

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park



December 2014

Website: www.Friendsofhuntleymeadows.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark

President's Message

Dear Friends,

Ecological Balance. That's what we are working towards at Huntley Meadows. In nature all parts of the ecosystem work in concert with each other. This is much like what those of us who focus on native plants and trees are working towards in our gardens. Native plants, including the trees, are good at taking care of themselves without our intervention. They have evolved over many years in concert with all parts of the ecosystem. Our native trees are adapted to thrive in local conditions which include all the plants and animals that co-exist with them. This includes caterpillars or other insects that eat the leaves or otherwise get nourishment from the trees. One such native insect is the Fall Cankerworm (*Alsophila pometaria*). Unlike the notorious, non-native Gypsy Moth (*Entomophaga maimaiga*), the Fall Cankerworm (a.k.a. inchworm) is a native species of moth. Our trees and other parts of the ecosystem are adapted to the natural population dynamics of native insects such as the Fall Cankerworm.

Even though it is called the Fall Cankerworm, these inchworm caterpillars hatch onto our native trees, especially oaks, in the spring. The females lay their eggs in November-December in our area (that's the reason for the name "Fall" Cankerworm). The timing of the Fall Cankerworm hatch in early spring occurs at the specific time that it is needed as an important food source for migratory birds (which are actively passing through our area) and resident birds (which are nesting and need this important food source to raise their young). Since these inchworms feed on leaves during the active growth cycle of the trees, the trees are able to re-foliate quickly. Although the trees draw upon some of their energy reserves to re-foliate, they may also benefit from the nutrients from inchworm droppings that naturally fertilize the soil.

'President's Message' - cont'd on page 7

Park Manager's Message

Active Beavers and Water Level Management

The winter months, especially December, are often when beavers are most active at tree-felling. The critters are in a rush to gather winter food and building materials before ice forms across the wetland, making it more difficult to travel from their lodge to the forest edge. Shorter days with very little evaporation, dormant plants that draw less and less water, fall and winter precipitation, and beavers often raising their dams, all combine to create higher water levels in our wetland each winter. Good thing, because thousands of hibernating herps lie buried in the wetland mud, counting on deep water to protect them from ice. Diving ducks count on unfrozen feeding pools, and this is when cattails get pushed back by fall and winter flooding.

Look for active beavers at Huntley this early winter, and the deeper water they help to create.

Now that construction of the wetland restoration project is complete and we have a dam, pipes and slide-gates to manage the wetland's water levels, it's important that we keep these natural seasonal cycles front

and center in our management plan. From the beginning that has always been our goal - now that winter's higher water levels are upon us, this is a great time to review our goals and water level management plan.

Our primary goal is sustainable biodiversity of a hemimars, specifically conditions similar to Huntley's wetland in the '70s and '80s. To do that, we are using seasonally fluctuating water levels (along with several excavated pools) to encourage three major ecosystem building blocks: diverse native plant communities, fish and macroinvertebrates (insects, crayfish, etc.), and our mammalian wetland engineers - beavers and muskrats. The end result will hopefully be healthy populations of our 30 target species. Our three highest priority groups are spring waders (rails, bitterns, etc.), spring/summer herps, and fall/winter ducks.

'Park Manager's Message' - cont'd on page 8

Do you need a receipt?

The 2014 tax season is right around the corner! If you paid membership dues or made a monetary donation to FOHMP in 2014, these contributions may be tax deductible. If you would like a letter of receipt, please send your request to friendsofhmp@gmail.com, and we'll be happy to provide one. Thank you for your support!

Meet the Weekend Staff

Weekend naturalists enjoy greeting Park visitors and sharing their knowledge and stories about the Park and its flora and fauna. Whether it's your first time to Huntley or your 1,000th, talking with naturalist will give you great information on recent wildlife sightings and other seasonal happenings at the Park.

Margaret Wohler

I'm **Margaret Wohler** and I've worked as a weekend staff member at Huntley Meadows Park since 1994. I've enjoyed meeting the families for whom Huntley is a weekend tradition, with kids in the backpacks and strollers and Grandma and Grandpa along to share the fun. We answer all kinds of nature questions from : "What is that giant turtle doing in my azelea?!" to: "Where are the King Rails?" The questions are all useful, instructive, and give us a chance to share our love of the natural world with anyone who comes through the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center door. I've loved being a part of such a nice group of people who have bonded around the last (and best) non-tidal, freshwater wetland in Fairfax County.

