He was *bearly* here, but made a big splash!

Learn more about black bears on p. 13.

Photo courtesy of Josh Carson.
A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The bear that passed through Wissahickon Valley Park in May was probably looking for food and water. Those of us who live near the park have the same needs, and then some. In addition to food and clean water, we all have a direct investment in unpolluted air, places for our children to run and play, a natural environment for exercise and rejuvenation, and places for our community to gather. Like the bear, we are all stakeholders in our green spaces.

In fact, everyone in the Philadelphia region is a stakeholder in the Wissahickon, for the park is a regional asset. With just a short regional rail ride, Philadelphia and suburban residents have access to thousands of acres of green space around the region. FOW’s newest partnership with SEPTA is about helping people from within the city and beyond its borders to connect with the park, supporting cycle-transit use, and generating more support for the Wissahickon. You can read more about how we accomplish this on pages 10 and 11. Then continue on to page 12 to read what one of our long-standing Board members and Chair of the Conservation Committee has to share about FOW’s approach to conservation.

If you aren’t a member of FOW, let’s be friends! If you don’t already volunteer with us, consider getting involved. You can learn more about how we accomplish this on pages 10 and 11. Then continue on to page 12 to read what one of our long-standing Board members and Chair of the Conservation Committee has to share about FOW’s approach to conservation.

Everyone in the Philadelphia region is a stakeholder in the Wissahickon, for the park is a regional asset.

Wissahickon. You can read about FOW’s first jointly-sponsored event with SEPTA, Bike the Hill, on the following page. We are grateful to partner with SEPTA because they are helping to connect people in a new way to the park and they are helping us think about how people connect with the park.

At FOW we are keenly aware that our love of and need for the Wissahickon makes it a fragile environment. Stormwater runoff, invasive plants, poor water quality, erosion, sedimentation, invasive insects—all of these stresses on the park originated with humans. Fortunately, nature is resilient. So it is FOW’s strategy to create opportunities for natural processes to reassert themselves. You can learn more about how we accomplish this on pages 10 and 11. Then continue on to page 12 to read what one of our long-standing Board members and Chair of the Conservation Committee has to share about FOW’s approach to conservation.

If you aren’t a member of FOW, let’s be friends! If you don’t already volunteer with us, consider getting involved. You can learn more about how we accomplish this on pages 10 and 11. Then continue on to page 12 to read what one of our long-standing Board members and Chair of the Conservation Committee has to share about FOW’s approach to conservation.

Maura McCarthy, Executive Director
BIKE THE HILL A BIG SUCCESS!

Bike the Hill on April 17 was a great opportunity for people to view historic homes in Chestnut Hill and explore Wissahickon Valley Park. Presented by SEPTA, the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, the Chestnut Hill Business District, and FOW, this event was organized to encourage commuters to explore areas beyond Center City Philadelphia with their bikes. SEPTA ran two special Regional Rail trains that accommodate up to 40 bikes each. Pictured here are cyclists at the Chestnut Hill Train Station gearing up for a tour of the park.

THE POWER OF URBAN NATURE

Claudia West, author of Planting in a Post-Wild World (Timber Press, 2015) with Thomas Rainer, was the speaker at FOW’s Valley Talk on May 19 at Valley Green Inn. She focused on how residential gardens, public gardens, and city gardens can reflect a more natural approach and help increase biodiversity. On April 5, William Schuster, Executive Director of the Black Rock Forest Consortium, discussed the Consortium’s model for operating and managing the 4,000-acre Black Rock Forest, located about 60 miles from New York City.

fow.org/planting-in-a-post-wild-world-with-landscape-designer-claudia-west/

WHERE WERE YOU ON LEAP DAY?

FOW friends leapt over to Lucky’s in Manayunk to test their watershed knowledge in a Quizzo match! This event was hosted by Brad Maule, whose exhibit, One Man’s Trash, featured a year of trash collected in the Wissahickon. Thank you Lucky’s, who donated a $25 gift certificate to the First Prize winner, Trish Fries of the Wissahickon Environmental Center!

