

 WEB SITE:
 http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

# President's Message

Our non-birding members are perhaps bewildered at the lengths to which some people will go to chase down a bird just to "watch" it. It seems that no weather is too extreme, no cost too great, no distance too far, just to see a particular bird. There are even birding competitions, designed to test the dedication, commitment and stamina of birders.

One such annual event is called "The Big Day". Teams are formed to bird ("bird" is a verb as well as a noun in these circles) during a specified 24 hour period. The idea is to list as many species of birds as possible in that 24-hour period. The team makes mad dashes around the area to potential birding sites during the period to add to that all-important list. At the end of it all, the lists are tallied, and a winning team declared. A secondary purpose of such events is to raise money. Team members solicit pledges from family and friends, usually in the form of so much per species seen. These proceeds are then donated to some worthy cause in the names of the birding team. For the past several years Friends of Huntley Meadows has been the beneficiary of this fund raising. This year has been no exception.

On May 8 of this year, FOHMP members Jim Mathews, Bart Hutchinson, and FOHMP Board member Ben Jesup, became a team of birders and competed on The Big Day as they have done for the past several years. Jim, Ben and Bart were able to spot 107 species around northern Virginia. They began at Huntley at 2:30 A.M., and after tearing all over Fairfax County, ended up back at Huntley at 9 P.M. The team was able to raise \$760 which they have generously given to the Friends of Huntley Meadows. As with all such donations, this money will be used to help finance further childrens education programs at the Park.

These true Friends of Huntley Meadows have made similar donations in past years of Big Day outings. This kind of generosity is a common trait among those who cherish the out of doors, because if there is any one quality among all who truly love nature, it is the desire to share it with others.

Can Olympic Birding be far off?

Harry Glasgow

## Falling from the Sky

While most birders would probably say that May is their favorite time of the year, I have always preferred early autumn. September and October bring not just the colors of fall to Huntley Meadows, but also some of the best birding. Based on what has been observed over last few years, what might you expect to see?

During the first two weeks of September, many of the summer residents are still present, along with lingering south-bound shorebirds. Unusual sightings such as Little Blue Heron often occur now, as the birds are dispersing from nesting areas. This is also a good time to enjoy the challenge of those "confusing fall warblers". While no longer singing and in many cases not as colorful as they were in the spring, their numbers are now swelled by this year's recent fledglings, making their first migration. After watching the spectacle in the treetops, take a moment to scan the skies. This is the time when Bobolinks may be passing through, with their presence usually betrayed by the distinct "Pink!" flight call overhead.

By late September, there will likely be no more Oriole or Red-eyed Vireo. But waterfowl diversity should be starting to pick up with the arrival of Green-winged Teal. The numbers of Robin will begin to increase significantly. Raptor activity will also begin to escalate, with the arrival of Kestrel, Merlin, Sharpshinned and Coopers Hawk. You may see more raptors at one of the famed hawk watch spots, but if you want to see the interplay between these birds with other species, try a morning at Huntley Meadows.

On October 1st, the Green Heron and Hummingbirds will probably be gone. But the first half of October brings the wintering sparrows. Junco, White-throated, Swamp and Field Sparrow will all join the resident Song Sparrows throughout the Park. Both species of Kinglet will be arriving, and you will probably be seeing large groups of Tree Swallows massing over the wetland.

Come mid-October, the fall foliage will be visible throughout the wetland. The Red-winged Blackbird population will begin to grow again, after the annual decline in numbers at Huntley Meadows that typically occurs in late summer. Rusty Blackbirds should also start to be heard in the trees. More waterfowl species will begin to show up, and while you are watching them, scan the mudflats as well. This is often a great time to find Snipe.

September and October. Two months that start with Hummingbird, Ospreys and Solitary Sandpiper, and finish with Kinglet, Merlin, and Winter Wren. If you want a taste of avian diversity, it's a great time to come to Huntley Meadows.

