A Creek in Crisis: Time for Action

See p. 8 for coverage of this public meeting on the challenges facing the Wissahickon Creek and what municipalities and residents can do to improve its quality.
You may notice that this issue of the Friends of the Wissahickon newsletter is twice as long as usual. In our ongoing quest to be greener, FOW has inserted our Annual Report for 2014 into our summer newsletter. We hope to reduce mailing costs and our overall environmental footprint, while reaching a wider audience. The Annual Report is an in-depth summation of FOW’s work during the previous year—work that would not have been completed without the support of our members. We hope you will take the time to read it and learn more about Wissahickon Valley Park, the work of the Friends of the Wissahickon, and all that is being achieved by our members and volunteers in preserving this urban forest and watershed park.

This newsletter also features coverage of our second conference on water quality issues in the Wissahickon. A Creek in Crisis: Time for Action, held on May 13, was organized in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and Penn Future. Together, we sought to educate people on the state of the Wissahickon Watershed and engage them to become more active in protecting the watershed as citizens and as participants in its ecosystem. The Wissahickon Watershed, like all urban watersheds, crosses urban/suburban borders. On this side of the line, water quality is particularly important because of the public health impact on our drinking water. Of all the urban watersheds in Philadelphia, we believe the Wissahickon is the most beautiful. It is also one of the most heavily studied, and from these studies we know it is one of the most heavily compromised in terms of water quality.

While it is a place of extraordinary natural beauty and possesses a thriving ecosystem, it is in jeopardy and requires care.

Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association. We are grateful for their help in this effort, as well as the support of other local and regional organizations, such as the Philadelphia Water Department, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and Penn Future. Together, we sought to educate people on the state of the Wissahickon Watershed and engage them to become more active in protecting the watershed as citizens and as participants in its ecosystem. The Wissahickon Watershed, like all urban watersheds, crosses urban/suburban borders. On this side of the line, water quality is particularly important because of the public health impact on our drinking water. Of all the urban watersheds in Philadelphia, we believe the Wissahickon is the most beautiful. It is also one of the most heavily studied, and from these studies we know it is one of the most heavily compromised in terms of water quality.

While it is a place of extraordinary natural beauty and possesses a thriving ecosystem, it is in jeopardy and requires care. The water system itself, although better than it was decades ago, still has a long way to go to get where it needs to be in terms of quality. We hope those who participated learned how they impact the land and creek through their actions every day and were energized to become more involved in watershed stewardship.

Maura McCarthy, Executive Director

Why I am a Friend of the Wissahickon

Many people speak in a caring manner about the importance of giving back to the Wissahickon. Being a Friend of the Wissahickon not only enables me to give back by making a positive, tangible difference in the quality of the park, but also gives me a proud feeling of being, even in a very small way, responsible for what makes this park such a treasure.

—Jeff Clark, FOW Trail Ambassador and Member since 1990

United Way Donations

The Friends of the Wissahickon can receive membership/donations through the United Way. Our United Way number is 9882. If this is the most convenient way for you to give, please do so. Visit our website (www.fow.org) to learn about the benefits of membership in the Friends of the Wissahickon.
Wildlife Boxes for Sale

Volunteers from the Structures Crew and other individuals, under the direction of Steve Okula, have produced enough blue bird, hawk, bat, and wood duck boxes, that FOW can now offer them for sale. Find them at Killian’s Hardware in Chestnut Hill, Stanley’s Hardware on Ridge Avenue in Roxborough, and the Wissahickon Environmental Center. Sales benefit FOW’s Wildlife Committee. Thanks to Steve, Sam, John, Dave, Rich, and everyone else at The Woodshop!

FOW at International Trails Symposium

FOW Volunteer Coordinator John Holback represented the Friends of the Wissahickon at the 2015 International Trails Symposium in Portland, Oregon. The conference included dozens of lectures lead by trail builders, park/land managers, government agencies, and international trail organizations. Topics discussed included trail user conflict management, volunteer management, trail design pertaining to different user groups, and sustainable trail building practices. —John Holback, Volunteer Coordinator

Walnut Lane Bridge to Remain Open in 2015

PennDOT has announced that repairs to the Walnut Lane Bridge will be postponed to 2016, as reported by the Roxborough/Manayunk Patch. The repair project will remove and replace the bridge roadway, improve lighting and signage, and repair drainage systems and eroded slopes beneath the bridge. At a cost of $7 million, the project is estimated to take six months, and will require crews to close access to the bridge for motorists and direct them along a three-mile detour. Pedestrians will still have access to the bridge during the project.

Last Chance to See One Man’s Trash

FOW staff attended the opening of Trail Ambassador Bradley Maule’s exhibit, One Man’s Trash, on Earth Day, April 22, at the Fairmount Water Works. Maule collected litter in Wissahickon Valley Park throughout 2015 and amassed 3,786 pieces of trash. His goal was to shine a light on the abuse of the Wissahickon and bring the “carry in, carry out” principle to a larger audience. FOW has been supporting his efforts, and readers of this newsletter were able to follow his progress beginning in January 2015. The exhibit is free to the public and runs through June 26. Pictured here: FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy, Bradley Maule, and David J. Perri, P.E., Streets Commissioner.

Annual Ice Cream Social

Wednesday, August 19, 2015
3 to 6 pm
8708 Germantown Avenue in Chestnut Hill
Free ice cream • Live music
Nature activities for children
Meet with FOW’s staff and volunteers.
Members and volunteers are encouraged to wear their FOW gear!
More information at www.fow.org

Valley Green Bank Loves to Talk Up Valley Talks

UPCOMING TALKS:
9/24 & 10/20
All Valley Talks take place at the Valley Green Inn
To register and for more information, go to FOW.org

Maggie and Audrey Boyle

BRIEFLY NOTED

Annual Ice Cream Social
What’s Happening in the Wissahickon

1. Andorra Natural Area Improvements (FOW)—Rehabilitate and redesign 18,000 linear feet of trail to mitigate stormwater runoff and reduce sedimentation into Wissahickon Creek; install public, ADA accessible composting restroom; and build a new back porch for Wissahickon Environmental Center. Rerouting trail that leads from the intersection of Bell’s Mill Road and Forbidden Drive to the Andorra Meadow. **COMPLETE**

2. Wissahickon Environmental Center Stormwater Management (FOW)—$330K stormwater control project in Andorra Natural Area funded by Department of Environmental Protection. **Estimated to begin in 2016.**

3. Trail Closure & Reroute at Roxborogh Ave./Gorgas Lane (FOW)—Closure and restoration of two heavy eroded trail segments (totaling 1,600 ft). This will reduce stormwater runoff, lessen sedimentation in Wissahickon Creek, and mitigate damage to Forbidden Drive by stormwater. **Expect changed trail conditions at both locations from March 15 to October 15.**