NEW NATURE PRESERVE IN THE WISSAHICKON WATERSHED

The Wissahickon Watershed is now home to a new nature preserve: the Dodsworth Run Preserve. This 9.4-acre parcel at 512 Dickerson Road in Upper Gwynedd was dedicated from Merck to the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) on May 12. The preserve features a trail and raised boardwalk that loop around a shallow pool meant to provide habitat for amphibians and birds. WVWA volunteers and staff will monitor the preserve and take water quality measurements where it runs along the Wissahickon Creek. Preserving land in the watershed improves the water quality of the creek not only in the immediate vicinity, but downstream as well.

Dodsworth Run Preserve
ALL TRAILS CHALLENGE 2016

Friends of the Wissahickon

Want to explore 50 miles of Wissahickon Valley Park trails this fall and raise money for Friends of the Wissahickon to maintain the Park? In August 2016, FOW is launching the All Trails Challenge—a three-month-long event in which bikers, hikers, horseback riders, and runners take the challenge to explore all 50 miles of designated trails in the park, and friends and family support them in their effort.

Here’s how it works: The All Trails Challenge begins on August 20, 2016, and ends on Tuesday, November 22, 2016. Sign up at fow.org/alltrailschallenge and make the commitment. Your friends can make a one-time donation in support of your efforts or they can pledge to make a donation for every mile you walk. There’s no limit to how much or how little people can pledge to support your Friends of the Wissahickon All Trails Challenge. Every dollar you raise will go directly to Friends of the Wissahickon and our ongoing mission to preserve Wissahickon Valley Park. For every mile that you walk, run, bike, or ride, you can log your progress and document your experience.

There are prizes, too! T-shirts, iPads, vacation getaways, and more. For each level of achievement, FOW will add incentives to help inspire you to complete your trail challenge.

It’s a great way to enjoy the park, get outdoors with your family and friends, and support Friends of the Wissahickon.

Join us at the All Trails Challenge kick-off event at Valley Green Inn—date to be announced soon! We’ll have beer, t-shirts, and information about all of the trails in the park so you can choose your path. Want to get the hard trails out of the way first? Think starting off easy is the way to go? Friends of the Wissahickon staff will be there to help you map your course.

SEE YOU THERE!

RAIN CHECK WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22

6-7:30 PM | VALLEY GREEN INN

Learn how you can get a free rain barrel from the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) at this Rain Check Workshop. Reduced pricing for downspout planters, rain gardens, depaving your yard, and permeable pavers will be offered.

PWD believes that everyone can make a difference in transforming Philadelphia into a greener city with clean water. PWD’s Rain Check program gives Philadelphia residents an opportunity to reduce pollution that would otherwise enter creeks and rivers. The workshop presentation will last one hour with time afterward for questions.

Rain Check is funded by PWD and managed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) in partnership with the Sustainable Business Network. This workshop is hosted by Friends of the Wissahickon.


JOIN US FOR OUR 10TH ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17

3PM-6PM | The Cedars House Café on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Avenue

Join us for a lovely afternoon of free ice cream, live music, nature activities for the whole family with FOW volunteers and the staff from the Wissahickon Environmental Center, and the chance to meet with FOW’s staff and volunteers and community partners.
**YELLOW TRAIL RESTORATION**

A large section of the Yellow Trail from Bells Mill Road to Cathedral Road underwent heavy maintenance. Using a mini-excavator and the new mini-skid steer, FOW constructed new drainage features, cleared existing drains, and removed several sections of dilapidated fencing.

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**ANDORRA TREE HOUSE**

Early this spring after the snow melted and the ground was dry enough to move equipment, FOW completed the construction of a new wheelchair ramp and accessible path to the Wissahickon Environmental Center. The ramp and path were built by Meadowbrook Builders, FOW’s Structures Crew, and Terra Firma Trails, LLC. The ramp provides access to the new porch via an accessible path and dedicated handicap parking space. The path was constructed using native stone and crushed gravel dust to create a durable surface that matches the natural character of the park, and the ramp was built to match the historic structure. This project was partially completed using funds from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

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**ROXBOROUGH AVE. STORMWATER MITIGATION & HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT**

The site of the Roxborough Avenue Stormwater Mitigation & Habitat Restoration Project is located six hundred feet upslope from the Wissahickon Creek. It is a large (approximately one acre) canopy gap which has formed in a stand of trees dominated by large tulip poplars. Over the past five years, several large trees have toppled, damaging and bringing down adjacent trees, and heavy deer browse has suppressed natural forest regeneration leaving the area to be colonized by several invasive plant species.