Sally Cureton

Even though my home is no longer in the Alexandria area, the ties to Huntley Meadows Park are still strong. My involvement began as a Volunteer on Duty, then teaching pre-school groups on Monday mornings and eventually changing to Naturalist in Charge about 15 years ago. Coming to the Park about once a month to work a weekend is such a joy - everyone who visits is in a great mood, the questions are constant and varied - we all learn something. Walking in the Park and seeing the seasonal changes is something to look forward to each time my name comes up in the schedule.

Colette Hodes

When I moved to Alexandria, I was happy to find a park similar to a wetland park in Buffalo on the edge of Lake Erie where I had volunteered. (The big difference – no tours on snowshoes!) I started volunteering at the Park about 20 years ago doing View from the Tower and Bluebird Nest Box monitoring. I've always been particularly fascinated by birds and aquatic mammals, and I think my favorite part of the Park is being near the water at dawn and dusk.

Matthew Ryan

I am a Virginia Master Naturalist, Interpretive Guide, and recent graduate of Northern Virginia Community College. I am also a chef and run the sauté station for a local restaurant. If you don't see me taking pictures of Dragonflies, then you can bet I am making a veal marsala or chicken francese.

Excitement of Winter Birding! Start Your 2015 Year List with a Bang!

Believe it or not, a cold and windy winter in Northern Virginia (and this year is supposed to be another chiller) is perhaps the *most* exciting time of year for bird watching. True, those colorful warblers, orioles and other Neotropical migrants have all flown south, but if you enjoy seeing dueling raptors, unusual woodpeckers, dabbling ducks, and irruptive northern finches or listening to the sounds of courting owls (and who doesn't!), you can't beat winter birding.

This is the *only* time of year when the Northern Harrier and Merlin grace our wetland with their presence, and the best time to see Bald Eagles. Harriers are ghost-like hawks with long wings and owl-like faces that cruise low over marshlands, but only visit us in the winter, and Merlins are lightning fast, dark-bodied falcons that usually spend a day or two hunting at Huntley Meadows Park each winter. Bald Eagles can be seen in the Park almost any time of year, but only in winter do they fly over al-

most daily, often in pairs, and at least twice have been seen locking talons and performing their courtship spiral spin, letting go just seconds before hitting water.

This is the only time of year when Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (yes, that's a real bird) spiral up and down our hickories, sucking sap-soaked insects out of holes left to attract and trap sugar-loving bugs. It's by far the best (and often only) time to see our most dramatically-patterned woodpecker, the bright and elegant Red-headed Woodpecker, most often seen at either end of the boardwalk. Even Downy Woodpeckers put on a show climbing up and down cattails stems, hunting for winter insect eggs and pupa. And winter is the best time of year to see the usually shy Northern Flicker feeding from the Visitor Center suet feeder.

Have you ever seen Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails or Green-winged Teal? Three of North America's most impressively patterned puddle ducks, all three can

'Excitement of Winter Birding!' - cont'd on page 5

Monday Morning Bird Walk

I am the leader of the Monday Morning Bird walk. Nobody appointed or hired me for this job; it just sort of happened. I inherited it. In fact, I don't lead anything. Participants wander off on their own. I might explain Huntley's history and ongoing activities to interested newcomers, and I might convey questions and comments to Huntley management, but generally I simply go for a bird walk with several other people.

The Monday Morning Bird walk has been a Huntley activity since 1985, when Huntley's two most devoted volunteers, Ken Howard and Ed Weigel started walking through the Park in the morning. As veteran birders, naturally their interests were on birds.

After a while, other birders casually joined them. Over time, these walks became weekly events with a growing cast of characters. After Ken and Ed died in 1995, the walks continued,



with leadership sort of gently applied by several participants. In the early 2000's, a more conventional leadership emerged from the ranks of the Friends of Huntley Meadows, and today I have the privilege of serving as the current leader in a long line of early morning insomniacs. The leader's only real responsibilities include keeping record of the sightings on the walk, and deciding whether to cancel the walk because of dangerous weather conditions. The records kept for the Park by

the group represent some of the oldest avian records in the area, and are regularly consulted by scientists and birding enthusiasts throughout Virginia.