4. Gorgas Run Stream Restoration (PWD)—Stream corridor stabilization and restoration of ~1,800 feet of the Gorgas Run stream corridor and ~300 feet of a small tributary to Gorgas Run. Also stabilization and repair of Trail collapse near intersection with Forbidden Drive. Trail will be closed throughout this year-long project. **Estimated to begin in fall 2015.**

5. Trail Improvements (FOW)—Improvements to the Orange Trail between Kitchen’s Lane and Mt. Airy Avenue. **COMPLETE**

6. Tread Stabilization (FOW)—a tread stabilization project in Blue Bell Park that will make the trail more resistant to erosion and damage. **COMPLETE**

7. Roxborough Reservoir (PPR)—Invasive vegetation removed in a 2.5-acre area. Planted approximately 300 trees and 300 shrubs in the cleared area along Eva Street. Ongoing invasive control work on the site, especially in the “dry” basin. Plans to reconstruct a trail that will traverse the fill in the dry basin in fall 2015.


This list is not comprehensive.

---

**FOW Seasonal Field Assistants Start June 15**

**New FOW Field Assistants will improve park experience throughout the summer.**

FOW has hired three field assistants to assist with monitoring and cleaning popular destinations in Wissahickon Valley Park. These seasonal assistants will interact with the public, informing them of park rules and communicating FOW’s stewardship values, in addition to collecting trash within the park, particularly around the Valley Green Inn and Devil’s Pool areas. They will also assist with the maintenance of trails and structures, and perform other duties as assigned. These new FOW employees will work in the park for fourteen weeks beginning June 15.
Friends at Tahawus Trails have installed the twenty-five new trailhead kiosks FOW had commissioned as part of the new Upper Trails Wayfinding & Signage System. These unique, hand-crafted structures were designed to match the style of many existing structures in the park and feature black locust and red cedar materials. Black locust is a naturally rot resistant wood that can withstand the elements for generations with no special treatment. Fence posts made from black locust have been known to last more than one hundred years. Pictured here is Eddie Walsh from Tahawus carefully placing the roof on a new kiosk at Rex Avenue.

Spring has sprung, and trail construction is in full swing in Wissahickon Valley Park. FOW currently has several projects in progress throughout the park.

Upper Trails Wayfinding & Signage System

New Porch with Green Roof at Andorra Tree House

The porch on the rear of the Wissahickon Environmental Center, also known as the Tree House, is 85% complete. The green roof, created by Roofmeadow, rain chains, skylight, and decorative "tree" railing have all been installed. The project is expected to be complete (minus the wheelchair ramp and some painting) by the end of June 2015. The quality of the craftsmanship that Ray Tschoepe from the Fairmount Park Conservancy (formerly Fairmount Park Historic Preservation Trust) and his team have brought to the porch is amazing and will be a lasting treasure in the Andorra Natural Area.

Yellow Trail Near Roxborough Ave.

FOW has made significant progress on a new trail route on the Yellow Trail near Roxborough Avenue. This new route elevates park users from the existing trail, that had sunk well below grade, onto a hemlock covered ridgeline with dramatic views of Forbidden Drive and the Wissahickon Creek far below. A grassy knoll above the new trail offers a great place to have a picnic or take in the beauty of this special spot. This photo shows a new section of trail that has been engineered to shed water along its course. Many of the older trails in the park concentrate water which leads to erosion.

Stone Staircase at Andorra Natural Area

FOW put the finishing touches on a new stone staircase that was started in the fall of 2014 as part of a new trail that connects Andorra Meadow to the intersection of Bell's Mill Road and Forbidden Drive. The schist found in the park is a relatively soft rock that can be shaped by hand to fit into tight spaces. Pictured here are Henry Stroud and Steve Thomas from Terra Firma Trails surveying the new steps. Like many of FOW’s projects, volunteers and paid staff all lent a hand in the construction.

Dangerous Trail Conditions near Valley Green

A large portion of the stone wall that supports the trail adjacent to Valley Green Road has collapsed. This trail is closed until further notice. For your safety, please avoid this area. We will share more information as it becomes available.
Unless otherwise noted, hikes use rocky, rugged trails that may be wet, slippery, or steep. Please wear sturdy, protective shoes or boots and bring water/snacks if you want them. Children over eight years of age are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult, unless otherwise noted. In general, walks are cancelled in the event of heavy rain or snow. Reservations are not required but are recommended for communication in the event of cancellation due to inclement weather.

Visit www.fow.org for updated information.

TRAIL AMBASSADOR WALKS

**Wissahickon Walkers with Kris Soffa**
**Wednesdays, June 17–Sept. 16 • 9–10 am**
Join us every Wednesday for a brisk 2 mile walk on Forbidden Drive from The Cedars House Café to the Covered Bridge and back. Learn fitness walking tips about posture, stretching, fitness poles, weight vests, etc. Suitable for adults. No pets please. Rain cancels. Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

**History Walk on the Lower Wissahickon with Sarah West**
**Saturday, June 20 • 3–4:45 pm**
See two Revolutionary War era historical sites. Learn the history of the Wissahickon Turnpike, Forbidden Drive, the Walnut Lane Bridge, and more. Distance: 1 mile along lower Forbidden Drive on level ground as far as Walnut Lane Bridge. Meet at the small parking lot where Forbidden Drive meets Lincoln Drive, a short distance downstream from RittenhouseTown.

**Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn**
**Sunday, June 21 • Noon–2 pm**
Hike the Andorra Meadow. Learn about the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House); see the Great Beech and Fallen Magnolia. Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

**Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena**
**Sunday, July 12 • 2–4 pm**
Exotic alien plants are invading local ecosystems, and local native species struggle to stand their ground! See firsthand the difference between a disturbed, invaded woodland and some more naturally balanced areas. Identify problematic exotics, meet some of our treasured native species and find out how you can help at home. Level: Easy-moderate. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Sturdy, comfortable footwear recommended. Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking lot.

**Meandering in the Wissahickon with Shelly Brick**
**Sunday, June 28 • 11 am**
Enjoy our park, meet new folks, and “talk story.” The path is more than the destination. Pace will be set by the group, and remember to bring water and wear sturdy shoes. All ages welcome. Meet at intersection of Wayne Ave. and Allen’s Lane.

**Trails Less Traveled I: Monoshone Trail with Gerry Schweiger**
**Sunday, July 12 • 1 pm**
Did you know that there is a trail along Monoshone Creek? Or that trails lead up to the Yellow Trail from the Lincoln Drive bike trail? We will hike over these little-used trails. Cover legs and arms due to poison ivy. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Duration: 2 hours. Meet at Johnson St. between Wissahickon Ave. and Lincoln Drive. Johnson is one way between Wissahickon and Lincoln, so enter Johnson from Wissahickon. Park on Johnson as close to Lincoln as possible.

**Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena**
**Sunday, July 26 • 4–6 pm**
Exotic alien plants are invading local ecosystems, and local native species struggle to stand their ground! See firsthand the difference between a disturbed, invaded woodland and some more naturally balanced areas. Identify problematic exotics, meet some of our treasured native species and find out how you can help at home. Level: Easy-moderate. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Sturdy, comfortable footwear recommended. Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking lot.

**Exploring the ABCs of the Wissahickon with Cathryn Fassbender and Bruce Wagner**
**Sunday, July 19 • 3 pm–5 pm**
Explore the Wissahickon as we look to spell our names with the shapes of tree limbs, plants, and everything we can find on the hike. We will be working together to find as many letters to create a photographic collage with each participant’s name. Level: Moderate. Hiking boots or sneakers recommended. Pace will be determined by group. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

**Moth Night in Andorra Natural Area with Kris Soffa**
**Tuesday, July 21 • 7:30–9:30 pm**
Watch a short PowerPoint orientation and learn how to best observe moths in your home garden, construct a simple catch & release moth trap, and set up Ultra-Violet light lures and “sugaring” with our secret Moth Bait recipe. Meet special guest, Environmental Scientist Vaughn Shirley, who will instruct on how to participate in his new Citizen Scientist Moth Identification Project. Bring flashlights and smartphone (to register your sightings on the Citizen Scientist project at http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/phildub). Be prepared to walk quietly on the trails and woods in the dark. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Rain cancels. Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center, 300 Northwestern Ave., 19118

**Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn**
**Sunday, July 26 • 4–6 pm**
Hike the Andorra Meadow. Learn about the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House); see the Great Beech and Fallen Magnolia. Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

TA Maureen Flanagan shares information about landscape painter Walter Schofield. This hike was led by Flanagan and TA Bruce Wagner as part of a series inspired by the exhibition Schofield: International Impressionist that ran at the Woodmere Art Museum in 2014.
Butterfly Walk in the Wissahickon with Kris Soffa
Friday, July 31 • 10 am–Noon
Join Kris Soffa, North American Butterfly Association member, and learn fun facts, how to identify common butterflies, and how to attract butterflies to your garden. hike the Andorra Natural Area. Bring water, long pants, sturdy footwear, cameras, identification book, binoculars, and magnifying glass recommended. Rain cancels. Level: Moderate. Pre-registration required. Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center, 300 Northwestern Ave., 19118

Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena
Sunday, August 9 • 2–4 pm
Exotic alien plants are invading local ecosystems, and local native species struggle to stand their ground! See firsthand the difference between a disturbed, invaded woodland and some more naturally balanced areas. Identify problematic exotics, meet some of our treasured native species and find out how you can help at home. Level: Easy–moderate. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Sturdy, comfortable footwear recommended. Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking lot.

Kid Friendly Hike with Marv Schwartz
Saturday, August 15 • 10 am–12 pm
We will walk along Forbidden Drive and visit the Livezey Dam and Gorgas Creek cave, cross the Mt. Airy Bridge, and hike the hillside trail, then pass through Fingerspan Bridge. We’ll snack, then continue on to Devil’s Pool and Peck Wee Rock on our return. Level: Moderate on some rocky trails. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Finding a Full Dozen Wissahickon Valley Icons with Bruce Wagner and Cathryn Fassbender
Sunday, August 16 • 3–5 pm
A walk from Valley Green to Mt. Airy Bridge and back going through some of the most interesting icons and points of history in the park. We will see what is happening today, and what has happened over the course of two centuries. Our paths include rocks and hills, and we will ford Cresheim Creek, so wear good hiking shoes. Easy pace over moderately difficult terrain. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn
Sunday, August 23 • 10 am–noon
Hike the Andorra Meadow. Learn about the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House); see the Great Beech and Fallen Magnolia. Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House–Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

Geology Hike with Sarah West
Saturday, September 19 • 3–4 pm
We will talk about a recent theory of the formation of Wissahickon rocks, and visit several interesting geological formations, including an 18th century granite quarry and the talc-schist and magnetite formations of Wissahickon rocks, and visit the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Tree House); see the Great Beech and Fallen Magnolia. Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking lot.

Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena
Sunday, September 13 • 2–4 pm
Exotic alien plants are invading local ecosystems, and local native species struggle to stand their ground! See firsthand the difference between a disturbed, invaded woodland and some more naturally balanced areas. Identify problematic exotics, meet some of our treasured native species and find out how you can help at home. Level: Easy–moderate. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Sturdy, comfortable footwear recommended. Meet at Kitchen’s Lane parking lot.

Kid Friendly Hike with Marv Schwartz
Saturday, August 23 • 10 am–noon
We will walk along Forbidden Drive and visit the Livezey Dam and Gorgas Creek cave, cross the Mt. Airy Bridge, and hike the hillside trail, then pass through Fingerspan Bridge. We’ll snack, then continue on to Devil’s Pool and Peck Wee Rock on our return. Level: Moderate on some rocky trails. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Finding a Full Dozen Wissahickon Valley Icons with Bruce Wagner and Cathryn Fassbender
Sunday, August 16 • 3–5 pm
A walk from Valley Green to Mt. Airy Bridge and back going through some of the most interesting icons and points of history in the park. We will see what is happening today, and what has happened over the course of two centuries. Our paths include rocks and hills, and we will ford Cresheim Creek, so wear good hiking shoes. Easy pace over moderately difficult terrain. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Become an FOW Crew Leader
The Friends of The Wissahickon needs Crew Leaders—experienced volunteers who are committed to FOW’s mission of habitat protection in the park, skilled in leading volunteer groups and building trails and/or restoring habitat, and interested in sharing their knowledge and expertise with others. Crew Leaders can participate in a variety of training sessions held throughout the year. Training session topics include machinery operation, trail building, trail maintenance, tree and shrub planting, plant identification, First Aid and CPR, and volunteer leadership and safety. Contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org for more information or to register.
The beauty of the Wissahickon Creek is undeniable. Its picturesque riffles and tranquil pools are compelling—many seek solace on its banks. But what many don’t know is that the Wissahickon is in trouble.

At a recent town hall discussion at Germantown Academy, experts described the twenty-three-mile-long creek as eroded, degraded, damaged, and impaired. And though it may be hard for many to believe, the creek’s future is dire.

Hosted by Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW) and the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA), *A Creek in Crisis* public meeting on May 13 presented a sobering look at the state of the Wissahickon Creek’s demise and spelled out what municipalities and residents can do to improve its quality.

Held at Germantown Academy, 250 people joined the discussion. A panel of regional experts addressed the various challenges facing the Wissahickon and presented solutions to a decades-long problem that is only getting worse as development increases, placing more pressure on this natural resource.