Andy Higgs

### Meet the Author



Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Richard Rhodes will be at Huntley Meadows Park on Wednesday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m. to give a talk and sign copies of his new book, *John James Audubon: The Making of an American.* This event is co-sponsored by Olsson's Books and Records and Random House.

Carolyn Gamble

#### What birds will I see at Huntley Meadows Park in September

We don't know, but we can tell you what others have seen at the Park in previous years. Visitors to the Park in the month of September have reported the following birds. This is a summation of all the reports for the last three years, so the greater the number reported here, the greater your chances are of seeing the species.

# Pied-billed Grebe (7) Double-crested Cormorant (1) Great Blue Heron (29) Great Egret (28) Snowy Egret (8) Green Heron (19) Yellow-crowned Night Heron (2) Turkey Vulture (2) Canada Goose (204) Wood Duck (26) Green-winged Teal (8) Mallard (23) Northern Pintail (12) Bald Eagle (3) Northern Harrier (1) Sharp-shinned Hawk (2) Cooper's Hawk (3) Red-shouldered Hawk (13) Red-tailed Hawk (2) Merlin (1) King Rail (4) Semipalmated Plover (2) Killdeer (10) Greater Yellowlegs (7) Lesser Yellowlegs (3) Solitary Sandpiper (5) Spotted Sandpiper (4) Semipalmated Sandpiper (4) Least Sandpiper (2) Laughing Gull (131) Ring-billed Gul l(25) Rock Pidgeon (19) Mourning Dove (34) Yellow-billed Cuckoo (5)

Barred Owl (4) Chimney Swift (138) Ruby-throated Hummingbird (14) Red-headed Woodpecker (3) Red-bellied Woodpecker (31) Downy Woodpecker (33) Hairy Woodpecker (17) Northern Flicker (51) Pileated Woodpecker (16) Eastern Wood-Pewee (8) Acadian Flycatcher (2) Eastern Phoebe (22) Great Crested Flycatcher (5) White-eyed Vireo (1) Yellow-throated Vireo (1) Red-eyed Vireo (17) Purple Martin (1) Tree Swallow (7) Northn Rough-Winged Swallow (3) Barn Swallow (1) Blue Jay (40) American Crow (98) Fish Crow (1) Carolina Chickadee(108) Tufted Titmouse (69) Red-breasted Nuthatch (3) White-breasted Nuthatch (8) Brown Creeper (1) Carolina Wren (55) House Wren (6) Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (2) Eastern Bluebird (87) American Robin (257) Gray Catbird (29) Northern Mockingbird (7)

#### **Fred Bogar**

Brown Thrasher (4) European Starling (19) Cedar Waxwing (34) Tennessee Warbler (1) Northern Parula (3) Yellow Warbler (1) Chestnut-sided Warbler (1) Magnolia Warbler (11) Cape May Warbler (3) Yellow-rumped Warbler (10) Black-throated Green Warbler (5) Yellow-throated Warbler (1) Pine Warbler (4) Palm Warbler (2) Bay-breasted Warbler(3) Blackpoll Warbler (2) Black-and-white Warbler (13) American Redstart (8) Prothonotary Warbler (1) Ovenbird (3) Common Yellowthroat (39) Northern Cardinal (98) Indigo Bunting (8) Eastern Towhee (10) Song Sparrow (21) Swamp Sparrow (7) Red-winged Blackbird (362) Rusty Blackbird (1) Common Grackle (361) Brown-headed Cowbird (1) House Finch(17) American Goldfinch (93)

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Great Horned Owl (1)

# Lady Slipper Rescue

A resolute group of Park employees and volunteers, led by Huntley Meadows Park's Kitty Keller, set out in May to rescue a patch of pink lady's slipper orchids from a construction site in Lorton.

