

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park



September 2015

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

President's Message

Thanks to all who joined in the celebration of Huntley Meadows Park's (HMP) 40th, Friends of Historic Huntley's 25th and Friends of Huntley Meadows Park's (FOHMP) 30th birthdays at the annual meeting of FOHMP this past June. Around 100 members and other friends joined together to sing Happy Birthday to each other and to the Park! We championed through the 95+ degree day, and it was great fun. Many thanks for joining us on this special day to Master of Ceremonies and Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Board Member for Lee District Ed Batten, Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay, FCPA At-Large Board Member Mary Cortina, former Lee District FCPA Board Member Harold Henderson, former HMP Park Manager Gary Roisum, and many more friends. We also send special thanks to our new neighbors Wegman's who donated the birthday cake that we all enjoyed; it was yummy! We are continuing our celebrations with upcoming programs sponsored by FOHMP, and we hope to see you at a future program.

There is another reason for FOHMP to celebrate. Congratulations to the FOHMP Board of Directors and all of our Friends on winning the 2015 Elly Doyle Park Service Award from the FCPA! This is the Agency's top honor for volunteer service. I am amazed by your volunteer work and commitment to all things Huntley Meadows Park. It is an honor to call you our Friends. Together we have accomplished great things over the past year and I send kudos to each one of you for all that you do for the Park. Stay tuned for future announcements related to this honor. It just might be necessary to have another party, and we would not want you to miss it! See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/ellydoyleawards.htm> for details on the award.



Tiger Swallow-tail on a Milkweed
photo by Cathy Ledec

I have heard some refer to August as the summer doldrums. For us here at HMP there is so much going on that it is a whirlwind of activity. There have been a lot of summer camps this year, and the children have been coming and going, learning and experiencing new things.

Summer is also a busy time for pollinators. There have been a lot of stories in the news lately about the decline in pollinator populations.

What role does HMP play in this? Here at Huntley we are an oasis, a protected area, a sanctuary for pollinators. A place where our pollinators will thrive, safe from pesticides. I took a walk out to the wetland the other day and wow, there were bees, butterflies, moths and other insects all over the native flowers blooming in the wetland. Pollinators in our area include some of the birds too, especially Hummingbirds and Orioles.

What can you do to help our pollinators? Remember, our wildlife does not know what a property boundary is, this is not meaningful to them. And this means that our pollinators wander outside of the boundaries of the Park into the green spaces and natural areas that are in our neighborhoods, including our gardens and potted plants. By planting pollinator-friendly native plants, you are in fact providing a welcoming place with food, including nectar sources and insects, water (even if only the morning dew on the plants), and shelter.

'President's Message' - cont'd on page 9

Meet the Park Summer Interns

Interns play an important role in running summer camps, conducting essential research, and completing important projects over the summer. Mid-summer, this year's interns were asked to write about their experience and introduce themselves to our read-

Resource Management Intern

My name is **Michael Durst**, and I am the Natural Resource Management intern. I am a rising senior at Ursinus College, majoring in Environmental Science with two minors in Business and Politics. I am also a proud member of the Ursinus Men's Lacrosse team.

One of the main objectives of the internship is to assess the water quality of the wetland by taking macro-invertebrate samples and identifying them down to the genus. By doing this I have been able to learn how water quality assessments are performed, and I've been able to see organisms that aren't always visible to the naked eye. The diversity and amount of organisms I've gathered have really surprised me.

Coming into the internship, my goal was to learn as much as possible from the staff here and to meet as many new people as I could. As I approach the end of the internship I can confidently say I have done just that. All summer I have learned so much about Huntley Meadows, its history, the Wetland restoration project, and how a Park is run, just to name a few highlights. Being able to learn from and work alongside Dave Lawlor and Brian Moore has truly been an amazing experience and a summer I will never forget. Seeing the dedication of Huntley's staff continues to inspire me to work harder to make the Park a better place. I want to thank the Huntley staff and all the members of the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park for making this all possible. I have truly had an amazing summer!

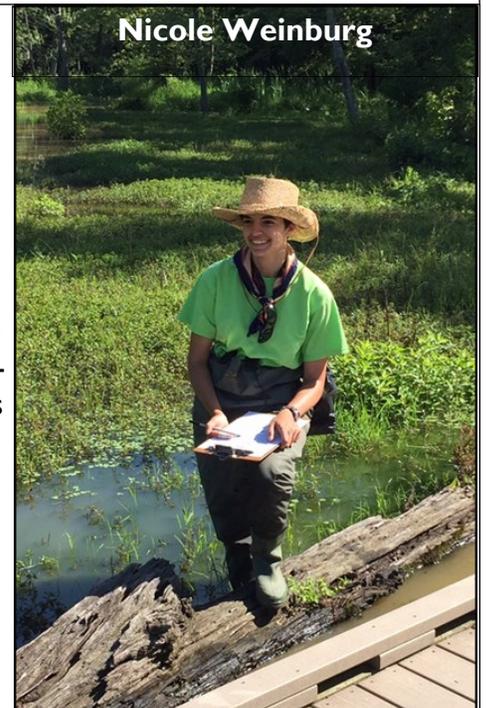
Mike Durst



Resource Management Naturalist Intern By **Nicole Weinburg**

When I applied to be a volunteer at Huntley Meadows this May, I was surprised to receive a call asking me to interview for an internship, and thrilled to be chosen for the position. I had no idea what I was getting into. Suddenly, I found myself surrounded by a veritable forest of knowledge, and despite starting from the ground up, I readily picked up the skills I needed to navigate the waters— or wetlands, in this case! Soon I was trekking through meadows, deer trails, and blackberry bushes hunting for the bizarre and elusive purple milkweed, and helping other interns and volunteers collect data for their wetland studies. Every day I discovered something new about the plants and animals in the Park. When the weather was too hot or wet, I unwittingly learned some of the more obscure features of common Microsoft programs while working on the herbarium database— useful in other areas, yes, but my new curiosity has sunk its teeth in deep. When I applied to volunteer at Huntley Meadows, I hadn't anticipated that taking this internship would mean setting out on a wonder-filled adventure into this oasis of wilderness. I'd like to thank all of the members of the Potomac Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society for supporting the internship and making this experience possible. I would also like to thank the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and the Park staff and volunteers for making it a great summer.