**What the Experts Say**

The sixty-four-mile Wissahickon Watershed plays a critical role in the region. It contributes to the drinking water of 350,000 Philadelphians, which represents ten percent of Philadelphia’s drinking water. And Wissahickon Creek flows through Wissahickon Valley Park, an area that is enjoyed by over one million visitors each year.

Maura McCarthy, Executive Director of FOW, set the tone of urgency for action. “If we want the Wissahickon Creek to exist for future generations, it’s incumbent upon those who love it so much to make investments in restoration now, while we still can,” McCarthy said. “And though it’s not a quick fix, solutions can be achieved by working together at all levels of government to protect this special place that holds rich history.”

Patrick Starr, Executive Vice President of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), set the tone for the meeting. Once a leader in watershed health, he said, the Wissahickon has experienced steep decline as a result of a century of heavy development. But, he maintained, the demonstrated history of public and private attention to the Wissahickon gives hope for change.

“The Wissahickon doesn’t have to be an impaired stream,” Starr said. “Can we get there? Yes, but it’s going to take a lot of work.”

---

**See p. 13 for coverage of FOW and WVWA volunteers at the Annual Creek Clean-Up!**
One of the biggest problems in the Wissahickon Watershed is stormwater management. Because of the increased development in the watershed, stormwater cannot be absorbed naturally into the landscape, and flooding occurs. The Wissahickon Creek acts like a pipe, not a stream. Stormwater gushes into the creek, bringing with it bacteria and chemicals, and causing severe erosion in its wake.

These flood events are costly. A series of recent floods have caused extensive damage to the park. In 2004, flood damage totaled $3 million, according to Sarah Marley, Outreach Manager with FOW.

Chris Crockett, Deputy Commissioner of Planning and Environmental Services at the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD), provided sobering statistics about the high bacteria content and general water quality in the Wissahickon Creek after a rain storm. Fertilizers, pet waste, chemicals, and road salts are some of the sources of contamination that degrade the stream quality and make it unhealthy. Runoff from sewage treatment plants compounds the problem.

Although improving quality is a slow process, Crockett said, PWD is committed to making the Wissahickon healthier. “Managing a watershed is never done. It’s a living, breathing thing,” he said. Residents can help by checking both their stormwater and sanitary drains, making sure they are working properly.

Development has reached an all-time high, which means that there are fewer places for water to go during a storm event. For example, sections of Ambler and North Wales have 100% impervious cover, which means that water drains downstream, with no place for absorption. Much of that water flows directly into the Wissahickon. Each municipality develops a stormwater management plan and must allow for public input into the plan. Citizens can become involved by engaging in the process and looking at how these plans effect the Wissahickon Watershed.

Michael Helbing, an attorney at PennFuture and one of the panelists, suggested that residents contact their local municipality to learn more about the process and the issues involved.

Dennis Miranda, Executive Director of WVWA, stated, “When you educate municipalities and citizens alike on the issues facing the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek and get everyone on the same page, all of our collective actions can make a positive impact and move the needle on improving water quality.”

Public Feedback

John Foley of Chestnut Hill and his wife, Emily Plowman, attended the meeting because protecting the Wissahickon is very important to them. They said they moved to Chestnut Hill to be near the Wissahickon Creek and they want to know what they can do so that that their young son can enjoy the creek in the future.

Foley is a volunteer creek watcher with WVWA and regularly monitors conditions in the creek. He said he left the meeting with a better sense of how one person’s actions can help the creek, and he was surprised by what he could do to help. “It’s the micro-things that really make a difference,” Foley said, “like collecting rain water, planting native plants, and not washing your car in your driveway.”

Zeta Cross said, noting she was planning to contact her township engineer to learn more about the township’s plans for managing stormwater.

Even though she serves on the township’s environmental advocacy committee, she said she didn’t know opportunities existed for homeowners to give public comment and input on the township’s plans for stormwater management.

The road to improving the health of the Wissahickon is a long one and will require the commitment and dedication of state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and residents throughout the watershed. The Friends of the Wissahickon and the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association are committed to restoring the creek. They need you to do your part to help them achieve this goal.

What you can do to help the Wissahickon Creek

- Reduce the use of fertilizers on your lawn
- Install a rain garden or rain barrel
- Replace some of your lawn with a natural meadow or garden
- Use native plants in your garden
- Redirect downspouts onto your lawn, instead of the road
- Always pick up after your pets
- Dispose of used car oil and household chemicals properly
- Wash your car at a car wash
- Keep yard clippings away from drains and stream banks
- Let the vegetation along stream banks grow naturally

Friends of the Wissahickon • Summer 2015
The spring bird migrations were in full swing on May 2 when birding expert Ruth Pfeffer led a group of birders through the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum. Organized by FOW, the group got the opportunity to see forty-four different species of birds, some passing through Tinicum on their way north, and others returning to nest from their wintering grounds.

Tinicum was chosen as the first Important Bird Area in the State of Pennsylvania. The first bald eagles to nest in Philadelphia chose Tinicum. It consists of 1,000 acres which include impoundments for waterfowl, woodland trails, etc.

Birds spotted at Tinicum
- American Crow
- American Goldfinch
- American Robin
- Bald Eagle (only seen by 2 birders)
- Baltimore Oriole
- Barn Swallow
- Blue Jay
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- Blue-winged Teal
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Canada Goose
- Carolina Chickadee
- Carolina Wren (heard)
- Chimney Swift
- Common Grackle
- Common Yellowthroat
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Downy Woodpecker
- European Starling
- Forster’s Tern
- Gray Catbird
- Great Egret

Safety Guidelines
- Exercise with a partner; if exercising alone, avoid using the park during off-peak times.
- Be alert! Go headphone free! It leaves you vulnerable to physical injury and crime.
- Vary your routine. Go at different times and start from different locations.
- Trust your instincts. If you sense trouble because of a person or a place, leave.
- When parking your car, lock doors, carry keys with you, and do not leave valuables in plain sight in the car.
- Call 911 if your car is broken into. Use the parking lot number to report the location of your car. Stay until the police arrive.
- Report suspicious activity by calling 911.
- Visit www.fow.org frequently. FOW posts crime alerts as necessary.
- Philadelphia Park System Rangers: 215-685-2172. If you are unable to call 911 or the Rangers, find an FOW Trail Ambassador (TA) and ask for help.
- TAs provide information to park visitors about the Wissahickon and report any problems they encounter to Park Rangers.

Public Pools Near the Park
Swimming at Devil’s Pool and in any of Philadelphia’s rivers and streams is illegal and dangerous. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health states that swimming and wading is not permitted due to risks of drowning, injury from submerged objects, strong currents, and other hazards. Swimming in Philadelphia creeks and rivers is also a serious health hazard because of bacterial contamination and pollution in the water. FOW encourages park users to use local pools this summer.