Now, given that opening sentence, I have to decide what path to take with this story. I could portray a tense moment of confrontation with a threatening bulldozer while others feverishly dig up the endangered plants. Or I could describe an anxious courtroom clash, with 3-piece suited lawyers representing a sub division developer battling slightly shaggy, tweed jacketed pro-bono lawyers in a battle reminiscent of the snail darter wars. But, the fact of the matter is that there was no rush to the barricades. Kitty calmly sought and received enthusiastic permission from the developer and the owner of the lot to go on the property and dig up what we wanted. It was a pretty unexceptional encounter. No drama whatsoever.



So, one afternoon in late May, Kitty and Carolyn Gamble of the Huntley Meadows staff, and volunteers Marianne Mooney, Connie Carpender, Kitty's husband Roger Rosscoe, and I met to dig up Lady's Slippers. Pink Lady's Slippers, or *Cypripedium acaule*, are herbaceous perennial orchids that thrive in acidic soils of a forest. (Herbaceous means a non woody plant that dies back completely in winter, and perennial means that the plant lives for more than one year.) This plant is also sometimes called a moccasin flower. These common names refer to both the white settlers' and Indian view of what the flower looks like. They are not particularly rare, but are protected in some states (not, unfortunately, in Virginia). But Lady's Slippers have a mystique about them that I think comes from the very delicate flower and the designation of orchid that makes us think of them as fragile plants in

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need of tender care. In fact, they are pretty tough little plants – but no match for a bulldozer.

We dug up over 100 plants, put them in cardboard boxes, milk crates, and any other containers we could gather. I took about ten plants to plant in the woods behind my house; Kitty and Roger took the rest. Some were going to Rod Simmons of the City of Alexandria Parks Department who was to plant them in suitable sites around Alexandria. The rest were to be planted at a selected spot at Huntley Meadows.

The day of the Huntley Meadows planting arrived a few days later. Another set of volunteers took on this task. Kitty, Marianne and I were holdovers from the "rescue" phase, but now our group included Brian Moore, Heather Cox, and Ross Downer, all of the Huntley Staff. Kitty and Brian had scouted a suitable spot for the flowers a few days earlier, so off we went in two all terrain vehicles to the designated location. We all are sworn to secrecy as to this location so that the plants will remain undisturbed. Of course, the many deer in the Park may have already taken care of our secret, but that's nature.

There is not a lot to this story, really. But it illustrates that in every activity sometimes the very small steps can be the most important. Plant rescue from building sites isn't a particularly unusual activity – It has been doing it for years. Nor is it a particularly powerful expression of environmental activism. But it does represent a small, gentle act which invokes the enduring conservation axiom that tells us to think globally, act locally.

Harry Glasgow

# From the Park Staff

#### Cafe Cattail - October 1, 7-9:30 P.M.

Welcome to Huntley Meadows' very own coffeehouse! Enjoy a relaxing evening applauding our community's talents. Musicians, poets, dancers and other artists are encouraged to share performances with a nature theme. Reservations required for performers only. Free.

#### Thank yous -

The Huntley Meadows staff is very grateful to the Friends of Historic Huntley for the donation of the Epson Stylus Photo Printer. This printer will be used to create displays and to document Historic Huntley restoration. Thank you.

Don Riggs, woodworker, donated his time and talent to create a number of useful and beautiful objects from a branch trimmed from one of the 150+ year old monarch Swamp Chestnut Oaks this last spring. These objects will be available for purchase at the Historic Huntley Fall Open House on October 16, 1-3 P.M.

A big thank you goes to Gene Keefe for the generous donation of his Kowa spotting scope and tripod. It will be a real plus for birding programs and special events.

# Meet Melissa Gaulding, Huntley Meadows New Program Director

We are very pleased to have Melissa Gaulding join the Huntley staff this September. She brings 25 years of experience in interpretation. She has a masters degree in museum education from George Washington University. From 1981 to 2003 she worked at the National Zoo developing and evaluating exhibits and education programs, and training paid and volunteer education staff. Melissa replaces Kitty Keller, Program Director for over 3 years, who has moved to West Virginia with hopes of buying a farm.