Nicole Weinburg



Naturalist Intern

My name is **Spencer Ward**; I will be entering my senior year at Hobart and William Smith College where I am an Environmental Studies Major with an English Minor. I want to thank the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park for the opportunity to work as a naturalist intern at the Park this summer. I could not have asked for a more beautiful place to spend my summer. The staff has been fantastic; constantly teaching me new things about the wetland and nature conservancy. Their passion for the outdoors is inspiring and has given me a whole new perspective on nature, noticing the animals and plants, rather than just the views. As a result, I feel I've gained invaluable experience working in the outdoors and educating, while developing new hobbies like birding and nature photography. Overall, I would say that this has been one of my favorite summers in recent memory and I can't thank you enough for the opportunity.



Spencer Ward

Claire Love

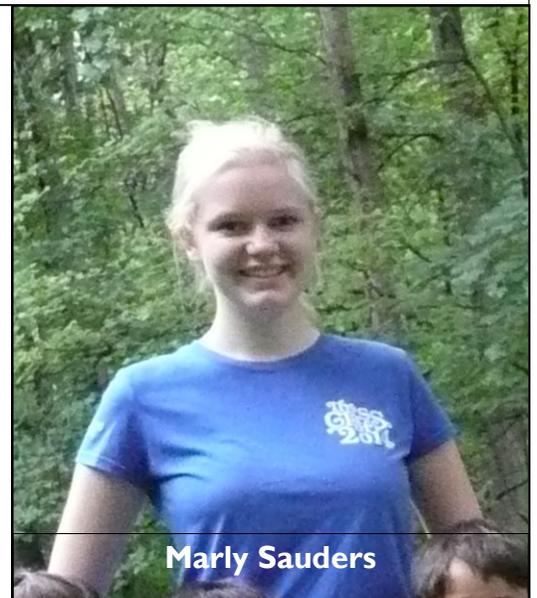


Cultural Resources Management Intern

My name is **Claire Love**, and I am currently a doctoral student in American history at George Mason University. My research focuses on technology, outer space, and science fiction. Working at Historic Huntley, I gained an ever deeper understanding of American and Virginia history in the centuries prior to the 20th. I love teaching and working with the visitors as well as our campers. The internship provided me with a new window into the ways I can use my history degree in the future.

Naturalist Intern

Hi! My name is **Marly Saunders** and I'm one of the naturalist interns. I'm a rising sophomore at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg where I double major in Biology and Environmental Science & Policy. I've had an absolutely amazing summer interning here at the Park; the chance to see how the Park is managed, to work with kids, and to get practical experience in biology & environmental science has been such a great opportunity. I'm more excited than ever to graduate and pursue a career in this field. Thank you SO much to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park for the opportunity and to the staff and volunteers for such an amazing summer.



Marly Saunders

Huntley Meadows Park Beginnings

By: Carolyn Gamble - Friends of Historic Huntley

Former Park Manager Gary Roisum was the first Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) employee assigned to Huntley Meadows Park (HMP). That was 38 years ago in 1977. He was 27 years old when the FCPA hired him to develop 1,261 acres into a public park. I called Gary the other day. He is enjoying retirement in Florida now. I asked him to help us picture those early years. Please enjoy this sampling of his remembrances. They gave him a draft master plan and little in the way of funds. Imagine yourself in his shoes. It's a daunting thought, isn't it?

"I had administered Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) grants in my prior position with City of Bowie parks in Maryland. I also developed trails, bridges, outdoor classrooms and amphitheaters in several parks within the Park Authority holdings. One of the first things I did at Huntley was apply for YCC/Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) grants. Through implementation of these grants over the next four years, I was able to buy equipment and materials and hire additional work force to construct the first boardwalk, observation tower and resource management facility at HMP."

"The crews were 50% girls and 50% boys. They liked to impress each other with their abilities, so they were great workers. The conditions were very difficult, especially in the summer. We all dealt with heat, humidity, ticks, mosquitoes, mud and creosote. Yes, creosote – it was legal to use it back then."

"The boardwalk and tower were strictly Do-It-Yourself projects that I designed. There were no architects drawing plans for us. It was a relief when years later the boardwalk and tower were replaced with an engineer approved design. I always worried about that first tower possibly twisting and coming down. We braced it and checked it all the time, but still I felt so responsible. I made sure boardwalk and tower replacement was included in the Park Bond program. "



YACC crew members were 50% female and 50% male.



YACC crew members building the first boardwalk.

"The biggest challenge was always funding. Planning was the easy part, but implementation was difficult."