Hillside Recreation Facility
201 Fountain Street
Philadelphia, PA 19128
215-685-2595

Kendrick Recreation Facility
5822-24 Ridge Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19128
215-685-2584

Pleasant Recreation Facility
6720 Boyer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19119
215-685-2230

Swimming at Devil's Pool and in any of Philadelphia's rivers and streams is illegal and dangerous. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health states that swimming and wading is not permitted due to risks of drowning, injury from submerged objects, strong currents, and other hazards. Swimming in Philadelphia creeks and rivers is also a serious health hazard because of bacterial contamination and pollution in the water. FOW encourages park users to use local pools this summer.

The spring bird migrations were in full swing on May 2 when birding expert Ruth Pfeffer led a group of birders through the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum. Organized by FOW, the group got the opportunity to see forty-four different species of birds, some passing through Tinicum on their way north, and others returning to nest from their wintering grounds.

Tinicum was chosen as the first Important Bird Area in the State of Pennsylvania. The first bald eagles to nest in Philadelphia chose Tinicum. It consists of 1,000 acres which include impoundments for waterfowl, woodland trails, etc.

Birds spotted at Tinicum
- American Crow
- American Goldfinch
- American Robin
- Bald Eagle (only seen by 2 birders)
- Baltimore Oriole
- Barn Swallow
- Blue Jay
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
- Blue-winged Teal
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Canada Goose
- Carolina Chickadee
- Carolina Wren (heard)
- Chimney Swift
- Common Grackle
- Common Yellowthroat
- Double-crested Cormorant
- Downy Woodpecker
- European Starling
- Forster’s Tern
- Gray Catbird
- Great Egret
Watershed Wizards is a free, after-school pilot program for grade school students that enhances environmental and water-focused school curriculums through guided exploration and adventure activities. Launched this year with funding from the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) in conjunction with the East Falls Development Corporation, Watershed Wizards was conceptualized by Peg Shaw, MLA and ISA certified arborist, as a way to bolster young people’s knowledge and interest in the environmental systems of their communities, thereby encouraging a life-long passion for nature and sustainable development.

Focusing on the Thomas Mifflin School and Wissahickon Charter School in East Falls, the program was initially promoted to all children in grades 4 through 8. Soon it became clear that the program concept appealed most readily to 4th and 5th graders in both schools, and so activities were tailored to those age-groups. During the first session, it became equally apparent that the children who chose to participate in the program were highly motivated, curious, and passionate about science and nature.

Watershed Wizards met every Friday afternoon after school, alternating between Thomas Mifflin and Wissahickon Charter Schools. Environmental Educator and Landscape Designer Allison Ostertag, MLA, collaborated on program development and instruction. Jaime Minich, a graduate student of environmental public health at Temple University, volunteered to provide valuable support and assistance.

The Watershed Wizards program took cues from the PWD watershed curriculum currently adopted by several schools in the City (although not at either school in East Falls). The program guided participating students through an exploration of watersheds as geographically defined and comprehensible landscapes, water use and quality, topography, slope and soil infiltration, stormwater and stormwater management, the impact of native and invasive plants in the watershed, and school-ground site analysis and design for enhancing beauty and enjoyment through stormwater management systems using native plants.

One of the most anticipated highlights of the program were the Saturday field trips. These trips were designed to add a deeper layer of understanding for the children while providing adventure and excitement. Field trips included exploring the green stormwater management facilities in East Falls, touring a wastewater treatment facility, visiting the Fairmount Waterworks, searching for macro invertebrates in the Wissahickon Creek, and enjoying a nature walk at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

By the end of the school year, students installed native plant gardens on their school grounds and celebrated their official status as Watershed Wizards with their families, friends, teachers, and community. It is hoped that this program can be further developed and expanded in East Falls and inspire other neighborhood school communities to offer similar enrichment after-school programs to their students.

In Their Own Words

My favorite hobby is science.

I want to participate because it sounds really fun and interesting.

I love experiments and I like to draw.

I am interested in learning the different ways water is being used in my community.

I like buildings and technology and being outside.

Quotes from student’s Watershed Wizards program applications.
Volunteer Highlights

by John Holback, Volunteer Coordinator

The Crefeld students have been working hard all spring. They helped out in Carpenter's Woods with the Meadow revitalization project, as well as repaired sections of fence. They removed invasive plants on Lincoln Drive, spread gravel at Northwestern Stables, and helped with lots of miscellaneous trail work.

The Structures Crew recently built six new picnic tables for the Wissahickon. Find them at all three stables, The Cedars House, and Houston Playground. The Crew has also been keeping up with bench and gate repairs throughout the park. You can check out their work at Forbidden Drive and Northwestern Avenue, where you will find a new portable toilet enclosure.

The Yellow Trail is ready for action! After about half-a-dozen workdays, two machines workshops, four school group workdays, and some staff hours, the new Yellow Trail reroute in Roxborough is completed. The trail includes two stone walls, logs and stone chokes, and some entirely hand-built sections. Thanks to the dozens of individuals who volunteered, as well as students from North Penn School District and the Episcopal Academy.

FOW's Crew Leaders have been hard at it this spring. In addition to leading their own workdays, helping lead crews on larger workdays, and removing downed trees, they have been learning and honing their skills in a variety of workshops offered to them by FOW. Rigging Training with Tahawus Trails LLC was a blast, as was Advanced Machines Training with professional trail builder Valerie Naylor. Special thanks to Crew Leaders John Jensen and Sharon Horace for doing an awesome job leading their own crews!

Fifteen volunteers made it out for Love Your Park Day in May. The size of the volunteer crew was perfect for the work being done. They demolished a small rogue trail, installed some split rail fence, moved a ton (literally) of rocks and logs, and still had enough energy to clear the corridor for a trail reroute.

Map of Wissahickon Valley Park

NEW EDITION!

New trail distance info.
New contour elevations.
Reflects STI trail changes.

Still made with durable synthetic paper and 100% recycled materials!

Only $10

Available for purchase at FOW's office and www.fow.org.
Free to all new FOW members and current members when they first renew at the $45 level or above.
Also available at: Weavers Way Co-op, Valley Green Inn
Find more locations at www.fow.org

Saturday Workdays
with FOW
9 am to 1 pm
Held most Saturdays unless it is a holiday or there is inclement weather. Projects include trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and clean-ups.

Wednesday Workdays
9 am to 12 pm
Can't volunteer with FOW on the weekends? Still want to help out? Come work with the Wednesday Morning Crew. This volunteer group takes on whatever needs to be done that week. Always a good time!

