Some species of aquatic invasive plants can be controlled if caught early, such as water chestnut.

Every region is different, so check with your local PRISM to help identify "early detection" species which are new or not yet in the region, and, if found early enough, could be eliminated before becoming established.



Charlotte Malmborg of the New York State Hemlock Initiative at Cornell University (second from left) leading a recent hike to observe the health of hemlocks around Lincoln Pond after her lecture on the hemlock woolly adelgid

AR: Given how prolific they are, what is the goal for managing invasive species?

JD: The key is to think strategically about what management actions have a chance of successfully reducing negative impacts. Invasive species that are abundantly widespread will be difficult, if not impossible, to eliminate. Taking on large scale, long-term management projects for these species is done to protect rare species or ecologically significant habitats.

At state and regional scales, natural resource managers focus more on prevention and early detection. Examples of successful prevention strategies are boat wash stations at public launches, firewood moving restrictions that reduce the spread of tree pests, and prohibitions on the sale of highly invasive species in the state. There are also many monitoring projects for key invasive species that, if caught early, can lower negative impacts.

This concept can be applied to a very localized scale, like your backyard. If you find a small patch of a known invasive species, a little bit of work now can prevent a lot of headache later. I do this with the vining oriental bittersweet in my backyard, even though it will never be eliminated from the region, I keep it at bay to protect my trees.

AR: How do we report invasive species, and what are the best resources for learning more?

JD: Anyone can report invasive species to the NYS invasive species database through iMapInvasives, an online and mobile app-based mapping system for sharing information, photos, and locations of new sightings.

Visit www.nyimapinvasives.org to learn more and sign-up for an account.

Visit the Preserve's Newsletter Resources section of our website for Dr. Dean's recommendations of resources on invasive species: www.huyckpreserve.org/newsletter-resources.

Want to lend a hand in our efforts to combat invasive species at the Huyck Preserve? Contact Anne@huyckpreserve.org. ♦



Jennifer Dean, Ph.D., is the Invasive Species Biologist for the NY Natural Heritage Program, which is a partnership between SUNY ESF and NYS DEC. Dr. Dean has a degree in Plant Biology from Ohio University and a Ph.D. in Entomology from Penn State University.

Spring and Summer Events

All events take place at Eldridge Research Center, 284 Pond Hill Road, Rensselaerville, NY, unless otherwise noted.

APRIL

BIRDING HIKE

SUNDAY, APRIL 28 | 9:00 AM

Join local member and birder, Philippa Dunne, for a hike to listen for springtime calls.

Suggested donation of \$5 | Members and children under 12 free

MAY

WILDFLOWER HIKE

SATURDAY, MAY II | 10:00 AM

Revel in the beauty of spring flowers on a guided hike with local naturalist and board member, Chris Schiralli, and learn identification tricks and tips.

Suggested donation of \$5 | Members and children under 12 free

JUNE

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY: VOLUNTEER TRAIL CLEAN-UP

SATURDAY, JUNE 1 10:00 AM

Join in the fun of National Trails Day by helping to clear the trails after the long winter. We will also be preparing the trails for the Rensselaerville Ramble taking place on June 15. Be a steward: grab your nippers and a pair of gloves for this family-friendly, community building event!

JULY

INVASIVE SPECIES SERIES:

WATER CHESTNUT REMOVAL

SUNDAY, JULY 7 | 9-11 AM

Volunteer with us at the start of Invasive Species Awareness Week to remove highly invasive water chestnut from Lincoln Pond and monitor Lake Myosotis and Ten-Mile Creek.

MOHAWK HUDSON LAND CONSERVANCY HIKE-A-THON

SATURDAY, JULY 20 10:30 AM

Join Wildlife Rehabilitator, Kelly Martin, for a light walk on the Huyck Preserve and close look at her rescued animals as part of MHLC's annual Hike-a-thon event.

All welcome! Registration required

Wheeler-Watson Cemetery Work Day

SUNDAY, JULY 21 9-11 AM

Come help maintain the historic Wheeler-Watson Cemetery on the Huyck Preserve.

EVENING HIKE

LAKE MYOSOTIS

SATURDAY, JULY 27 | 6:00 PM

Following our pizza party (see p.6), join us for a relaxing hike along the lake on a summer's eve.

Suggested donation of \$5 | Members and children under 12 free



"Huyck Forest" by Debra Bechtold

Have photographs from events or hikes at the Preserve you would like to share with us? Send to Laura@huyckpreserve.org for a chance to be featured in future newsletters.