"Surveying the boardwalk alignment involved sloggng through thick vegetation and mud in hipwaders, and marking the path with surveying ribbons. Buttonbush, swamp rose and cattails filled the wetland. "

"My old Volvo station wagon took a beating because that is all I had to use to transport materials before we received funding to buy a truck. For the first two years, I didn't even have a desk. I kept two filing cases in my Volvo. If I needed a table, I used one at Greendale Golf Course. However, if Greendale was really busy, I was kicked out to make a table free for patrons. "

'HMP Beginnings' - cont'd on page 5

'HMP Beginnings' - cont'd from page 4

"We laid out a grid system by marking trees with a bronze tag every 250 feet using transit and stadia, and mapped the vegetation and wildlife in the Park. This helped determine where to align the trails. We, of course, did not have the benefit of GPS or computers. "

"Three Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) buildings from the 1940s, as well as a cinderblock structure built by the Naval Research Laboratory were the only buildings in the Park. The blockhouse was located near the end of the Hike-Bike Trail and was full of graffiti and trash from kids partying in there. The FCPA Superintendent of Construction used a bulldozer and front end loader to break it up and remove the debris. Park staff and YACC/YCC worked on the remaining BPR buildings to make them usable as an office and tools/supplies storage area. We had to repair the roofs and siding and clean out the interiors. There was no insulation, wall board or ceiling, so we installed all of that and ran wiring for the electrical. After painting the concrete floor, I finally had an office with a desk!" (note: this is the current Resource Management Office).

"Poaching was common at the Park. Motorcycles were a problem on the trails, too. Once, we had to take down a log cabin that someone had built. It was made with trees from the Park and lumber stolen from a nearby housing construction site. The first day I explored the Park, I was confronted by a fierce pack of feral dogs. Animal Control ultimately removed 21 of them during the next few weeks."

Gary and I spoke of much more during our conversation. From these humble beginnings, Huntley Meadows Park has evolved into a regional gem and wildlife viewing mecca. Gary knew he was working with a wonderful resource and took the Park in a direction that we all enjoy today. Thanks Gary!

Gary Roisum at the 2014 dedication ceremony for the Wetland Restoration Project.



Volunteer at Huntley Meadows Park

Historic Huntley

The Park is looking for volunteers to help at the historic house, both leading Saturday tours and greeting visitors.

Huntley Meadows Park

As fall approaches, we are also seeking volunteers to help with series programs and field trip guides Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

For more information and to fill out an application please go to the following website
<https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/>

Go Green

Would you like to receive your newsletter via email? The Board is moving toward providing the newsletter through email.

If you would like to be added to our email list please email us at: friendsofhmp@gmail.com

1) Please indicate whether you would like to receive the newsletter via:

- Email
- Mail
- Both

2) Please indicate if you would like to receive occasional communications from FOHMP via email.

FOHMP DOES NOT SHARE
OUR EMAIL LIST WITH ANY
OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.



Thank You and Good-bye, from a Very Grateful Park Manager!

By Kevin Munroe

“You work at Huntley Meadows Park?! Wow, you’re lucky, and I’m jealous!” That’s a pretty standard reaction anyone who works here has heard many times, myself included. The Park’s reputation precedes itself - residents of other states and even other countries have heard of this place, and consider its staff and volunteers “lucky”, and of course they’re right! I have been very lucky to work here for the last eight years, and am already looking forward to coming back to walk the trails soon, as a visitor.

I have been dreaming of moving out West since I was 10, when my dad took me to his father’s ranch in New Mexico. That dream slowly turned into a plan over the last decade as I’ve made several trips to explore the Pacific Northwest. My last day as Park manager was July 11, and I’m currently working in Sonoma County, CA for a great organization called The Laguna Foundation. If I’m any good at this new job, it will be because of the excellent, comprehensive learning experience I received at Huntley Meadows Park. The two places are very similar: containing seasonally-flooded wetlands, meadows, and vernal pools, with an emphasis on resource protection and environmental education, and an amazingly dedicated and passionate community! As I’ve been telling everyone these last few months, I *don’t* want to leave VA, but I *do* want to go to CA.

I’m not sure it’s possible to leave the Park in better hands: current staff, volunteers, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Board members, and of course you! As members of Friends, you are the community that has protected, shepherded and supported the Park now for 30 years, the majority of the Park’s 40 year history. Despite the excitement of moving to California, I am sad and sorry to be leaving such a dynamic, unique and regionally-significant place as Huntley Meadows, but not at all worried - as long as the Park has a strong and involved Friends group, its future is secure.

I’d like to briefly share some of the special aspects of this Park that make it so unique, and so worth caring for:

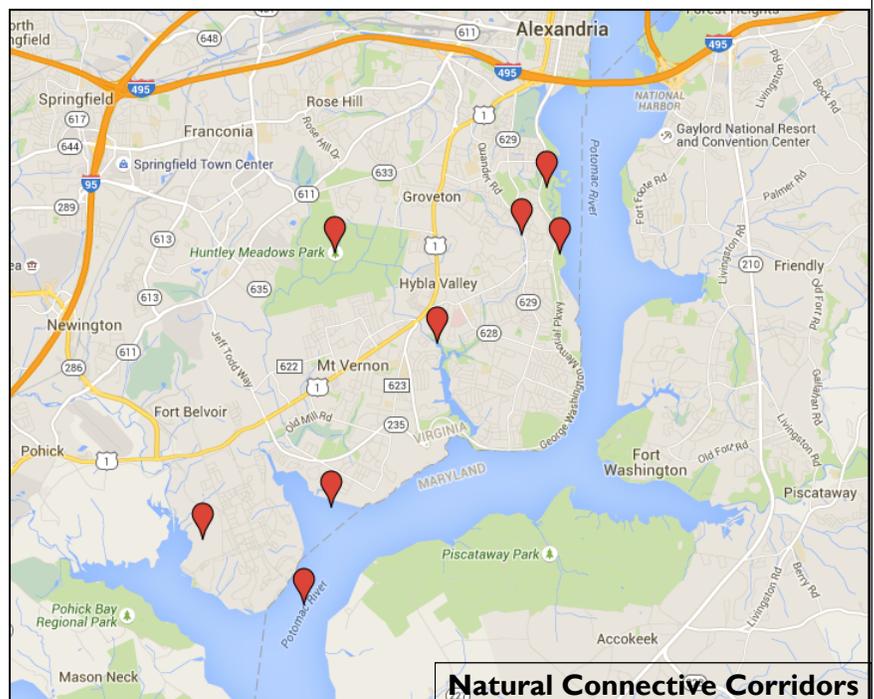
Size and Wholeness: At 1,554 acres, it is the largest **contiguous** resource-based Park in Fairfax County.