At this site FOW is experimenting with using four-foot tree tubes to protect new plantings. At many FOW restoration sites, we have seen very high levels of deer browse and plant mortality. These tubes are specially designed to protect the trees until they can grow above the “browse line,” after which they will have a better chance of survival. Throughout the summer, the trees will be watered weekly and cared for by FOW’s team of seasonal employees. FOW’s signature Love Your Park Week event took place in May near the Walnut Lane Golf Course at this site. Volunteers planted 150 native oak, poplar, and maple seedlings from Octoraro Nursery. (Learn more on p. 6.)
STRUCTURES CREW MAKING THEIR MARK THROUGHOUT THE PARK
FOW’s Structures Crew has been hard at work all spring. They’ve built eight large picnic tables to be distributed throughout the park. Try one out at The Cedars House Café, Monastery Stables, or Valley Green Inn. The Crew also provided the labor for the new wheelchair ramp at The Tree House, which connects to the new porch. (Learn more on p. 5.) Currently they are working on a few projects at Courtesy Stable. They’ve repaired the rink-side bleachers and are planning to rebuild the springhouse roof. Coming up: They will be repairing the picnic pavilion at Blue Bell Hill. Look for them there this summer!

VOLUNTEERS GET A DIRTY JOB DONE
It’s always my goal to make sure FOW volunteers have fun work to do, so I felt a little guilty when I needed to ask them to clean out a drainage ditch on the Orange Trail which is definitely not fun. This particular ditch had not been cleaned for some time and was beginning to fill up with leaves and other organic debris. Given enough time, the ditch and culverts would fill with the debris and fail. I had lots of help on this project from students at The Crefeld School and The Episcopal Academy, plus many individual volunteers. A special thanks to Marc, Steph, Lisa, Melissa, Jeff, and Ed, who shoveled a ridiculous amount of mud.

SIX NEW FOW CREW LEADERS
Did you know that FOW provides hands-on training and special workshops for volunteer Crew Leaders? And did you know that this year FOW welcomed Emily Southerton, Peg Shaw, Lance Lau, Dean Rosencrantz, Brad Maule, and Joe Mikuliak to our Crew Leader ranks? Well now you do! This “semester” they joined the rest of FOW’s Crew Leaders for several training sessions and workshops. Tahawus Trails gave a presentation on volunteer management, and Valerie Naylor, professional trail builder, talked about trail design and maintenance as well as machine operation and use. On top of that, everyone was certified in CPR and first aid. FOW Crew Leaders are prepared to lead!
18 VOLUNTEERS AT KITCHEN’S LANE WORKDAY

Segments of the White and Orange Trails in the Kitchen’s Lane area, as well as the connector trail, were in need of some maintenance this spring, so FOW decided a workday at the site would be a great way to kick off the trail-work season. On April 16 Crew Leaders John Cassidy, Kara Schoch, and Lisa Stout joined me in leading 18 volunteers as we fixed some overly out-sloped trail, added some nicks, and repaired some drains and the stone staircase at Westview Avenue. A group of volunteers also removed devil’s walking stick at the restoration site.

FOW volunteers at the Westview staircase: Steve Blenheim, Augustin Bolanos, James Shenck, John Cassidy, Johnny Bolanos, and Jeff Schlosser.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

CREW LEADERS REMOVE FALLEN TREES

We’re only a few months into 2016, and already FOW Crew Leaders trained in the use of chain saws have been very busy removing fallen trees from the Wissahickon trails. The most notable work was done when a huge tulip tree fell on the Lavender Trail near one of the newly constructed bridges. (See FOW’s Annual Report 2015.) The tree had two separate trunks that were hung up at chest height over the trail. We chained the two trunks together and held the weight with the griphoist while we made the final cuts. It was a very exciting morning and lots of fun! Thanks to Dave, Chuck, Kenn, John, and Brad.

FOW volunteers Lisa Myers, Marc Snyder, FOW Board member David Dannenberg, and Stephanie Walker.