AUGUST

INVASIVE SPECIES SERIES: FOREST INVADERS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3 | 9 AM-12 PM

Join Lindsay Charlop, Seasonal Invasive Species Steward, in a morning focused on controlling aggressive invasive plants in the forest.

A CELEBRATION OF 80 YEARS OF RESEARCH

NOVEMBER 2, 2019

The Huyck Preserve has been hosting biological researchers at its field station, and seeing published results about its flora and fauna for eight decades.

Join us at the Carey Institute for Global Good, overlooking Lake Myosotis, for a daylong celebration of this rich legacy, featuring thought-provoking lectures by research alumni, and stories from the field.

Stay tuned for more details.

Annual Events

On-Going Programs

ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT ELDRIDGE RESEARCH CENTER, 284 POND HILL ROAD, RENSSELAERVILLE, NY, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

RENSSELAERVILLE RAMBLE TRAIL WALK AND RUN SATURDAY, JUNE 15 | 9:00 AM

Choose between a 2-, 5-, or 8- mile route in this all-ages recreational event! This fourth annual joint fundraiser between the Huyck Preserve and Rensselaerville Library takes runners and walkers on some of the most beautiful, underused trails at the Preserve. Participate alone or join as a team with family or friends for an added discount. Awards given to best times in each distance category.

Learn more and sign-up at www.rensselaervilleramble.weebly.org.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SATURDAY, JUNE 29 1:00 PM

Meet with board members and cast your vote at the annual board election. Guests will also learn about the current and future happenings at the Preserve.

Annual Benefit

CAREY INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL GOOD SUNDAY, AUGUST 11 | 5:00 PM

Join us for a summer evening with good friends as we celebrate the Huyck Preserve. Participate in our silent auction, enjoy delicious food, and support our 50/50 raffle with tickets sold to benefit our Education Fund.

SAVE THE DATES

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE HUYCK PRESERVE

BIRDING HIKE- Sunday, April 28
WILDFLOWER HIKE- Saturday, May 11
TRAIL CLEAN-UP DAY- Saturday, June 1
RENSSELAERVILLE RAMBLE- Saturday, June 15
LAKE MYOSOTIS BEACH OPENS- Saturday, June 22
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING- Saturday, June 29
WATER CHESTNUT REMOVAL DAY- Sunday, July 7
MHLC HIKE-A-THON- Saturday, July 20
W.W. CEMETERY WORK DAY- Sunday, July 21
EVENING HIKE- Saturday, July 27
FOREST INVADERS WORK DAY- Saturday, August 3
ANNUAL BENEFIT- Sunday, August 11
RESEARCH CELEBRATION- Saturday, November 2

ON-GOING PROGRAMS

PIZZA PARTIES

AT THE BEACHSaturday, June 29;
Saturday, July 27;
Saturday, August 31

WILDLIFE FAMILY
HOURTuesdays:
July 9 & 23;
August 6 & 20

THURSDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES-July 11, 18, 25; August 1, 8, 15, 22

PIZZA BEACH PARTIES

WITH BEGOLDEN FARMS
LAKE MYOSOTIS BEACH
SATURDAY, JUNE 29 | 5-7 PM
SATURDAY, JULY 27 | 5-7 PM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31 | 4-6:30 PM

Wood-fired farm-to-table pizzas cooked to order and topped with all of BeGolden Farm's fresh-picked produce. Join our Pizza Beach Parties on the last Saturdays of June, July, and August.



Saturday picnic on Lake Myosotis Beach. Circa 1940's

THURSDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERIES

POT-LUCK 6:00 PM | LECTURE 7:00 PM JULY 11, 18, 25
AUGUST 1, 8, 15, 22

Gather at the Research Center every Thursday night for an engaging scientific lecture series following a communal, pot-luck meal.

Please bring a dish to share or a suggested donation of \$5.

Full lecture schedule to be announced

WILDLIFE FAMILY HOUR

TUESDAYS 10:30 - 11:30 AM
JULY 9 & 23
AUGUST 6 & 20

Make Tuesday mornings even better with nature walks, basic plant identification and up-close encounters with wild animals! This program is run by local wildflife rehabilitator, Kelly Martin.

SWIMMING LESSONS

LAKE MYOSOTIS BEACH
SESSION I: JULY 8-19, MWF | 10:30 AM
SESSION II: JULY 22 - AUGUST 2, MWF | 10:30 AM
COST: \$25 for Members and \$35 for Non-Members.
Join us for our longest-standing program! Swim lessons have been helping area kids to swim since the '40s. Sign your child up today for this great Huyck learning tradition!
Please contact info@huyckpreserve.org for more information and to

To register for events, please email info@huyckpreserve.org, or visit www.huyckpreserve.org/coming-programs.