Since the walk occurs on Monday mornings, it should be no surprise that the majority of participants are retired. Regulars in the gatherings include retired military officers, Foreign Service officers, teachers, accountants, and many species of federal, state and local government officials. Occasionally, birding celebrities join the group. Among these have been David Allen Sibley, Kenn Kauffman, and James Schlesinger.

A long standing tradition of the Monday Morning Birdwalk is the gathering afterward at the nearby Denny's restaurant to have a little breakfast and compile the morning's list of sightings. Over the years, management at Denny's has been very generous, and seats us in a separate room - probably to keep us from bothering their other patrons: we sometimes get a bit animated when arguing over a particular bird discovery.

As we announce at the end of our weekly reports, *"The Monday Morning Birdwalk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows Park since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7AM (8AM from November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the Park's entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria, VA. Questions should be directed to Park staff during normal business hours at (703) 768-2525."* So, come on out and join us - 7AM in the summer, and 8 AM in the winter.

Harry Glasgow

Park Manager's Message - cont'd

To accomplish all of the above we're developing a water level management schedule that mirrors the natural cycles of a hemi-marsh, and allows the Park to provide maximum biodiversity and wetland function, both of which are in serious decline worldwide. Our water level plan will be a combination of punctuated equilibrium and adaptive management. In brief, we'll have two to four "standard" years of relatively similar seasonal fluctuations, punctuated by one "re-charge" year of either drying or flooding conditions, depending on how our wetland plant communities are functioning. Standard years will have high water with flooded forests in the winter, low water with scattered mudflats in the summer, and springs and falls of gradual transition. Flooding years will be used to push back cattails and re-charge aquatic wildlife populations, while drying years will be used to consolidate silt and re-charge plant germination.

Our management decisions will be adaptive and responsive to monitoring results and ground-truthing, and guided by the goals of sustainable biodiversity and target species success.

Stay tuned for more information in following newsletters, on our website, and at the Park – our goal each year will be to provide a summary of last year's water levels and a look ahead at what you can expect for the next 2 or 3 years. This summary will allow Park fans and visitors to better understand the wetland's current conditions and give them an idea of what to expect for the months ahead.

Cheers and enjoy the park!
Kevin Munroe, Park Manager

Bluebird Nest Boxes at the Alexandria Coast Guard Station

Most regular Huntley Meadows visitors know of the yearly Eastern Bluebird nesting box monitoring program conducted at the Park. This program has been a staple of Huntley activities for roughly 30 years. Protecting Bluebirds has been one of the most successful conservation efforts in North America.

The native Bluebird is a timid, cavity nesting bird. It searches for hollows in decaying wooden fence posts or dead trees. Over the years, land has been cleared for urban development, and metal posts have replaced wooden fence posts. The result has been reduction of natural nesting cavities.

Adding to the problem of loss of Bluebird habitat was the introduction of the House Sparrow and the European Starling to the United States in the 1800s. Both Starlings and Sparrows are also cavity nesters. These extremely aggressive birds compete with the passive Bluebird for nesting sites. Sadly, Starlings and Sparrows often take over occupied Bluebird nests by puncturing eggs, killing nestlings, and sometimes killing the parents.

For the past 40 years, a coordinated effort to save these beautiful, gentle Bluebirds has gained momentum throughout the United States and Canada. The principal endeavors have been introduction of nesting boxes in suitable habitat and regular monitoring of these boxes to reduce predation and to annotate the success of the Bluebirds' efforts at nesting and raising young.

When the Huntley Meadows Bluebird program started, the administration of the neighboring Coast Guard Station was asked if boxes could be installed and monitored on the Station. The interest and enthusiasm shown by Coast Guard officials then has carried through to today. Every spring, two of the volunteers who work the Bluebird monitoring enterprise have the Coast Guard boxes assigned to them. I have had that very pleasant responsibility for the past dozen years. My friend Nancy Vehrs and I begin monitoring each March, and visit the station every week through August. Our records are added to those of the other monitors who survey the Huntley Meadows Park boxes.

The Coast Guard Station is a fairly unique place. It is surrounded on three sides by residential development and on the fourth by Huntley Meadows. My experience has been that it is an unusually wildlife friendly place. Not only do Bluebirds thrive, but many other bird species, as well as much terrestrial wildlife. There is ample evidence that the Coast Guard makes a great effort to keep this Station as welcoming a nature preserve as one can hope for given the Station's mission.