Focused and Specific Mission: The Park’s dual mission of Resource Protection and Environmental Education is strong and focused leading to international recognition.

Diverse and Regionally Significant Habitats: We know about our 50 acre hemi-marsh, but let’s not forget the Park’s other, and equally valuable habitats. Our open meadows, early successional scrub/shrub habitats, stands of mature trees, a shallow braided seep-fed stream system, Dogue Creek, and the largest Coastal Plain Depression Swamp in the State. This habitat is forested, dominated by trees and vernal pools, and covers almost the entire southern third of the Park. State officials are excited about, and would like to declare that section of the Park a State Natural Preserve.

Natural Connective Corridors: The Park is connected to several significant natural resources that add tremendous sustainability, re-charge potential and natural highways for both seeds and wildlife. We are connected to Jackson Miles Abbott Wildlife Refuge, Potomac River via Dogue Creek, Dyke Marsh and Hog Island on the Potomac River, via Little Hunting Creek, and Paul Spring Branch. From the perspective of water quality and wildlife populations, they are one system.

Community! Huntley Meadows Park has some of the most dedicated, passionate and knowledgeable patrons in the Washington, D.C area.



Natural Connective Corridors

'Park Manager Message' - cont'd from page 6

Biggest Challenges:

Some of the biggest upcoming challenges for the Park will be dealing with the projected population growth and resulting transportation infrastructure expansion. Some predications call for Fairfax County to double in population over the next few decades. That could mean one million additional residents. The entire Route 1 corridor, Telegraph Road, and South Kings Highway are all slated for large-scale expansion, along with their accompanying side streets. The high-density development of the Tysons Corner area will likely be the template used for most of South County during these expansions and re-zoning. This could bring some exciting and positive public transportation improvements, and excellent new schools, parks, entertainment and shopping opportunities. However, it will also put tremendous pressure on this 1,554 acre wooded parcel that serves as the major transportation blockage in southern Fairfax County. Proposals for new roads, bike commuter routes, parking lots and athletic fields to be added inside Huntley Meadows Park will come over the next few decades, as they already have in the Parks' not so distant past. It will be up to the Park's community, neighbors and Fairfax County voters to decide what additions to Huntley Meadows Park are needed. Please stay involved and informed, and do your best to make thoughtful, long-term choices.

Upcoming Projects:

The VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

is currently working with Park staff, the Virginia Native Plant Society and Friends of Huntley Meadows Park to learn more about the Park's State-rare flora and fauna, and exploring methods for protecting and managing HMP into the future. They are knowledgeable and dedicated professionals, and we're excited to have them as partners in conservation.



Virginia Department of
Game and Inland Fisheries

Historic Huntley's tenant house will be restored! Completion is scheduled for sometime in 2016, and will allow for more programming and interpretation of this George Mason family site and architectural gem.

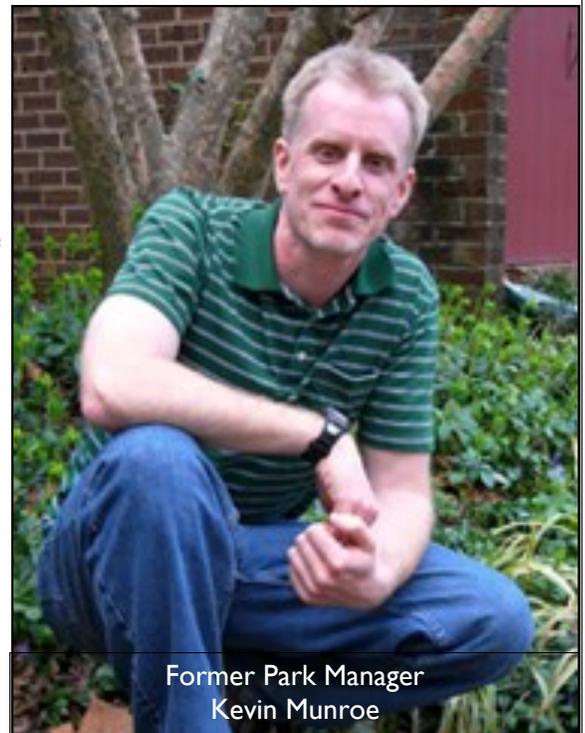
Wetland Restoration Project – it's all about management and monitoring now. It's been over a year since construction was completed for this project that involved two decades of planning, 60 public meetings and three separate environmental engineering firms. We're very happy with how the wetland has responded, especially plant communities, crayfish, fish, frogs and duck species. We're still aiming for Rails, Bitterns, and Grebes, and slowly working towards the correct water levels for spring and summer to attract them.

Park Staff and Volunteers are excited about increasing trailside, informal interpretation. The Park offers a great deal of educational programs, approximately 500 a year, including 25 camps with close to 10,000 students and scouts. We'd like to increase the amount of trailside informal interpretation for visitors that happen to be walking down the trail, rather than just offering registration-based programs.