Carolyn Gamble

#### **FOHMP** Annual Meeting

The Annual meeting was held on June 22 at the Visitors Center. We had our usual very fast election of the Board of Directors. The results are shown in the box listing the members. Officers will be chosen from among this group at the Board's meeting on September 22.

The highlight of the meeting was the fascinating lecture on the periodic cicada invasion by Dr. Dexter Hinckley. Dexter is widely known in Huntley Meadows circles as a teacher, scientist, and good friend to nature. He is retired from an exceptional career as an entomologist with the Envionmental Protection Agency and as a volunteer with the Smithsonian. He continues to volunteer, helping many children and adults understand and love the world of insects. Thanks, Dr Dex!

Harry Glasgow

# Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Photo Contest

# **GIVE US YOUR BEST SHOT**

#### Description

The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Photo Contest is a nature-themed photography contest for the benefit of Huntley Meadows Park. All photos must be taken at the Park. Contestants must submit photos between May 15, 2004 and October 1, 2004. No late entries will be accepted. A panel of judges will select photos from the pool of contest entries. The selected photos will be exhibited at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor's center during the months of November and December, 2004. All photos may be used by the Park for promotional or fund raising purposes. A subcategory, with prizes, will be awarded to children fifteen years of age or younger.

#### **Contest Rules**

- An entry fee of \$5.00 must accompany your entry (for a maximum of 3 photos). No entry fee is required for those 15 years old and under.
- All photographs must have been taken at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax County, Virginia.
- Photographs made with both film cameras or digital cameras are acceptable.
- Only photographs of a nature theme will be considered (plants or animals, including birds). Photos may contain images of people so long as the provisions below are met.
- Photographs must be mounted. Mounts should not exceed 18"x20".
- Name, address and phone number should be entered clearly on the BACK of the mounted photograph. No identifying marks should appear on the front of the photographs, to preserve anonymity for fair judging.
- The decisions of the judges are final.

#### **Copyrights and Permissions**

- The photographer must hold the copyright to all photos he or she submit to the contest. Photographs that violate the laws of copyright will be disgualified.
- The use of public domain images is prohibited.
- Photographers retain ownership of all copyrights.
- By submitting an image to Huntley Meadows Park, you hereby grant Huntley Meadows Park permission and rights to store, display and use the image, its thumbnails, and your name as the photographer indefinitely, on any Huntley Meadows Park web sites and in Huntley Meadows Park or promotional materials both printed and on-line. No other entities will be allowed to use this material.
- Photographers must have sufficient permission of any recognizable models or other persons appearing in the photograph to be able to grant to Huntley Meadows Park the right to display their photographic submission online or in printed materials.
- Any contest submissions that receive legal challenges from either copyright or insufficient model permissions will be removed.
- Entrants may sell their photographs during the exhibition period. 20% of sales will be retained as a donation to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park. If a photo is available for sale, please specify the sale price on the back of the mount. If not for sale, clearly mark NFS on the back of the mount.

#### Eligibility

- Park Volunteers and employees of Huntley Meadows Park and their families, not involved in judging or administering the contest, are allowed to enter the contest.
- Contest judges are not eligible to enter the contest.
- All Huntley Meadows Park rules do apply, including rules that animals must not be harassed and no modifications or improvements of the environment may be made to improve the photograph.
- All federal, state and local laws apply.

If you have questions or comments, please call Huntley Meadows Park, phone 703 768 2525; your call will be redirected to a representative of the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park.