Over the years, Bluebird nesting has generally been quite successful at the Station. This past year has been a bit below average with only 12 chicks hatched. Our record was about 5 years ago when 27 birds were fledged. We start the 2015 season with the same wonderful cooperation and helpfulness in our efforts.

2014 marked the 30th anniversary of our partnership with the Coast Guard Station at Alexandria. Here's looking at 30 more!

Harry Glasgow



FOHMP Board of Directors Approved Budget for FY2015

Income:	Budgeted
Memberships	\$4,000.00
Donations	6,000.00
Sales	6,000.00
Parking Donations	10,000.00
Grants	3,000.00
Misc. Fundraising (Photo show, Wetlands Awareness Day, Whole Foods)	4,500.00
Total Income	\$33,500
Expenses:	
<i>Park Program Support</i>	
Seasonal Salaries	\$1,200.00
Naturalist Intern	2,800.00
Resource Management Intern	2,800.00
Financial Aid	500.00
Resource Management	3,000.00
Building Operations/Grounds	8,500.00
Special Projects (Wetlands Awareness Day, Birdathon)	3,400.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$22,200.00</i>
<i>FOHMP Operating Expenses</i>	
Newsletter	\$1,700.00
Sales (apparel, books)	4,500.00
Fundraising (appeal, parking)	200.00
Website	400.00
Friends of Historic Huntley	500.00
Misc. (meeting, VA fee, stickers)	1,000.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$8,300.00</i>
Total Expenses	\$33,500.00

Happenings at Historic Huntley

FOHH Mantel Campaign: to Repair and Restore Historic Huntley's Great Hall Mantel

There are many different reasons to be attracted to and care about Historic Huntley: its exemplary illustration of Federal-period architecture; its testimony to bygone eras and people, including its historical connection to the lands comprising Huntley Meadows Park; the grassroots, citizen activism that led to Huntley's preservation; its incomparable southern Fairfax County viewshed; and the neighborhood community it binds together. While we all have different reasons to be Historic Huntley champions, the Huntley house and its surviving outbuildings are the most salient representation of them.

At the heart of Huntley house is the fireplace mantel in the great hall, framing the hearth of heat and light that no doubt drew together Huntley's families and guests in the chilly, colder seasons like the fall now upon us. The mantel is original to the property, and, unfortunately, it looks like the almost 200 years old that it is—missing a substantial portion of its carved wood along its lower left side, and suffering an obliteration of all detail under its many, many layers of whitewashing paint.

As a special project for this year, Friends of Historic Huntley (FOHH) has initiated a fundraising campaign to restore the great hall's mantel. Our goal is to raise \$4,000 for the mantel's repair and restoration.

Underneath its centuries of paint, the handcrafted mantel is much more detailed than the other mantels in the

house. While we don't know who carved the mantel, there is evidence of the master's style. Tony P. Wren, in *Huntley, A Mason Family Country House*, writes that "the proportions are similar to the Federal styles of Asher Benjamin." Stephen Ortado, a local master carpenter who has worked at Gunston Hall and on the restoration at Historic Huntley, finds elements in the mantel to be similar to those of William Buckland, the architect and master carver responsible for designing the stunning interiors at Gunston Hall. While Buckland died before Historic Huntley was constructed, it is possible that one of his apprentices carved the mantel at Historic Huntley.

Mr. Ortado has agreed to repair and restore the Historic Huntley mantel in his workshop. There, he will strip off the obscuring layers of paint, carve a new piece of wood to fill in the missing area, and provide a finish that highlights the original beauty of the delicate carving details. FOHH's mission is to raise the necessary funds to accomplish the work this fall. If we can complete the mantel's repair and restoration during the winter, it will ensure a big "reveal" when the house reopens in the spring! If you would like to contribute to the FOHH Mantel Fund, contact Ms. Barbara Ballentine at bbbalex@verizon.net.

Sincerely,
Todi Carnes, President
of Friends of Historic
Huntley



Excitement of Winter Birding! - cont'd

be seen "dabbling" (shoulders and bills underwater while feeding, with rear-ends pointing skyward), but only here during winter.

The rest of the year they live in Canada and our upper Midwest. And if you happen to be on the boardwalk at just the right time, usually February, you may

be lucky enough to see and hear a v-shaped flock of Tundra Swans, as they float and whoop above the trees on their way towards deeper river water.