What Role Does Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Play?

This is up to you! The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Board of Directors currently works closely with you, the members, to support the Park in just about every way possible: funding, advocacy, volunteer work in every capacity, education and outreach, partner and community building, on-line presence (website and Facebook), and much more. Serving as the **voice** of the Park and its extended community, acting as **long-term stewards** of these regionally-significant resources, and providing a stable **support system** for operations, programs and projects are all ways that YOU have helped the Park grow and flourish over its 40 years. If the Park is lucky, Friends will still be here 40 years from now!

Kindly,
Kevin Munroe



Former Park Manager
Kevin Munroe

Monday Morning Bird Walk

When we take bird walks, it's more than about birds. Certainly, it's rewarding to study a Tanager or a Warbler or a Thrush for a minute or so. We are dazzled by colors, song, and setting. But over time, our interest in birds gradually expands to include habitats, behaviors, and life cycles. We develop interests in things such as migration and breeding. As we watch a Thrush, we begin to think about anatomy or its beautiful song, and before long, we are swathed in the measureless scope of a bird's seemingly simple life.

I share leading the Monday Morning Birdwalk with my friend Nancy Vehrs. Nancy's basic interests revolve around wildflowers. With her background, we have gently helped some of our regulars see the relationships between birds and wildflowers. We are able to link the flower with the insects that eat it and use it as the host for their larvae, and with the birds which count on those insect stages for food. Nancy and I have watched the wonder show in the eyes of our friends as they grasp the clean symmetry of nature revealed in this simple example.

To watch the cycle of flowering plants in the Huntley wetlands from spring through fall is to also watch the progress of bird cycles. The synchronization of flowers, insects, and birds is stunning, and quite easy to observe. Here's an example: most songbirds we know in our area go through their courtship and nesting processes in early spring. These birds must feed their nestlings insects or caterpillars which are plentiful at this time. One notable exception to this pattern is the American Goldfinch. Goldfinches differ from most other songbirds in that they feed their chicks seeds instead of insects. Therefore, they have evolved to delay their nesting process until seeds are plentiful, which usually means late summer. So, while we notice the very bright plumage of the male Goldfinch beginning in late spring, their actual courtship and nesting doesn't occur until August or even September.

To watch birds, then, means to also watch evolution, biodiversity, and generally the miracle of the natural world. We still call it a birdwalk, but soon it becomes much, much more.

To learn more about our local native plants, and the insects and birds they attract, I highly recommend the guide, *Native Plants of Northern Virginia*, electronic copies of which are available at www.plantnovanatives.org.

Harry Glasgow

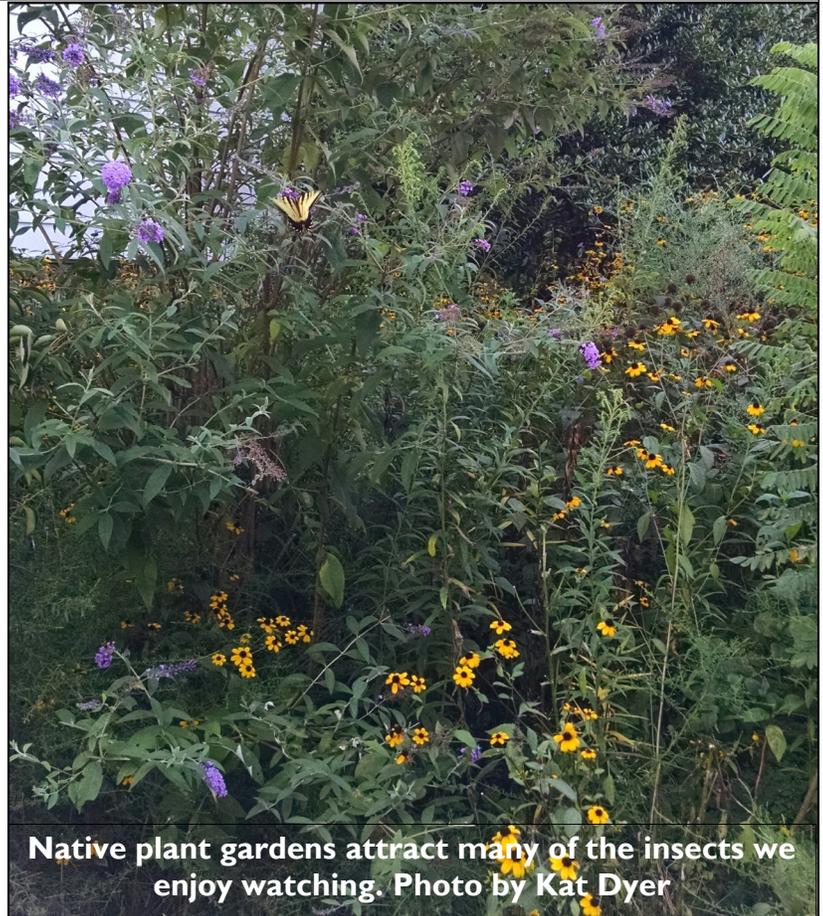
The Monday Morning Bird Walk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows Park since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7AM (8AM from November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders 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.