To register for all workdays, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x107.
Visit http://www.fow.org/volunteering for more information.
A. Just some of the 70 volunteers who came out to help clean the creek!
B. Sophorn Choy and Dan Duggan
C. Sam Bilus and Shiloh and Bodin Bloom
D. Marlbeth Crane, Lali Merino, Ben Okon, Ginny Catar, and Vishal Kumar
E. Tom, Miranda, and Jeffrey Mencken with Luke Caucci
F. Nina Dudley and Brie Halloway

66 Bags Collected at Annual Creek Clean-Up

FOW had another successful Creek Clean-Up on April 25. Sixty-six bags of trash were removed from Wissahickon Valley Park by seventy enthusiastic volunteers. This was in addition to the trash collected by our upstream neighbors at the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) who added 350 volunteers to the effort.

The Annual Creek Clean-Up is sponsored by the Friends of the Wissahickon and the WVWA. This spring marked the 45th anniversary of WVWA’s Annual Creek Clean-Up, which was sponsored by Merck & Co. It was the sixth year that FOW has worked with WVWA to clean the Wissahickon Creek.

FOW volunteers cleaned up a section of the creek in Chestnut Hill, at Northwestern Avenue and Forbidden Drive. While in Montgomery County, volunteers of all ages cleaned sections of the Wissahickon Creek or a tributary, extending from Lansdale to Flourtown.

Thanks to all the volunteers who came out and special thanks to the Wharton Business School for sending a huge crew of volunteers!
FOW Urges Park Users to Keep Dogs on Leash

FOW encourages park users to keep their dogs on leash when visiting Wissahickon Valley Park this summer. The city leash law requires all dogs to be on a leash no more than six feet long for the safety of park users, their pets, and wildlife. The law applies to all city parks, and in the Wissahickon includes Forbidden Drive, the Andorra Natural Area, Carpenter's Woods, and all hiking and biking trails.

It is also important to clean up after your pet. Keeping your pet leashed will help protect the fragile forest habitat. Pet waste may contain pollutants and disease. High levels of nutrients and ammonia are released when pet waste washes into creeks. These pollutants increase algae growth and reduce oxygen levels in creeks, particularly harmful to fish during warm months when water temperatures rise.

Police officers and Park Rangers patrol the park throughout the summer to increase safety and enforce all park regulations regarding swimming, parking, littering, and walking dogs off-leash. Dog owners may be fined or held responsible for damage or injury caused by their dogs.

Reasons to Keep Dogs on Leash

- Keeping a dog on leash reduces its exposure to deer ticks, which carry Lyme disease, and wild animal populations that can carry rabies.
- If a dog startles a horse, it may be kicked and injured, and the rider may be thrown and injured or even killed. With a leash, an owner can remove their pet from a dangerous situation.
- A dog could be hit by a biker if it runs across his/her path, injuring dog and biker.
- A dog on a leash is less likely to get into a fight with another dog or animal.
- Dogs running off the trails damage plants and reduce the habitat available to wildlife, especially ground-nesting birds.
- Dogs off leash have been known to harm deer and chase them into traffic, leading to severe injuries or fatalities for both deer and people.
- It is more difficult to find a dog’s waste and carry it out when the dog runs off leash; dog waste left in the park is carried by stormwater run-off into the creek adding to bacterial pollution and reducing water quality.
- Even a friendly dog can injure elderly or very young park users if allowed to jump and run freely.

What the Law Says

§10-104. Animals Running at Large and Vicious Animals.

No person shall permit any animal other than a cat to go at large upon any street, public place or private property other than the property of the owner of the animal. All animals using any street, public place or private property of anyone other than the owner of the animal shall be on a leash not exceeding six (6) feet in length including the handgrip but excluding the collar and accompanied by a person able to fully control the animal at all times.

Horses shall be exempt from the provision requiring a leash but shall under this Section require proper rein and bit or halter and lead shank.

Any animal running at large in violation of this ordinance shall be seized by any animal control officer or police officer and delivered to an appropriate area of confinement approved by the Department of Public Health.

Free Dog Leashes from FOW

Pet owners are invited to pick up a free dog leash at FOW’s office.

Leashes are blue with white FOW imprint.

FOW’s office is located at:
8708 Germantown Ave.
Philadelphia, 19118

FOW Takes a Virtual Walk in the Woods

Arborist Ken LeRoy explored the Wissahickon Valley’s woody flora in all its glory and diversity at a Valley Talk on April 21. LeRoy identified the various tree species and the ecosystems where they occur. He also discussed the many associate animal and insect species, as well as forest and soil ecology dynamics. He is an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist since 1991 and is dedicated to integrating trees and plants into the urban and suburban environments. Valley Talks are sponsored by Valley Green Bank. Pictured here are: Lesley Seitchik of Valley Green Bank, FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy, Arborist Ken LeRoy, and Debra Wolf Goldstein from Philadelphia’s Park & Recreation Commission.
They’re Playing Outside!

by Trish Fries, Wissahickon Environmental Center

Many parents in Philadelphia feel that they cannot let their children play outside anymore—they watch the news. But maybe they have also heard about “nature deficit disorder,” a term coined by Richard Louv in his book, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder (2005). There are multiple studies supporting the benefits of being outdoors for children with ADHD, weight issues, poor eyesight, and more. There is now the research that supports the importance of everything baby boomers grew up with years ago. Children need to spend time outdoors with unstructured play, and what better place to play than in the Wissahickon.

Families are welcome to bring their children to explore and play at the Wissahickon Environmental Center, also known as the Tree House, in the Andorra Natural Area. Take the bus, bike, or hike into the woods. If needed, park in the often empty parking lot. Even when Northwestern Avenue is packed, parking can often be found at the Tree House.

Bring a picnic lunch, lay a picnic blanket out on the lawn, or sit at one of the picnic tables. Enjoy the shade of the Wissahickon forest, where the temperature is much cooler than in other parts of the city. Once fed, let the kids climb on the fallen tree behind the Tree House. This still-living tree has been a staple for summer camp activities for over fifteen years. Encourage the kids to explore, run, and play. There is a dirt pile to dig in, a wood chip pile to climb, a grape vine to be swung upon—all things that can be used for imaginative and active play. Spend some time with your children looking at the clouds, relaxing in the shade, building a fairy house, or examining an ant hill.

Yes, children might get into the stinging nettle, they might even get poison ivy, or discover the hard way that bees can sting. It’s okay. Research shows that kids need to challenge themselves, touch soil, and play with things they find outdoors. While they’re at it, remember they are also improving socialization skills, increasing levels of Vitamin D, reducing stress, and improving eyesight and concentration—just by playing. What more could you ask from a day out with your kids?

Trish Fries is an Environmental Education Program Specialist at the Wissahickon Environmental Center.