Not all our winter feathered visitors are quite as large or flashy as swans and sapsuckers – this is also the only time of year that the impossibly tiny Winter Wren (only 4 inches), Golden-crowned Kinglet and Red-breasted Nuthatch fly south from evergreen forests to spend



Northern Pintail's dabbling

their winters in our comparatively temperate woodlands. All three can be seen at Huntley, along with Pine Siskins, Purple Finches and once in a lucky while, the Common Redpoll. Redpolls are pink-capped finches from the tundra that occasionally zip down to Virginia during "irruptive" years when weather or food conditions drive them south. If you see one this winter, keep in mind that just a month ago it may have been eye-to-eye with wolves, musk ox and polar bears.

Lastly, attend our winter owl prowls or evening wildlife walks, and you may hear courting Great-horned or Barred Owls calling back and forth across the wetland – a special experience not to be missed. Some people keep a fresh list of birds seen each year, trying to beat the previous year – imagine starting your 2015 list with Great-horned Owls, Common Redpolls or Tundra Swans. Spend enough time at Huntley Meadows this winter and you just might.

Kevin Munroe

News & Announcements

Upcoming Art Shows

December 2014 thru February 2015

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Annual Photo Contest is celebrating 40 years of Huntley Meadows Park! Visitors to the Park submitted their best and favorite photos taken at the Park. Journey through time and see the Park, past and present, through the eyes of fellow Park enthusiasts.



March 2015 - Curtis Gibbens

You may know me as the former "View from the Tower" Huntley Meadows Park volunteer, but I also enjoy photography. I will be presenting a photography exhibit featuring birds and wildlife at the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center during March and April of 2015. One wall will be strictly photographs taken at Huntley Meadows Park. I hope to see you at the reception, March 8, 2014, from 2:00 – 4:00.

Lifetime Members

The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park would like to thank the following new Lifetime members:

- Arnetta Austin
- Vivien & Ron Crea
- Nadia Sadee & Kevin Dietz
- Carol L. Kearns
- Julia Karin & John Lawson
- Jacqueline Woodle
- Barb Kiker
- Wayne Crist

If you would like to give a "lifetime" of support to Huntley Meadows Park by becoming a life member, please send a donation of \$150 to:

Treasurer, FOHMP, 3701 Lockheed Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22306

Can You Help?

We would like to ask any of our readers who receive a homeowners e-mail or newsletter to please consider sending the editor's contact information to the FOHMP Board so that we can share Park news and activities with your community.

Send contact information to:
friendsofhmp@gmail.com

WANTED: USED BOOKS



FOHMP is looking for donations for our used book display at the Visitor Center gift shop. Bring books to the front desk at the Visitor Center.

Having trouble bringing your books to the Park? Email us at: friendsofhmp@gmail.com and arrange for a Friend to pick them up for you.

All proceeds from book sales go to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park to support Park activities.



Donate through Amazon



If you shop on Amazon, you can identify Friends of Huntley Meadows Park as your favorite charity, and for every purchase you make, we will receive a small donation. Simply register FOHMP as your preferred charity at <https://smile.amazon.com>.

You'll be asked to identify the organization you'd like to support. Enter "Friends of Huntley Meadows Park" in the appropriate box. Our information will pop up for you to verify. You'll then need to continue logging into Amazon using your usual user name and password. It will show who you're supporting at the top of the page.

This costs YOU nothing and costs FOHMP nothing. Amazon makes the donation.

The donation amount is 0.5% of every purchase. We'll receive proceeds on a quarterly basis.

Huntley Meadows Park turns 40 in 2015!

In 1975 Huntley Meadows Park was born - this year, it settles into middle-age as the Park turns a comfortable and accomplished 40. It was four decades ago that the federal government transferred 1,261 acres to the Fairfax County Park Authority as part of President Gerald Ford's Legacy of Parks Program, "This property will be used in perpetuity for public park, recreation, or wildlife purposes." 40 years later, the Park has grown to 1,554 acres, is nationally known for resource protection and environmental education, holds the only Americans with Disabilities Act accessible wetland boardwalk in Northern Virginia, and is home to several regionally rare habitats and their imperiled flora and fauna.