**Crimson Eyed Marshmallow being visited by an insect,
photo by Nancy Pryor**

'President's Message' - cont'd from page 1

Our area is becoming more densely urbanized with fewer connected green spaces, more houses and apartments and more impervious surfaces. In Fairfax County we talk about unconnected green spaces and fragmented forests. In between the unconnected natural areas are the places where we live. Each of us has a very important role to play to support our wildlife. We can create natural biological corridors between these green spaces connecting one natural area to the next. Our wildlife will travel along these natural corridors into and through our gardens from one individual property to the next, and then from one neighborhood to the next, and then onto the next green space. We can create spaces that connect our fragmented forest and green spaces by filling our gardens and our neighborhood green spaces with native plantings that are attractive to pollinators. We want to create a welcoming place for wildlife. When a majority of our more than 400 Friends create wildlife sanctuaries, this extends the impact that Huntley Meadows has as a wildlife sanctuary and provides important habitat and support for pollinator populations.



Native plant gardens attract many of the insects we enjoy watching. Photo by Kat Dyer

On another note (perhaps some of you know this already) our Park Manager Kevin Munroe has relocated to California for a new job opportunity. As Park Manager for eight years Kevin filled Huntley Meadows Park with his leadership, enthusiasm and commitment to all things Huntley Meadows. That included his inspiring work with me and the FOHMP Board of Directors. We will miss you Kevin. The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation is lucky to have you working for them. We all look forward to hearing of your successes and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

I hope to see you on the trails!
Cathy Ledec - President FOHMP

Thank you to all who contributed to the 2015 Birdathon!

Fred & Suzanne Lepple
Martha & Mark Orling
Cathy & George Ledec
Dorothy Raduazo
Sandra Galletta
Nancy Pryor
Barry Pearson
Larry Cartwright
Elizabeth Trexler
James Mathews
Alan Matson
Barbara Ward



Great Egrets fishing, photo by Nancy Pryor

Bonnie Baldwin
Michael Duffy
BJ Opfer
Steve & Ann Lindbom
Philip Krzywicki
Ana Argulelles & Jeff Wneck
Ann Van Deusen
Connie Carpender
Andy Higgs
Paula Sullivan
Den & Debbie Halla
Andrew Stifler

News & Announcements

Art Show

Maremi Andreozzi, a fan favorite at Huntley, will be showing and selling her art from September 12 through November. Her paintings of skylines and clouds in her last show were charming and relaxing. A portion of the sale proceeds will be donated to Huntley Meadows Park.

In Memoriam

FOHMP thanks all those who donated in memory of Seymour "Sy" Fishbein of Arlington, who passed away on June 6, 2015 at the age of 91. Sy was a long-time visitor to the Park, and we appreciate his family remembering us.

Lifetime Members

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

Sergio Peschard & Irma Noemi
 Karla Jamir & Paul Glist
 Lisa Romano
 Amy Kean
 Mark Lent

John Youngquist
 Kevin Munroe
 Stephen Kimbel
 James & Elizabeth McDonald

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

Website Relaunch

FOHMP has just relaunched our website! One great new feature is your ability to become a member, renew your membership, and make a donation using PayPal. It is a safe, secure, and a convenient option to support the Park.

Visit us at <http://www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/> to see all the new features!

The screenshot shows the website's layout. At the top is a navigation bar with links for ABOUT, MEMBERSHIP, NEWSLETTER, and CONTACT. Below this is a sidebar with buttons for Home, Visit, Programs, Resource Mgmt., Species Lists, Facility Rentals, and Resources. The main content area features a 'Wetlands Awareness Day' poster for Sunday, May 3rd, 2015, from 12-4 pm. The poster includes details about the event, such as 'Meet Live Raptors and Wetland Critters', 'Hands-On Activities and Crafts', and 'Discover Nature at Education Stations'. It also mentions 'Celebrate 40 Years of Wetland Conservation and Education' and provides contact information for more details. To the right of the poster is a 'Who We Are' section, which describes the organization's history and mission. Below that is a 'Monday Morning Birdwalk' section, which states that the birdwalk takes place every week, rain or shine, at 7 AM, and is free of charge. The bottom of the page features a section titled 'The Story of The Woman Who Saved Huntley Meadows Park', which begins with 'For 15 years, Norma Hoffman relentlessly campaigned against construction of a four-lane highway through the Park. The odds were...'

Message from Resource Manager

By: Dave Lawlor

I have some unfortunate news to share with everyone; Ranavirus was recently confirmed at Old Colchester Park which had a wood frog tadpole die off this past May. Old Colchester Park is only eight miles south of Huntley Meadows Park as the crow flies and raises a big red flag to me and other staff members. This is the first "Confirmed Positive" test result in Fairfax County, although there have been previous "Unconfirmed Positive" tests before in the County.

Here is a little bit of ranavirus background to put things into perspective. The ranavirus only affects ectotherms including amphibians, turtles, snakes and fish. It has not been cultured above 30 degrees centigrade, and appears to pose no risk to humans or other mammals. There is no cure or established treatment for the virus. The ranavirus is found in almost every state in the US and has been isolated (viral isolation and DNA) from frog populations exhibiting no symptoms (as close as Prince William County). Adult frogs can carry the disease, but most information about ranavirus comes from frog larvae and tadpole outbreaks which can cause high mortalities, up to 100%. The virus can spread between individuals and between species within the same pool, creek or wetland, including from frogs to frogs or frogs to fish, etc.



Tadpole infected with ranavirus.

Typical infected tadpole symptoms include red bellies, sores on the tail or underside, swollen abdomen and lethargy. These symptoms make the organism easy prey and help spread the transmission. If you see any signs of a tadpole or frog die-off, please notify staff immediately; any more than 10 dead tadpoles at a time in one area or any tadpoles exhibiting the previously listed symptoms should be reported. Amphibians have been classified by their susceptibility levels to the ranavirus in the laboratory. Four of our frog species are considered highly susceptible including; Southern Leopard Frog, Cope's Gray Treefrog, Green Frog and Pickerel Frog. One species in the Park is considered to have medium susceptibility to

the ranavirus, Marbled Salamander. Three species in the Park were reported as having low susceptibility to the virus, American Toad, Bullfrog, and Spotted Salamander.