TREE PLANTING FOR LOVE YOUR PARK WEEK

On May 7 FOW celebrated Love Your Park Week by hosting a tree planting as part of a forest restoration project at the site of the Roxborough Avenue Stormwater Mitigation & Habitat Restoration Project. Volunteers planted 150 trees (red, white, and black oaks, tulip trees, and red maples) in the heart of the restoration site. In time, these trees will fill in a large gap in the forest canopy. Families, Cub Scouts, individual volunteers, and FOW staff were all part of this successful workday. I’d like to especially thank FOW Crew Leaders Wendy Willard and Joe Mikuliak for their leadership.

FOW Project Manager Henry Stroud speaks with volunteers.

VOLUNTEER WORKDAYS

TUESDAYS
Join FOW for structure repair and construction from 9 am to 1 pm.

WEDNESDAYS
Can’t volunteer with FOW on the weekends, but still want to help out? Come work with the Wednesday Morning Crew each week from 9 am to 12 pm as we tackle projects throughout the park.

SATURDAYS
There’s no better way to be friends than to help us in the park with trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and general cleanups from 9 am to 1 pm.

To register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org. Visit fow.org/volunteering/workinthepark/ for more details.

FOW volunteers at the Westview staircase: Steve Blenheim, Augustin Bolanos, James Shenck, John Cassidy, Johnny Bolanos, and Jeff Schlosser.
TRAIL AMBASSADOR HIKES

Unless otherwise noted hikes are on rocky rugged trails that may be wet, slippery, or steep. Please wear long pants for protection against poison ivy and possible ticks as well as sturdy, protective shoes or boots. Bring water. Hikes suitable for children are noted in their descriptions. Hikes are cancelled in the event of rain. Registration is not required but is recommended in the event of a cancellation. Please visit fow.org to register and for updated information.

TRAILS LESS TRAVELED II WITH GERRY SCHWEIGER
Sunday, June 12
1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at corner of St. Martin’s Lane and Huron St. For GPS and internet, use 7500 St. Martin’s Lane, Phila., 19118.
Explore the Cresheim Creek South Trails. The main trail usage by the Cresheim Creek is on the well maintained North (Chestnut Hill) side, but there are trails covering the hillside along the South (Mt. Airy) side. We will hike two of these less-used trails and visit Devil’s Pool and Climber’s Rock. These trails cross several steep draws/ravines. Level: difficult. Distance: 3.25 miles.

WISSAHICKON GEOLOGY WITH JEFF FRAZIER
Saturdays June 18 and July 2
10 am - noon
Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave.
Learn through a slide presentation about the theories of what caused the rocks of the Wissahickon Gorge to be formed and why they are currently exposed at the earth’s surface. Explore Wissahickon Schist, with its intricate and beautiful patterns. View stream characteristics such as cut banks and deposition bars. Learn how movement of rock particles through erosion processes have shaped the landscape. Level: easy.

LOWER FORBIDDEN DRIVE WITH SARAH WEST
Saturday, June 18
3:30 - 5 pm
Meet at the small parking lot where Forbidden Drive meets Lincoln Drive, a short distance downstream from RittenhouseTown.
This hike follows lower Forbidden Drive on level ground as far as the Walnut Lane Bridge. See historical sites connected to the Revolutionary War era, the bridge that replaced one of five former covered bridges across the creek, and the foundation of the last of the Wissahickon road houses. Talk about the construction of the Walnut Lane Bridge. Be prepared for one surprise. Suitable for children 10+ with a responsible adult. Level: easy.

WOODS AND MEADOW HIKE WITH KIMBERLY QUINN
Sundays, June 19 and September 25
1 - 3 pm
Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave.
Hike through woods to the Andorra Meadow and then to the Wissahickon Environmental Center to return. Learn about the former Andorra Nursery and visit the Tree House. See The Great Beech and the Fallen Magnolia! Level: moderate. Suitable for children 8+ with a responsible adult. Distance: 3 miles.

TRAILS LESS TRAVELED V WITH GERRY SCHWEIGER
Sunday, June 19
1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at corner of St. Martin’s Lane and Huron St. For GPS and internet, use 7500 St. Martin’s Lane, Phila., 19118.
A Glimpse of Cresheim Creek East. We will start by hiking the lower Cresheim Creek, cross it, and loop back to the unique and out of the way Lincoln Drive/Cresheim East trail running from Allen’s Lane to Germantown Ave. We will come out of the park to return back to our starting point. We will be fording the Cresheim Creek. Level: challenging. Distance: 3 miles.