Please join us this year as we celebrate the past and prepare for the future! Look for an exciting list of programs and events, starting this December 6th (look for the flier that lists that day's programs). Just a few of the anniversary events to look for throughout 2015 include:

- A celebration of the Park's Duck Nesting Box program during our Birding for Beginners classes
- Several special guided nature walks into lesser known areas of the Park this spring and summer
- Wagon Rides this summer and fall with conservation, land-use and Park history themes
- A special anniversary-themed Wetlands Awareness Day in May
- A Huntley Meadows Park Time Capsule with contributions from visitors, volunteers and Friends like yourselves
- A year-long lecture series geared towards adults presenting natural and cultural resource data gathered in the Park over its rich history

President's Message - cont'd

November and December are when Fairfax County staff survey for the presence of female Fall Cankerworms climbing up trees to lay their eggs; you may already see the county sticky bands wrapped around the trees. Fairfax County is pursuing a pesticide spraying program (using the biological insecticide Btk [*Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) var. *kurstaki*]) to kill this native insect, in the misinformed belief that this is necessary to keep our trees healthy. I have met with Fairfax County staff on several occasions to discuss the science that they rely on to make decisions about this program. They have not presented any scientific evidence to support the continuation of this program in Fairfax County, and to our knowledge no one else has either. This spraying program impacts large areas of Fairfax County, mostly in the Mount Vernon and Lee Districts. The County hires a contractor to spray Btk on extensive wooded areas from helicopters and to employ ground spraying. **Spraying** is targeted at the caterpillar stage of the inchworm, but it **kills all types of butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera) that are in their caterpillar stage on tree leaves during spraying**. As a result, this spraying program also harms migratory and resident birds and other wildlife that depend on the inchworms as an important food source.

In our area, native trees face many stresses. Some can be much more severe than partial defoliation from the Fall Cankerworm. This includes water shortage stress from grassy lawns that compete with trees for water, exotic forest pests (including the non-native Gypsy Moth), air and water pollution, the warming and extreme weather of changing climate patterns, and stress from invasive plant species such as English Ivy and other non-native vines that strangle and often kill our trees.

It is important for the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park to know that the HMP Park Manager has made the important decision not to allow this spraying to occur on Huntley Meadows Park property, due to the negative impact of this spraying



Fall Cankerworm
(*Alsophila pometaria*)

program on non-target species.

There is a citizen campaign underway to have the Fairfax County spraying program canceled and have the funds re-allocated to cover alternative ways to address concerns County residents may have about

inchworms. Friends of Huntley Meadows Park is joined by nine other organizations that support stopping the spraying program, including the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of Dyke Marsh, Friends of Little Hunting Creek, Friends of Mason Neck State Park, Friends of Meadowood, North American Butterfly Association, Northern Virginia Bird Club, and the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations.

If you share our concern and want to express your desire to cancel and re-allocate spraying program funds, please contact your County Supervisor before January 15, 2015. We look forward to your active participation in this important effort. More information is available about this at <http://www.audubonva.org/index.php/advocacy-efforts/asnv-urges-stop-killing-caterpillars> or email me if you have questions at president.fohmp@gmail.com.

We invite all of our Friends to visit Huntley Meadows Park, a place where you can see our magnificent native trees thriving in concert with native insects, native predators, birds, and other wildlife, including the Fall Cankerworm. Huntley Meadows Park is a fantastic place to come to see these natural processes balancing and re-balancing themselves. We look forward to seeing you in the Park very soon.

Sincerely,
Cathy Ledec, President of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

Programs at Huntley Meadows Park

*All programs **require reservations**, unless free. Sign-ups can be done online using Parktakes, search "Huntley" at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes. Or call 703-222-4664. For help, call Huntley Meadows Park at 703-768-2525.*

December

12 Friday - Local Lore

(Families) 6:00-7:30pm. Travel with your family back in time. Explore the rich history of the Chesapeake region and the many cultures that have helped create this diverse community of local legend through activities, crafts and walks. \$7 Reservations required. Registration Code: 3404012002

13 Saturday - Winter Hike Marvelous Meadows

(Ages 9 and up) 2:00-3:30pm. Chase the winter blues away with a hike on the **South King's Highway** side of the Park. Look for winter hawks, ducks, bluebirds, and goldfinches, while exploring the Park's native meadows and stopping at the wetland overlook. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$6 Registration Code: 3404881001

Boardwalk Astronomy

(Ages 12 and up), 6-7:30pm. What's new in the night sky? Join Park naturalists as they take you on a tour of constellations, comets and other current events happening in the heavens above. \$6 Registration Code: 3404865103