# Entry Form

Name			
Please Check () Adult () Junior 15 and under (Please provide age)			
Street Address			
City	_ State	_ Zip	
Day Phone	_ Evening Phone		
Email address			
Print Caption			
Sale Price or Not For Sale			
I certify that the photo I am entering into the 2004 Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Photo Contest was taken at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax County, Virginia. I agree to all the rules of this contest. I grant the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and the staff of Huntley Meadows Park permission to publish my name and/or photo in their publications and website, to use the photos for educational purposes and to exhibit my photo at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor's Center.			
Signature			

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_\_(for contestants under 18)

To Enter: A separate entry form must accompany each photograph entered (a maximum of three). Mail your entries to Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Boulevard, Alexandria, Virginia 22306, or deliver the photos to the Reception Desk at the Visitor's Center. A check for \$5.00, payable to the FRIENDS OF HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK, must accompany your entries. The \$5.00 entry fee covers up to 3 photos. Please do not send entries in excess of 3 photos.

# **UPCOMING EVENTS: FALL 2004**

# Fall 2004

In September and October the Visitor Center is open 9am-5pm, Monday, Wednesday-Sunday. In November, the Visitor Center is open 9am-5pm, Monday, Wednesday-Friday; noon to 5pm Saturday and Sunday. The Visitor Center is closed Tuesday. Grounds open dawn to dusk.

### Saturday, September 11 -Birding at South King's Highway

(Adults), 7-10A.M.. Meet at the park's South King's Highway and Telegraph Road entrance. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

## Sunday, September 12 - Welcome to Huntley Meadows

1-2:30Р.М.. Appropriate for families with children 5 yrs. and up. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

Saturday, September 18 - Birding for Beginners - Optics and Field Guides

(Adults), 7:30-10:30A.M., Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

### Monday, September 20 - Young Explorers - Birds of Prey

(6-8 yrs.), 3:15-4:30P.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$3

#### Wednesday, September 22 - Nature Detectives - Birds of Prey

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M., Reservations required. \$5

## Thursday, September 23 - Nature Detectives - Birds of Prey

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M.. Reservations required. \$5

### Sunday, September 26 - Fall Birds and Bagels

(Adults), 7:30-10:30A.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$5

### Thursday, September 30 - Lecture - Migrating Monarchs

(Adults), 7:30-8:30P.M.. FREE to FOHMP members and Huntley Meadows' volunteers. Reservations required. \$3

Friday, October 1 - Café Cattail

7-9:30Р.м.. Reservations required for performers only. FREE

### Saturday, October 2 - Boy Scout Fly Fishing Merit Badge

9А.м.-6Р.м.. Reservations required. \$50/scout

Saturday, October 9 - Video - Fall Colors

1-1:30P.M..

Sunday, October 10 - Video - Fall Colors

1-1:30P.M..

Saturday, October 16 - Watershed Cleanup Day

9-11:30A.M.. Wear boots, old clothes and bring gloves. Trash bags and appreciation provided.

Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

# Saturday, October 16 - Historic Huntley Fall Open House

1-4P.M.. Historic Huntley. Call 703/768-2525 (Huntley Meadows Park) for information. Sponsored by Friends of Historic Huntley. FREE

## Sunday, October 17 - Birding for Beginners - Migration

(Adults), 7:30-10:30A.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

Monday, October 18 - Young Explorers - Wild Turkey

(6-8 yrs.), 3:15-4:30P.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$3

Wednesday, October 20 - Nature Detectives - Pumpkinfest

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M.. Reservations required. \$5

# Wednesday, October 20 - Lecture - Watershed Ecology:

(Adults), 7:30-8:30P.M.. FREE to FOHMP members and Huntley Meadows' volunteers. Reservations required. \$3

# Thursday, October 21 - Nature Detectives - Pumpkinfest

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M.. Reservations required. \$5

# Saturday, October 23 - Autumn Tree Trek

(16 yrs. & up), 1-3:30Р.М.. Reservations required. \$5

Saturday, October 30 - Batty About Bats

1-3P.M.. FREE

SundayOctober 31 - Batty About Bats

1-3P.M.. FREE

Saturday, November 6 - Video - Cardinals Up Close

1-2P.M.. FREE

Sunday, November 7 - Video - Cardinals Up Close

1-2P.M.. FREE

# Saturday, November 13 - Reading the Landscape

(Adults), 9-11А.м.. Meet at South King's Highway entrance. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$2 Sunday, November 14 - Fall Evening Walk