KID FRIENDLY HIKE WITH MARV SCHWARTZ
Saturday, June 25
1 - 3 pm
Meet at the Valley Green Inn.
This family-friendly hike will take in many of the most interesting Wissahickon sites. From the Valley Green Inn, down Forbidden Drive, we will visit the Livezey Dam and Gorgas Creek Cave. Crossing the Mt. Airy Bridge, we will take the hillside trail upstream past interesting rock formations and pass through the Fingerspan Bridge. We will stop to enjoy our snacks and drinks on the stone steps high above the scenic Wissahickon Creek and continue on to Devil’s Pool and Pee Wee Rock on our return to the Inn. Level: moderate difficulty on some rocky trails.
TA Field Report

Ambassadors: Suzanne Banks and Jim Kohler
Date: 4/21/16
Shift time: 9:30 am - 12:15 pm
Zones: A (Northwestern Stables) & B (Valley Green)
Mode of Transportation: Hike
Number & Type of Interactions: 8
We encountered one man who was devoting a full hour walking briskly up and down cardiac hill. He claimed to be in training for a hike in the foothills of the Himalayas.
Dogs off leash: 0

Shift Summary: It was very difficult to find parking along Northwestern Ave. to start the shift. After meeting at Cedars House, we walked up the trail to and around the perimeter of Andorra Meadow. Flowering apple, crab apple, and dogwood were in abundance. We spied bluebirds around one of the bluebird boxes. From the meadow we walked down the trail toward Forbidden Drive and went up the Yellow Trail and walked part way through Houston Meadow before returning to Cedars House.

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIRDERS OF A FEATHER WITH MICHAEL KOPENA</td>
<td>Sundays, June 26, July 24, August 28</td>
<td>4 - 6 pm</td>
<td>Meet at FOW outreach table at Valley Green Inn. You know what they say, birders of a feather flock together! We will listen for avian friends, compare notes, share stories and sightings, and trade tips on birding tools and resources. This walk is for you if you are: just getting into birding or want to learn more; have been birding forever, love it, and want to share your enthusiasm; want to learn astonishing facts about local wildlife; want to spend a summer evening along the Wissahickon looking for birds with friends. No equipment needed. Level: easy.</td>
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<td>FINDING SUMMER PHOTOS IN THE UPPER WISSAHICKON WITH BRUCE WAGNER</td>
<td>Sunday, July 10</td>
<td>10 am - noon</td>
<td>Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. Summer in the Park and the foliage is dense! The shade is deep. Let’s go for a walk between Northwestern and the Thomas Mill Bridge and find the special places where the photos are always good. We will get close to the shore and the water, look under things, and use our imaginations to find the light and shadows that make good photos. Suitable for children with a responsible adult. Level: adapted to the group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUTTERFLY WALK WITH KRIS SOFFA</td>
<td>Tuesdays, July 19 and August 2</td>
<td>10 am - noon</td>
<td>Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center A Mini Nature Safari. Sharpen your senses and learn fascinating facts about butterflies. We’ll hike to the gorgeous Meadow Observation Loop in the Andorra Natural Area. Learn how to identify common butterflies while picking up pollinator and caterpillar host plant tips on how to attract butterflies to your home garden. Also learn tips on raising butterflies at home. Bring water, camera, and ID book if you like. Suitable for children 12+ with a responsible adult. Level: easy.</td>
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<td>TRAILS LESS TRAVELED VI WITH GERRY SCHWEIGER</td>
<td>Sunday, August 21</td>
<td>1 - 3 pm</td>
<td>Meet at corner of Mt. Pleasant Place and North Mt. Pleasant Rd. Park on North Mt. Pleasant bet. Wissahickon Ave. and Mt. Pleasant Place. For GPS and internet use: 7100 Mt. Pleasant Place, Phila., 19119 Toleration of Obscure Trailheads. The Toleration Statue is complaining about not enough visits. To boost his ego we will visit the Statue, starting from the very out-of-the-way Mt. Pleasant Place trailhead. Along the way we will visit the Monastery and the historic Church of the Brethren baptismal site. Terrain at Tolerance Statue is rocky and difficult. Difficulty level: challenging. Distance: 2.5 miles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHORT GEOLOGY HIKE WITH SARAH WEST</td>
<td>Saturday, September 17</td>
<td>3:30 - 5 pm</td>
<td>Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. We’ll walk along Forbidden Drive from Northwestern Ave. to Bells Mill Rd. and visit an 18th century quarry and several other interesting rock exposures. We discuss the likely formation of Wissahickon rocks as the result of plate tectonics. This hike is suitable for children over 10 accompanied by a responsible adult.</td>
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In 2004, two powerful storms created excessive amounts of stormwater runoff from outside Wissahickon Valley Park that washed hundreds of tons of debris into the creek and its tributaries. This stormwater took out several bridges, destroyed trails, blocked culverts, scoured and widened streambeds, collapsed embankments, and exposed bedrock. Catastrophic storms like this take their toll on the park, but daily stresses, such as invasive plants, non-indigenous insects, and routine stormwater runoff, continually threaten what is a resilient yet fragile ecosystem. FOW’s mission is to preserve the park. Its methods support the park’s resiliency.