19 Friday - Family Nature Night

(Families) 6:30-8pm. Come discover your natural neighborhood and reconnect your family with nature. This month we explore the awesome world of owls through activities, crafts, games and walks. \$7 Registration Code: 3404012104

20 Saturday - Owl Outing

(Adults), 4:30-6:30pm. These nocturnal raptors are pair-bonding and looking for nesting sites at this time of year. Prowl the Park after dark to listen for and learn about our local owls, and possibly see a barred owl. Meet at the Visitor Center and dress for the weather and standing off trail. \$7 Registration Code: 3404866602

January

10 Saturday - Evening Walk

(Adults) 4:30-6:30 pm. Join Park Naturalist PJ Dunn to hike the trails after dark, listening for owls and frogs and watching for beaver activity. \$6 Registration Code: 3401881801

11 Sunday - Birding for Beginners-Woodpeckers

(12-Adults) 8:00-11:00am. As they drum and drill on trees, Woodpeckers are seeking food, shelter, or a mate. Come learn about Woodpecker biology and behavior, attract them to your yard, and see if you can spot some of the seven species that can be found at the Park, on feeders and on the trail. \$6 Registration Code: 3401879601

17 Saturday - Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults), 3-5pm. Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on these monthly walks. Find out about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the Park is known. No registration required. FREE

23 Friday - Family Nature Night

(Families) 6:30-8pm. See 12/19. \$7 Registration Code: 3401012101

24 Saturday - Sketch Hike- Winter, Trees and Landscapes

(12-adults) 10:00- 11:30am. Join Park naturalists and artist Margaret Wohler for a hike and learn sketching techniques to

enhance your observation skills. \$6 Registration Code: 3401027701

Dive into Dragonflies

(Adults) 2:00-3:30pm. Discover the diverse world of dragonflies-their amazing powers of flight, voracious appetites, and the many different species that call Northern Virginia home. Leave with a list of the top ten Parks to spot dragonflies, as well as, information on how to create a perfect dragonfly pond at home. \$6 Registration Code: 3401880601

Evening Stroll

(Ages 6 and up) 4:00-6:00pm. Take this rare opportunity to visit the wetland after dark. Learn the curious habits of fireflies, listen for owls, and watch bats hunt. You might even see resident beavers at work! Canceled if rain. \$6 Registration Code: 3401827901

February

7 Saturday - Winter Hike Marvelous Meadows

(Ages 9 and up) 2:00-3:30pm. See 12/13 \$6 Registration Code: 3401881001

8 Sunday - Winter Tree Identification

(12-Adult) 1:30-3:00pm Do you know your sweet gum from your hickory? Come learn winter tree identification basics and go for a hike to practice new skills. \$6 Registration Code: 3401027801

13 Friday - Local Lore

(Families) 6:30 -8:00pm. See 12/12. This month's topic historic Valentines. \$7 Reservations required. Registration Code: 3401012001

14 Saturday - Evening Stroll

(Ages 6 and up), 4:30-6:30pm. See 1/24. \$6 Registration Code: 3401827902

20 Friday - Family Nature Night

(Families) 6:30-8pm. See 12/19. \$7 Registration Code: 3401012102

21 Saturday - Sketch Hike- Winter, Trees and Landscapes

(12-adults) 10:00- 11:30am. Join Park naturalists and artist Margaret Wohler for a hike and learn sketching techniques to enhance your observation skills. \$6 Registration Code: 3401027702

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults) 3:00-5:00pm See 1/17. FREE

22 Sunday - Winter Hike Wonderful Wetland Waterfowl

(Ages 9 and up) 1:00-3:00pm. Hike the boardwalk to the observation tower, looking for green-winged teals, pintails, swamp sparrows, winter wrens, and hopefully spot a bald eagle. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Reservations required. \$6 Registration Code: 3401881101

28 Saturday - Evening Woodcock Walk

(Adults) 5:45-7:15pm. Take an evening stroll through the forest to one of the Park's largest meadows. We'll listen for the call of the male woodcock and hopefully see his amazing courtship dance and flight. Bring a flashlight. Canceled if rain. Reservations required. \$6 Registration Code: 3401834001

Children's Programs

*All programs **require reservations**, unless free. Sign-ups can be done online using Parktakes, search "Huntley" at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes. Or call 703-222-4664. For help, call Huntley Meadows Park at 703-768-2525.*

Nature for Tiny Tots

(Ages 2 – 3 1/2)

Children and their parents learn about plants, animals, and their habitats through songs, crafts, and activities. Supply fee of \$5 is due to instructor at first class. Children must be accompanied by a parent. 8 week series, 10:00-11:00am beginning Monday, January 12 or Thursday, January 15. \$92.