What does this mean for Huntley Meadows Park? Well, it means we will be establishing new protocols to protect our amphibian, fish, snake and turtle populations across the entire Park. We ask for your full cooperation. The easiest way to help is to stay on the formal trails! By staying on the trails, you almost eliminate the possibility of introducing the virus to one of our vernal pools, wetlands or creeks. Always clean your boots from debris when arriving, even when you are staying on trails; this ensures no foreign material from another park will be deposited at Huntley (through boards in the boardwalk, etc.) which can possibly introduce the virus to the Park. We will be establishing new protocols for anyone venturing off trail and walking through our vernal pools, wetlands and creeks. For convenience and to ensure compliance, we will be installing two new boot/wader and equipment sanitizing stations on each side of the Park for all staff, volunteers and researchers to use so they can wash boots and equipment before entering the Park. A few things to remember when sanitizing your boots or waders: 1) please remove all mud and debris, before sanitizing; the virus can be in the debris, and those types of materials are very difficult to sanitize, 2) allow your boots 24 hours to dry, so we don't introduce chlorine to our pools which is very toxic to all organisms, 3) be diligent and timely! Make sure you allow enough time to perform the required steps before going off trail. Some will ask if dedicating a pair of boots to Huntley Meadows Park is enough and my answer would be no, for one basic reason. I believe this is the first of many new biological concerns we will have to deal with as we go forward. I think we should start getting in the habit of cleaning our boots, waders and equipment anytime we go afield to prevent the accidental introduction of any new disease that would threaten our incredible wildlife resources here at Huntley Meadows! The Chytrid fungus or BD fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*) is already present in Prince William County, although no signs of disease or death have been seen to date. Didymo is a possible invader as well. If you prefer, you can also sanitize your boots and equipment at home using a 3% solution of household bleach (with 6% Sodium Hypochlorite). A simple protocol is available online at http://fishandboat.com/ais/NEPARC_Disinfection_Protocol.pdf. Sanitizing stations have been made available at the park. Please contact me if you have any questions.

We will need help from all of you in limiting the Park's exposure to these new threats! Thank you for your continued cooperation and support!

Huntley Meadows Park Programs

All programs **require reservations**, unless free. Sign up 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.

Series Programs

Nature for Tiny Tots.

(Ages 24mos-42mos) 10-11am.
Child and parent learn about plants, animals, and their habitats through songs, crafts, and activities. Supply fee of \$5 is due to instructor at first class. Adult participation is required. 8 weeks. \$90

Mondays starting September 14. Registration code: 3404672002

OR

Thursdays starting September 17. Registration code: 3404672001

Nature Sleuths

(Ages 5-6 years) 4:00-5:30pm.
Wednesdays starting September 16. Children explore various habitats through hikes, hands-on investigations, stories, and the creation of their own nature journals. Additional supply fee of \$5 payable to instructor at first class. 8 Weeks. \$108. Registration code: 3404648901

Nature Detectives

(Ages 3-5 years) 10:00am-11:30am or 1:00pm-2:30pm.
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. 8 weeks. \$108

Wednesdays starting September 16. Registration code: 3404663302

OR

Thursdays starting September 17. Registration code: 3404663301

Homeschoolers at Huntley

(Ages 6-9 years) Thursdays 1:30-3:00pm.
At Historic Huntley. Students see the past laid out before their eyes and discover Huntley, Northern Virginia and Chesapeake-region history. Each week students 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. Starting September 17. 8 weeks. \$108. Registration code 5784866701

Science for Homeschoolers

(Ages 6-9 years) 1:30-3pm.
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 weeks. \$108

Wednesdays starting September 16. Registration code: 3404703001

OR

Thursdays starting September 17. Registration code: 3404703002

Autumn Adventures

(Ages 7-12 years) Wednesdays 4:00-5:30pm.
Come explore the forest, meadow and wetlands. Watch and learn the process of the summer melting away into autumn. Starting September 16. 8 weeks, \$108. Registration code: 3404810901

Young Explorers

(Ages 7-12 years) Mondays 4-5:30pm.
Through activities, crafts, journals and trail walks, students will learn about animals and how nature is preparing for the changing season. Students will also learn about the Park and improve their observation and interaction skills. Students should dress for the weather. Starting September 14. 8 weeks, \$108. Registration code: 3404702601

Boy Scout Merit Badges* (Ages 11-17)

Archaeology Merit Badge: Sunday, November 15, 10am-3pm. Registration code: 3404739701, \$38

Bird Study Merit Badge: Saturday, September 26, 9am-1pm. Registration code: 3404740001, \$30

Chemistry Merit Badge: Tuesday, December 29, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 3404748201, \$30

Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge: Sunday, October 18, 10am-2pm or Monday, December 21, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 3404749001, 3404749002 \$30

Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge: At Historic Huntley. Sunday, September 27, or Monday, December 28, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 5784739902, 5784739901 \$30

Citizenship in the World Merit Badge: At Historic Huntley. Sunday, October 25, 10am-3pm. Registration code: 5784749101, \$38

Environmental Science Merit Badge: Monday, December 21, 10am-3pm. Registration code: 3404740701, \$38

Fish and Wildlife Merit Badge: Sunday, September 27, 1pm-5pm. Registration code: 3404740901, \$30

Forestry Merit Badge: Sunday, October 11, 1pm-5pm. Registration code: 3404740301, \$30

Plant Science Merit Badge: Saturday, October 24, 10am-2pm, Registration code: 3404740401, \$30

Reptile and Amphibian Merit Badge: Sunday, September 13, 1pm-4pm. Registration code: 3404741801, \$23

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

Wagon Rides

Families (children 4 years and up). Enjoy a 90-minute tractor ride with a naturalist to the wetland and back. Look for and learn about songbirds, wildflowers, butterflies and waterfowl, and pause for a snack at the observation platform. Rides **leave from the South Kings Highway entrance.** \$6.