The 1.1 million visitors to Wissahickon Valley Park every year are part of what keeps it a safe, cared for, and vibrant community asset. Ironically, human impact on the Wissahickon is the primary cause of the park’s fragility. Invasive plants and insects, erosion, and poor water quality are just some of the pressures put on the park that can be attributed to humans.

• In North America, many non-native plants were brought over from other continents by European settlers. Some were introduced accidentally, but many were relied upon for agricultural, medicinal, and ornamental purposes.

• Insects not indigenous to this area were often introduced accidentally. The emerald ash borer, for example, was introduced on ash wood used for stabilizing cargo in ships or for packing or crating heavy consumer products (emeraldashborer.info/faq.php).

• Erosion and poor water quality are both caused, in part, by stormwater runoff, which is largely the result of development around the perimeter of the park.

FOW builds the park’s resiliency in a variety of ways that intersect and work together to combat multiple problems and strengthen the park’s natural ability to thrive. Because a healthy forest canopy captures rainfall, filters runoff, and reduces soil erosion in the watershed, restoring native vegetation is an essential component of the Sustainable Trails Initiative (STI). FOW organizes and trains volunteers to remove invasive species and reestablish native plants that provide habitat for wildlife. These efforts may involve installing deer fences or tree guards to protect plants as they mature and become important food sources for animal species that rely on their flowers, seeds, and berries.

STI is creating a trail network that limits erosion and protects the fragile forest habitat while enhancing park users’ experience throughout the park. Trails that are stable and resist erosion also help reduce sediment and nutrients from washing into the Wissahickon Creek. FOW builds trails that remain dry, shed water off the trail surface, and provide safer footing for all trail users. Existing trails that do not properly drain runoff become severely eroded and are targeted for closure and habitat restoration.

“In many cases, the work we do is an active positive reinforcement of the habitat,” says FOW Executive Director Maura McCarthy. “In others, the most important thing we do is to try to remove the results of human interaction with the park. Whether it is removing invasive plants or trying to reduce the contaminants that enter the creek due to runoff, FOW creates conditions in which natural processes can reassert themselves.”

**FUTURE PROJECTS**

**TRAIL AND STREAMBANK STABILIZATION PROJECT**

Walk along Forbidden Drive and you will find several prime examples of the fragility of Wissahickon Valley Park. These partial collapses of the most frequently used trails in the park are hard to miss. Originally supported on its waterside edge by stone walls, Forbidden Drive has a rudimentary drainage system comprised of a series of trail side ditches and culverts running beneath it that have kept it from becoming oversaturated during storms. Over time these systems have deteriorated from a lack of maintenance, while the frequency of large, damaging rain events has increased.

FOW has begun the permitting and design phase of the Trail and Streambank Stabilization Project to repair these...
three sites of erosion and partial collapse near Valley Green Inn, Mt. Airy Avenue, and Kitchen’s Lane. This project, one of the largest FOW has ever undertaken, will incorporate native plants, rocks, and soil to stabilize the trail. Park-user safety will be improved, erosion mitigated, and the riparian stream bank habitat restored, which will help improve the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek.