READ MORE: www.childandnature.com

Hikes in the Wissahickon

Trail Ambassador Walks

Unless otherwise noted hikes use rocky rugged trails that may be wet, slippery, or steep. Please wear sturdy, protective shoes or boots and bring water/snacks if you want them. Children over eight years of age are welcome if accompanied by a responsible adult. In general, walks are cancelled if it will rain or snow. Reservations are not required but are recommended for communication in the event of cancellation due to inclement weather. Visit www.fow.org for updated information.

Wissahickon Walkers with Kris Sofia • Wednesdays, June 17–Sept. 16 • 6 – 9 pm

History Walk on the Lower Wissahickon with Sarah West • Saturday, June 20 • 3 – 5 pm
Distance: 1 mile along lower Forbidden Drive on level ground as far as the Walnut Lane Bridge. Meet at the small parking lot where Forbidden Drive meets Lincoln Drive, a short distance downstream from Rittenhouse Hall.

Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn • Sunday, June 21 • Noon–2 pm
Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House—Northwestern Ave. and Johnson St.

Meandering in the Wissahickon with Shelly Brick • Sunday, June 28 • 11 am
Pace will be set by the group. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. All ages welcome. Meet at intersection of Wayne Ave. and Allen’s Lane.

Trails Less Traveled I: Monoshone Trail with Gerry Schweiger • Sunday, July 12 • 2 – 4 pm
Cover legs and arms to protect from poison ivy. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Duration: 2 hours. Meet at Johnson St. between Wissahickon Ave. and Lincoln Drive. Johnson is one way between Wissahickon and Lincoln, as enters Johnson from Wissahickon. Park on Johnson as close to Lincoln as possible.

Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena • Sunday, July 12 • 2 – 4 pm

Trails Less Traveled IV: Icons of the Lower Wissahickon with Gerry Schweiger • Sunday, July 19 • 1 pm
Distance: 2.5 – 3 hours. There will be several strenuous climbs. Meet at parking lot on Gypsy Lane near Lincoln Drive (prokes from Wissahickon Hall).

Exploring the ABCs of the Wissahickon with Cathryn Fassbender and Bruce Wagner
Sunday, July 19 • 3 pm–5 pm
Level: Moderate. Hiking boots or sneakers recommended. Pace will be determined by group. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House—Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

Moth Night in Andorra Natural Area with Kris Sofia • Tuesday, July 21 • 7:30–9:30 pm
Bring flashlights and smartphone (to register your sightings on the Citizen Scientist project at http://www.naturalist.org/projects/philadelphia). Be prepared to walk quietly on the trails and woods in the dark. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Rain cancels. Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center, 300 Northwestern Ave., 19118

Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn • Sunday, July 26 • 4 – 6 pm
Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House—Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

Butterfly Walk in the Wissahickon with Kris Sofia • Friday, July 31 • 10 am–Noon
Bring water. Long pants, sturdy footwear, cameras, identification book, binoculars, and magnifying glass recommended. Rain cancels. Level: Moderate. Pre-registration required. Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center, 300 Northwestern Ave., 19118

Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena • Sunday, August 9 • 2 – 4 pm

Kid Friendly Hike with Mary Schwartz • Saturday, August 15 • 10 am–12 pm
Level: Moderate. Some rocky trails. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Finding a Full Dozen Wissahickon Valley Icons with Bruce Wagner and Cathryn Fassbender
Sunday, August 16 • 3 – 5 pm
Hike will include rocks and hills, and we will find Creshem Creek, so wear good hiking shoes. Easy pace over moderately difficult terrain. Meet at Valley Green Inn.

Explore the Woods and Andorra Meadow with Kimberly Quinn • Sunday, August 23 • 10 am–noon
Level: Moderate. Distance: 3 miles. Wear good sneakers or hiking boots. Children 8+ with responsible adult welcome. Meet at Cedars House—Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

Invasive and Native Plant Safari with Michael Kopena • Sunday, September 13 • 2 – 4 pm

Geology Hike with Sarah West • Saturday, September 19 • 9 – 10 am
Meet at shelter across from Cedars House—Northwestern Ave. and Forbidden Drive.

Appalachian Mountain Club Delaware Valley Chapter www.amcdev.org


Tuesday Nights in the Wissahickon—Casual social hike through hills of Wissahickon Gorge. Bring water and a flashlight or headlamp. Always an option for dinner following the hike. Meet at Bruns’s, at the corner of Germantown and Northwestern Aves. at 6:30 pm. Nasty weather will cancel the hike. If doubtful check the status of the hike at www.amcdev.org/AMCCalendar.php or contact a Leader: David Stein, 215-508-5915; Pat Naas, 610-639-3670. June 16, 23, 30.

Wissahickon Wednesday—Moderate paced hike through the Wissahickon Gorge. Bring rain jacket, at least a quart of water, and lunch. Meet at Germantown and Rex Avenues at 10:30 am. Take the Chestnut Hill East or West train if possible. Leader: Lu Fox, 215-432-8747, lifox333@hotmail.com. Sign up with leader. June 17.

Friends of the Wissahickon • Summer 2015
WISSAHICKON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
Registration is required for all programs unless otherwise noted. The Tree House is open the second Saturday of every month, 10 am–4 pm. For information or to register, call 215-685-3085 or email WECinfo@rhd.org.

TREE HOUSE OPEN HOUSE • JULY 11, AUGUST 8, SEPTEMBER 12 • 10 AM–4 PM
Meet our staff, visit our animals, view our history, read, play, discover, and learn! More registration required. Everyone welcome! FREE.

MOMMY & BABY OUTDOOR YOGA
congenial, get back to, on a sunny, once your baby was born? Bring your baby to the Tree House lawn and join certified yoga instructor Callie and baby Edie for an hour of baby-friendly yoga. Moms with children up to 12 months old. $10 per mom/class. Register at least one week prior to the program. Bring a yoga mat, towel, and water bottle.

SUNDAY, JULY 19 • 9–1 PM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 • 9–1 PM
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 • 9–1 PM

WINE BERRY WILD • SATURDAY, JULY 11 • 10 AM–NOON
In this summer edition of Kids Gone Wild, we will head out for a special expedition to find and eat wild berries. Wine berries are a raspberry-like fruit, which is highly invasive in the Wissahickon, but delicious to eat. After completing this expedition, both the kids and the Wissahickon will be healthier. All Ages. Registration required. FREE.

MOTH NIGHT IN ANDORA NATURAL AREA • TUESDAY, JULY 21 • 7:30–9:30 PM
Watch a short Power Point orientation and learn how to: best observe moths in your home garden, construct a simple catch & release moth trap, and set up Ultra Violet light tubes and“gouging” with our secret moth bait recipe. Meet special guest, Environmental Scientist Vaughn Shipp. We’ll construct a moth trap as part of the Citizen Scientist Moth Identification Project. Bring flashlights and smartphone (to register your sightings on the Citizen Scientist project at http://www.naturalist.org/project/batlab). Prepare to walk quietly on the trails and woods in the dark. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Rain cancels. FREE.