Registration Code: 3401672001, 3401672002

Storytime in the Forest

(Ages 3-5)

Join us for a nature story followed by songs, crafts, outdoor exploration and other activities. Thursday 10:00am - 11:00am or 1:30-2:30pm, December 4. \$7/child/session.

Registration Code: 3404865009 or 3404865010

Nature Detectives

(Ages 3-5)

During this naturalist-led class, children and parents get the opportunity to explore the natural world through hikes, stories, songs, crafts and other hands-on activities. Additional supply fee of \$5 payable to instructor at first class. The class will meet on Wednesdays from 10:00am - 11:30am or on Thursdays from 1:30pm-3:00pm for 8 weeks beginning January 14 and 15. \$101.

Registration Code: 3401663301 or 3401663302

Science for Homeschoolers

(Ages 6-12)

Students explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have basic reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. 8 week series, beginning Wednesday, January 14. 4:00-5:30pm. \$101.

Registration Code: 3401703201

Homeschoolers at Huntley

(Ages 6-9)

Students will see the past laid out before their eyes and discover the history of Huntley, Northern Virginia, and the wider Chesapeake region. Each week students will learn about a different aspect of American history by participating in hands-on activities and hikes. Students must have basic reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. 8 week series 1:30-3:00pm beginning Thursday, January 15. \$101. Registration

Code: 3401866701

Young Explorers

(Ages 7-12)

Through activities, crafts and trail walks, children learn about animals in winter and how nature is preparing for spring. Students also learn about the Park, and improve their observation and interaction skills. Students should dress for the weather. Call site for additional information. Six week sessions 4:00-5:30pm starting Monday, January 19. \$76.

Registration Code: 3401702601

Boy Scout Merit Badges (Ages 11-17)

*All programs **require reservations**. Sign-ups can be done online using Parktakes, search "Huntley" at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes.*

Art: Saturday, January 10, 10am - 1pm. \$28

Registration Code: 3401742001

Astronomy: Saturday, January 24, 5:30pm - 9:30pm. \$28

Registration Code: 3401740101

Bird Study: Saturday, March 7, 9am - 1pm. \$28

Registration Code: 3401740001

Citizenship in the Community: Monday, December 29, 10 am - 2 pm or Monday, January 19, 10 am - 2 pm or Saturday, March 7, 10 am - 2 pm. \$28

Registration Codes: 3404749002, 3401749001, or 3401749002

Citizenship in the Nation: (at Historic Huntley) Saturday, December 20, 10 am - 2 pm or Monday, February 16, 10 am - 2 pm

Registration Codes: 5784739901 or 5781739901 \$28

Citizenship in the World: (at Historic Huntley) Monday, March 16, 10 am - 3 pm or (at Huntley Meadows Park) Saturday, February 28, 10 am - 3pm. \$35

Registration Codes: 5781749101 or 3401749101

Genealogy: Friday, January 30, 10am - 1pm. \$21

Registration Code: 3401746201

Sustainability: Monday, March 16, 10am - 1pm. \$28

Registration Code: 3401775801

All programs satisfy most of the requirements to earn these badges.

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
Membership and Renewal Form**

Please support Huntley Meadows Park by joining our Friends group. By becoming a member, you will help to protect and preserve the Park. Dues help fund new initiatives and programs, and your membership support will help us to be stronger advocates for the Park.

Fill out this form and mail the application to:

Dues information (Annual):

- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$10 Student/Senior
- \$150 Lifetime Membership
- Donation

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
3701 Lockheed Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22306**



Name: _____

Address: _____

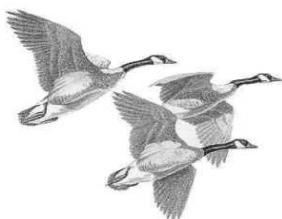
Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

3701 Lockheed Blvd.

Alexandria, VA 22306



Please check your mailing label for accuracy and notify us of any changes.
Your membership expiration date is in the upper left corner.