Restoration of these sites will contribute to meeting the established Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for siltation of the Wissahickon Creek as established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection in accordance with the Clean Water Act. This project is being funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority Department of Community and Economic Development, and private donors.

**LOWER VALLEY GREEN RUN RESTORATION PROJECT**

If you have tried to make your way from the upper parking lot on Valley Green Road to the Inn over the past year, then you know just how fragile streambanks are in the Wissahickon. The stream here is actively enlarging, and this widening process—lateral erosion—is likely to continue into the future and will eventually undercut the old fill slope, causing its failure.

The work FOW is planning and fundraising for at this site will restore approximately 315 feet of stream channel, creating a stable, flood-tolerant stream channel in Valley Green Run to its confluence with the Wissahickon Creek. In addition to the environmental benefits of this project, it would allow for future restoration work of an adjacent trail and provide a secure foundation for all work FOW undertakes above this site.

Once completed, the channel would be restored to a naturalistic, boulder-bed, step-pool channel based on the morphology of the lower valley in this location—steep, narrow, and rocky. Restoration would include large select rock as well as extensive riparian zone planting. Additional stabilization of the fill slope—and protection from exceptional floods—would be provided by the establishment of a dense native plant cover above the wall.

**VALLEY GREEN ROAD PEDESTRIAN TRAIL PROJECT**

The boardwalk bridge at the same site has been undermined, and once design planning and fundraising is completed, FOW plans to construct an elevated boardwalk approximately 140 feet long, restoring an environmentally and socially sustainable trail connection in his area. This project is critical to provide a safe, sustainable trail connection for park users from the upper parking lot to Forbidden Drive and other trails. After construction of the trail, there would be additional work to restore native plant habitat at trailheads and along the corridor.

After construction of the elevated boardwalk, the fill slope surface would be renovated to create a surface better suited to supporting a thriving plant community. This would be accomplished with dense plantings and ongoing maintenance; both help to defeat the invasive weedy species rampant in Wissahickon Valley Park. The natural forest recovery process would be accelerated by installing many large-stock plants within the corridor.

**ONE OF MANY SUCCESS STORIES**

This capital project illustrates how FOW and its partners support the park’s resiliency and work with the forces of nature to improve its habitat.

In 2009 the Wissahickon Stormwater Mitigation and Sediment Reduction Project was launched by FOW and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. Its goals were to reduce creek sediment, improve water quality, and enhance the Wissahickon Watershed habitat by closing trails that act as gullies and remediating some of the worst erosion sites in the park. At Kitchen’s Lane, one of many sites for this park-wide project, volunteers planted close to 300 native shrubs and trees to reinforce closures of three old trail beds that were closed.
CLOSE-UP

SUSIE WILMERDING,
FOW BOARD MEMBER

By Denise Larrabee, Editor

Susie Wilmerding joined the Conservation Committee at FOW at just the right time—for her and the organization. She had recently earned a Masters in Environmental Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, where she completed a thesis on managing small forest land in Pennsylvania. Her work explored many of the same issues that challenge Wissahickon Valley Park, such as invasive plants and an overwhelming deer population. Before graduating from Penn, she was involved in the conservation section of the Garden Club of America, which follows national conservation issues.

When she joined FOW’s Conservation Committee in 2004, FOW was investigating new ideas in conservation to deal with these and other problems in the park. Wilmerding supported this effort by sharing her own wealth of knowledge on conservation issues and inviting experts, whom she had heard present at Penn, to speak to her fellow board members at FOW.

Wilmerding’s interest in joining FOW was twofold: “I grew up here,” she says, “and FOW was looking at all these issues I had just been studying. So it sounded like a great organization to be involved with.” She has become a long-time member of FOW’s Board of Directors, serving on the Board from 2004 to 2012; she was reelected in 2015.

Wilmerding has chaired the Conservation Committee and been a member of the Executive Committee, while also helping FOW learn how to reinvest in habitat in a more meaningful way and adopt innovative solutions in habitat restoration. She led FOW in confronting the potential problem of invasive spread brought on by trail work and developed viable solutions:

- specialists now evaluate trail corridors before and after trail work;
- FOW designs special invasive removal controls before and after trail projects; and
- all trail work includes a planting regimen of native plants.