BAT BOX BUILDING WORKSHOP • SATURDAY, JULY 25 • 6:30–9 PM
This hands-on workshop will allow you to construct a bat box to take home or leave for use in the Wissahickon Valley Park. Learn about the benefits of the insect-eating bats that inhabit Pennsylvania, the potential risk of diseases carried by bats, and some of the current threats to local bat populations. Adults only please. $10/person.

BAT HIKE • SATURDAY, JULY 25 • 8–9 PM
Learn about the benefits of Pennsylvania’s bat species and the cause of their alarming drop in numbers. This hike takes to the creeks to search for brown bats in action. FREE.

FAMILY CREEK EXPLORATION • SATURDAY, AUGUST 1 • 8 AM–NOON
Get knee deep and explore life in the Wissahickon Creek. Using the creek as a laboratory, we’ll search under rocks for aquatic life and discover how these critters can help us determine the health of the stream. Come prepared to get your feet wet! All Ages. FREE.

FULL MOON HIKE • FRIDAY, AUGUST 7 • 7:30–9 PM
This program will take the adventurous into the forest at night. Hunt for animal signs, listen for nocturnal sounds, and enjoy the quiet night hike quietly on the trails and woods in the dark. Children 10+ with responsible adult welcome. Rain cancels. FREE.

MORNING BIRD WALK • SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 • 7:30–10 AM
Hosted by local birder Martin Sizer, this bird walk will take place during early fall migration. We’ll check out the birds in the Andora or Houston Mound. All Ages. FREE.

For a listing of more events this fall, visit http://www.fow.org/calendar.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER.
WISSAHICKON VALLEY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

WVWA offers many public programs as part of its mission to protect the quality and beauty of the Wissahickon Creek and to enhance life in the Wissahickon Watershed. Located at 12 Morris Road in Ambler. More info. at www.wvwa.org.

DESIGNED BY NATURE GARDEN TOUR
Saturday, June 20
EVANS-MUMBOWER MILL OPEN HOUSE & ANTIQUE CAR SHOW
Sunday, June 21
26TH ANNUAL TEX MEX SKRACE
FOR OPEN SPACE
Wednesday, June 24
MOTHS - THE SILENT MAJORITY
Friday, June 26
FAMILY HIKE AT PENLYN WOODS
Saturday, June 27
BUTTERFLY WALK
Saturday, June 27
THE GREAT ADIRONDACK CENTURY RUN
Thursday, July 9
RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP
Saturday, July 11
BERM IS THE WORD - STORMWATER AND STREAM RESTORATION TOUR
Wednesday, July 22
BIRD BANDING DEMONSTRATION
Wednesday, August 5
FAMILY CREEK EXPLORATION
Saturday, August 8
DEER EXCURSION TOUR
Saturday, August 22

WISSAHICKON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Registration is required for all programs unless otherwise noted. The Tree House is open the second Saturday of every month, 10 am-4 pm. For information or to register, call 215-686-9285 or email WCDC@philpa.gov.

TREE HOUSE OPEN HOUSE • JUNE 27, 10 AM–4 PM
Meet our staff, visit our exhibits, view our history, read, play, discover, learn, and more! No registration required. Everyone welcome! FREE

MOMMY & BABY OUTDOOR YOGA
Longing to get back to, or begin, yoga since your baby was born? Bring your baby to the Tree House lawn and join certified yoga instructor Casti and baby Edie for an hour of baby friendly yoga. Moms with children up to 12 months old. $10 per mom/class. Register at least one week prior to the program. Bring a yoga mat, towel, and water bottle.

SUNDAY, JULY 19 • 9 – 11 AM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 • 9 – 11 AM
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 • 9 – 11 AM

WINE BERRY WILD • SATURDAY, JULY 11 • 10 AM–NOON
In this summer edition of Kids Gone Wild, we will head out for a special expedition to find and eat wine berries. Wine berries are a raspberry-like fruit, which is highly invasive in the Wissahickon, but delicious to eat. After completing this expedition, both the kids and the Wissahickon will be healthier. All Ages. Registration required. FREE

MOTH NIGHT IN ANDORRA NATURAL AREA • TUESDAY, JULY 21 • 7:30 – 9:30 PM
Watch a short Powerpoint presentation and learn how to best observe moths in your home gardens. Participants will set out Under Western tarp moth traps and “ganging” with our secret Moth Bates recipe. Meet special guest, Environmental Scientist Vaughn Shirley, who will instruct on how to participate in the new Citizen Scientist Moth Identification Project. Bring flashlights and smartphone to register your sightings on the Citizen Science project at http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/philadus. Be prepared to walk quietly on the trails under the woods in the dark. Children 13+ with responsible adult welcome. Rain cancels. FREE

BAT BOX BUILDING WORKSHOP • SATURDAY, JULY 25 • 6:30 – 9:00 PM
This hands-on workshop will allow you to construct a bat box to take home or leave for use in the Wissahickon Valley Park. Learn about the benefits of insect-eating bats that inhabit Pennsylvania, the potential risk of diseases carried by bats, and some of the current threats to local bat populations. Adults only please. $10/person.

BAT HIKE • SATURDAY, JULY 25 • 8 – 9 PM
Learn about the benefits of Pennsylvania’s bat species and the cause of their declining population. Young tweens, teens, adults. Registration is required. FREE

FAMILY CREEK EXPLORATION • SATURDAY, AUGUST 8 • 10 AM–NOON
Get down deep and explore life in the Wissahickon Creek. Using the creek as a laboratory, we will search under rocks for aquatic life and discover how these critters can help us determine the health of the stream. Come prepared to get your feet wet! Ages 6+. FREE

FULL MOON HIKE • FRIDAY, AUGUST 28 • 7:30 – 9:00 PM
This program will take the attendees into the forest at night. Hunt for animal signs, listen to nighttime sounds, and enjoy marshmallows around a campfire. This hike is paced for families and is appropriate for children of all ages and abilities. Registration required. FREE

MORNING BIRD WALK • SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 • 7:30 – 10 AM
Hosted by local birder, Martin Selzer. This 2 mile walk will take place during peak fall migration. We’ll check out the birds in the Audubon or Houston Meadowlands. All ages. FREE

For a listing of more events this fall, visit http://www.fow.org/calendar.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

Future calendar listings for the newsletter may be placed by contacting the Friends of the Wissahickon at 215-247-0417 or by email at info@cresheimtrail.org.

The Calendar of Events in the Wissahickon may also be viewed on FOW’s website www.fow.org, which contains updates on our events, including cancellations.