GET YOUR KIDS OUTSIDE THIS SUMMER!

Before we know it, summer will be upon us! We're already getting geared-up for spring field trips and summer education programs. This summer brings enhanced versions of all your favorite offerings for students from kindergarten to undergraduate. Once again, we have opened three sections of Nature Study including one class for all K-5 elementary students to allow siblings to be together and children from earlier Nature Study classes to join us for a second week of kid-centered, play- and exploration-based nature education. Our Natural History Day Program is now strictly for middle school students and will be an active program of exploration and skills-building to meet their interests. Wildlife Ecology Research is open to all high school students who want to spend two weeks learning from professional scientists and performing their own research projects to explore careers in ecological science and prepare for college-level science courses. Finally, our Odum Internship in Field Ecology will bring an impressive group of undergraduates to work with this year's Senior Research Fellow, Dr. Sue Beatty, and Director of Conservation and Education, Dr. Anne Rhoads.

We can't wait to welcome this year's group of eager learners to the Preserve!

Nature Study

GRADES K-2: July 8-12
GRADES 3-5: July 15-19
COMBINED GRADES K-5: JULY 29-AUGUST 2
Classes run from 1 PM - 4 PM
\$75 for Members and \$150 for Non-Members

Nature Study introduces elementary school children to nature through exploration. Students spend the week outdoors learning basic science, observing wildlife, taking nature walks, and participating in nature- and science-themed games and crafts.

Students attending one of the first two sessions are encouraged to also enroll in the combined K-5 class later in the summer. Students are also welcome to join that class as a stand alone.

NATURAL HISTORY DAY PROGRAM

GRADES 6-8
JULY 22-26
9 AM - 4 PM

\$225 for Members and \$275 for Non-Members

Natural History Day Program provides the opportunity for middle school students to explore the Preserve's natural treasures and ecological concepts in an immersive, hands-on format. Students spend time hiking the Preserve's trails, exploring the ecosystems of the streams, lake, pond, and forests, problem solving, participating in group challenges and activities, and frequently end the day swimming at the lake.



Wildlife Ecology Research Day Program

GRADES 9-12 JULY 29-AUGUST 9 (M-F) 9 AM - 4 PM

\$475 for Members and \$550 for Non-Members

Wildlife Ecology Research is an intensive 2-week day program where high school students learn basic ecological principles through hands-on research experience. Ecologists from colleges and universities around the region instruct students on broad topics in ecology. Wildlife Ecology Research culminates in small group research projects. This program aims to provide a significant academic experience that will help students prepare for courses and research experiences at the college level while letting them explore career options in the natural sciences.



Please contact Anne@huyckpreserve.org with questions, or visit www.huyckpreserve.org./summer-programs.

To register at the member rate, please call (518) 797-3440.



HUYCK PRESERVE

AND BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION 2019-2020 Membership Form

Membership year is May 1, 2019 - April 30, 2020

| Name | | | | |
|---|---|--------|-----------------------|----------|
| ☐ Please update my contact information below: | | | | |
| | Address | | | • |
| | City | _State | Zip | |
| | Phone | Cell | | |
| | Please keep my donation anonymous by leaving it out of Huyck Preserve publications. | | | This |
| | I would like to sign up for paperless correspondence. Please send my newslett to my email provided below. | | | Please m |
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| Membershi | p Levels |
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|---|--------------|------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Individual | \$45 | | | |
| | Family | \$60 | | | |
| | Contributing | \$150 | | | |
| | Sustaining | \$350 | | | |
| | Patron | \$1,250 | | | |
| | Benefactor | \$3,000 or <i>more</i> | | | |
| ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal Membership \$ | | | | | |
| Additional Donation \$ | | | | | |
| Total Amount \$ This gift is given in honor of/ in memory of (please circle) | | | | | |

Please make checks payable to the Huyck Preserve.

To make a payment online, please visit www.huyckpreserve.org/membership.

Thank You!

The Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 organization and all gifts including dues are deductible to the extent provided by law.

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

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HUYCK PRESERVE AND BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION

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ABOUT THE COVER:

Eastern coyote image taken with trail cameras set by researchers Scott LaPoint, Ph.D. and Elie Gurarie, Ph.D.