Saturday 9/26, 2pm	Registration code: 3404864901
Saturday 9/26, 4pm	Registration code: 3404864902
Saturday 10/17, 2pm	Registration code: 3404864903
Saturday 10/17, 4pm	Registration code: 3404864904

September

12 Saturday - Naturalist's Choice 'Behind the Scenes' (Ages 10-Adults), 10:00am-1:00pm. Come celebrate the Park's 40th Anniversary by taking a tour of some off the beaten path, seldom seen places with a Park naturalist. Dress for going off trail.

Registration code: 3404031401 \$8

17 Thursday - Saving Your Heirlooms

(Adults), 7:00-8:30pm. Is grandma's china hutch gathering dust in the corner? Are you afraid to touch your heirlooms because you don't know how to properly care for them? Join us for an evening to learn the proper care and cleaning techniques of your cherished family heirlooms. Bring any (small) items in for staff to examine.

Registration code: 5784023701 \$30

19 Saturday - Evening Stroll

(Ages 6-Adults), 6:30-8:00pm. Come for a relaxing stroll through the Park at dusk. A naturalist takes you on a tour of the woods and wetlands to watch and listen for beavers, owls and other nocturnal residents.

Registration code: 3404827901 \$6

26 Saturday

Sketch Hike: Wetlands

(Ages 9-13), 10:00am-12:00pm. Join Park artist and naturalist Margaret Wohler for a hike focusing on wetlands and learn techniques to enhance your wetland observation and sketching skills.

Registration code: 3404023801 \$8

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults), 3:00-5:00pm. Join the Park Manager to learn about the wetland restoration project and go for a walk to look for plants and animals in the Park's 50-acre marsh. Meet in the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center. No registration required. FREE

27 Sunday - Birding for Beginners

(Ages 12-Adults), 8:00-11:00am. Interested in birding? We can get you started! Learn about the birds in the Park and some basic identification skills. Program begins with an indoor discussion. Children ages 12 to 16 must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Registration code: 3404842501 \$6

October

3 Saturday

Sketch Hike: Fall Wetland Flowers

(Ages 15-Adults), 10:00am-12:00pm. Join Park artist and naturalist Margaret Wohler for a hike to the wetland focusing on fall flowers and learn techniques to enhance your fall flower observation and sketching skills.

Registration code: 3404023601 \$8

Friends of Historic Huntley's Second Annual Architecture Festival

(Families). 1:00pm-4:00pm. Event with special lecture and tour by Debbie Robison starting at 1:00pm. No registration required. Suggested donation \$5.

4 Sunday - Birding for Beginners (Ages 12-Adults), 8:00-11:00am. Interested in birding? We can get you started! Learn about the birds in the Park and some basic identification skills. Program begins with an indoor discussion. Children ages 12 to 16 must be accompanied by a registered adult. Registration code: 3404842502 \$6

8 Thursday Genealogy - Where Do You Come From?

(Adults), 7:00-8:30pm. Are you overwhelmed with stories of your family's exploits or is your family's past in an unknown country? Join us to learn some tips and tricks to start your genealogical exploration.

Registration code: 5784088101 \$30

10 Saturday - Naturalist's Choice

(Ages 10-Adults), 10:00am-12:00pm. See 9/12.

Registration code: 3404031402 \$7

Evening Walk

(Adults), 6:00-8:00pm. Join naturalist PJ Dunn to hike the trails after dark, looking and listening for owls, beavers and other night animals.

Registration code: 3404881801 \$7

11 Sunday - Huntley Harvest Festival (Ages 4-Adults),

1:00-4:00pm. Join us for a day at Huntley Meadows and Historic Huntley to experience how everything from foxes to farmers prepare for winter. Come for storytelling, fun and games for the whole family. Canceled if rain. Dress appropriately for the weather.

Registration code: 5784815601 \$10

24 Saturday - Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults), 3:00-5:00pm. See 9/26. No registration required. FREE

November

7 Saturday - Evening Walk

(Adults), 4:30-6:30pm. See 10/10.

Registration code: 3404881802 \$7

8 Sunday - Birding for Beginners

(Ages 12-Adults), 8:00-11:00am. See 10/4.

Registration code: 3404842501 \$6

14 Saturday - Boardwalk Astronomy

(Ages 12-Adults), 6:00-7:30pm. 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.

Registration code: 3404865101 \$6

21 Saturday

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults), 3:00-5:00pm. See 9/26. No registration required. FREE

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.

Registration code: 3404866601 \$7

**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 contribute toward funding 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**

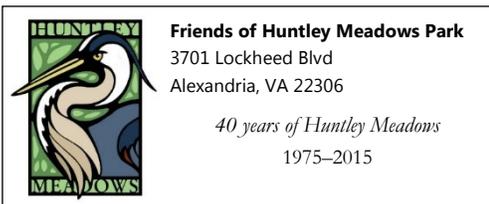


Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____



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