(6 yrs. & up), 4-5:30Р.М.. Children must be accompanied by adults. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$2

# Monday, November 15 - Young Explorers - American Indians

(6-8 yrs.), 3:15-4:30P.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. \$3

# Wednesday, November 17 - Nature Detectives - American Indians

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M.. Reservations required. \$5 Nature Detectives - American IFFFndians

# Thursday, November 18 - Nature Detectives - American Indians

(3-5 yrs.), 9:30-10:15A.M. or 10:45-11:30A.M.. Reservations required. \$5

### Saturday, November 20 - Native American Theme

1-3P.M.. Self-guided displays and hands-on activities will be open to the public. FREE

# Saturday, November 20 - Birding for Beginners - Seasonal

(Adults), 7:30-10:30A.M.. Reservations required. Canceled if rain. FREE

# Sunday, November 21 - Native American Theme

1-3P.M.. Self-guided displays and hands-on activities will be open to the public. FREE

# **FOHMP Member Feedback Requested**

The board would like to make the newsletter one of those pieces of mail that you look forward to receiving. If you are like me, most of the mail makes it to the trash unread. Any comments on items currently in the newsletter or on items which could be added would be greatly appreciated. Please contact myself or any of the board members either by email at the addresses below, by leaving a note at the nature center or by calling the nature center. Needless to say, no information makes it into the newsletter unless someone is willing to take the time to compile the data or write the article. So, if you have an idea and are willing to work to make it a reality, that is doubly good. Thanks

Ken Larsen

# Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

#### **Board of Directors:**

Harry Glasgow (President) (Membership) Sarah Stromayer (Vice President) Glen Curtis (Secrretary) Sally Cureton (Treasurer) Ken Larsen (Newsletter Editor) P.J. Dunn (Web Site Manager) Connie Carpender Suzanne Lepple Andy Higgs Kathi McNeil Norma Hoffman Marianne Mooney Ben Jesup Chuck Studholme

Web address: Email: General Information: Membership Info: Harry Glasgow Donations and dues: Sally Cureton Newsletter Inquiries/submissions: Ken Larsen Questions For Park Staff



http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

info@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org membership@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org treasurer@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org newsletter@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org staff@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

Are <b>You</b> A Member?			
Please help support Huntley Meadows Park and join The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park!			
Please help support Huntley Meadows Park and join The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park!			
Become a member of FRIENDS OF HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK. (FOHMP) and help to protect and preserve the park. Your annual dues (tax deductible) will keep you informed and help support the nature center's programs. Please fill out and mail this application today!			
Membership Information			
Our new dues schedule is as follows:Senior\$5.00Family\$15.00Individual \$10.00Lifetime Membership\$150.00			
Yes!       I would like to join FRIENDS!         I'd like to renew my membership. Enclosed is \$00 annual dues for a         membership. (Please make checks payable to FOHMP.)			
Additional \$00 donation enclosed.			
I have some comments and/or suggestions:			
I would like to volunteer at the Park. If you checked that you would like to volunteer, please help us by indicating your areas of knowledge and/or interest.			
FOHMP Volunteer Coordinator Park Watch Promoting Friends Special Events Mailing			
Phoning Members For Lectures and Special Events     Letter Writing Campaign     As Needed     Name:			
Address:			
Telephone: (h) (w)			
E-mail Address:			
Please Mail To: FRIENDS OF HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK c/o Huntley Meadows Park 3701 Lockheed Boulevard Alexandria, VA 22306			
E-MAIL ADDRESS: info@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org PHONE: 703/768-2525 WEB SITE: (http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/index.html)			

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