She also introduced FOW to the Plant Stewardship Index, which is a metric of habitat quality FOW now applies in and around all trail reconstruction sites. All of her improvements to FOW’s habitat work have been incorporated into the Sustainable Trails Initiative.

As Chair of the Conservation Committee once again, Wilmerding is eager to tackle several important conservation issues with FOW. “There are so many things that can be done to help trees and create a healthier environment,” says Wilmerding, and she suggests several areas of focus, especially invasive insects and plants.

She points out that the emerald ash borer is killing ash trees, while the woolly adelgid is attacking hemlocks. “Other places are experimenting with new varieties of hemlocks to see if they will do better.” Wilmerding thinks FOW should explore this idea and other experimental planting programs.

According to Wilmerding, the science for dealing with invasive plants has evolved over the years. When she studied at the University of Pennsylvania, she had the opportunity to work on a property with too many Norway maples, an invasive tree. “I went out there and I put markings on all the Norway maples and they took a lot of them down,” she recalls. “The feeling now is . . . if you have a full grown tree . . . don’t chop it down, because it’s endless. There are seeds in the ground that live for years and years. And if you take down a 50-year-old tree, you’re taking away carbon storage and habitat for birds.”

The Conservation Committee is currently laying the groundwork for a forest management plan, a plan that Wilmerding believes needs to, in addition to many other conservation issues, focus on water quality and the balance of park visitor use and the natural habitat. She has returned to FOW at just the right time.

Weavers Way and Saul High School
Team Up

By Jackie Schrauger, Weavers Way Community Programs

Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP) conducts hands-on educational programs focused on farming, nutrition, and environmental issues for students attending WB. Saul Agricultural High School. WWCP also hosts a summer internship program at Saul, where teenagers learn agricultural and workplace readiness skills. This summer WWCP will expand this experience by holding our first-ever Youth Conference on Urban Agriculture and Food and Environmental Justice. The conference will primarily be designed by a Youth Planning Committee of Saul students, who will be involved in everything from setting the program to marketing and operations.

Our Youth Conference provides an opportunity for teens from Philadelphia and Camden to come together to combat food insecurity by cultivating their urban agriculture skills, building community, and empowering participants to increase food access in their neighborhoods. Located at Awbury Arboretum, the conference will feature breakout sessions, giving teens a chance to problem-solve issues directly affecting them and their communities. They will also attend presentations by local experts/champions of food access (including youth presenters) and workshops designed to help participants develop key skills of their choosing. Our goal is for attendees to deepen their investment in urban agriculture and become empowered to be change makers in their communities, while building community among like-minded youth. In having the youth drive the agenda for the conference, we aim to cultivate leadership skills while supporting their development in key professional skills (organization, communication, marketing, and more). We are excited to see the final product!

Jackie Schrauger is Program Director at WWCP, which partners with Saul High School and Weavers Way Farms, operator of the Henry Got Crops! CSA Farm. WWCP is fortunate to utilize the farm as a land lab for Saul students, enhancing classroom instruction by getting kids out of their desks and into the dirt. Students at Saul High School have also donated many hours of volunteer time to projects in Wissahickon Valley Park over the years.
THE BEAR FACTS

On the morning of May 13, a black bear was spotted in the creek in Wissahickon Valley Park by a man fishing near Valley Green Inn. He contacted FOW and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The bear then swam across the creek and disappeared into the woods. Conservation officers with the Game Commission searched the park, but did not locate the bear, which had been documented with photos.

Ursus americanus is the black bear’s scientific name; it means “American bear.” Although three species of bears inhabit North America, only the black bear is found in Pennsylvania. A population estimate in 2015 showed approximately 20,000 bears living in the commonwealth. Black bears appear heavy, but are surprisingly agile; they can run up to 35 miles per hour, climb trees, and swim well. They may live up to 25 years in the wild.

Adults usually weigh around 200 pounds, with males being heavier than females, often more than twice as much. Some weigh up to 600 or more pounds, and rare individuals up to 900. Black bears measure about three feet high when on all fours or about five to seven feet tall when standing upright. Bears are usually dormant in winter, remaining in their dens: rock caverns; excavated holes beneath shrubs, trees, or dead falls; hollow trees; or nests built on the ground.

BEAR SIGNS AND SOUNDS

Black bear tracks are distinctive. The hind footprint resembles a human’s. Bears have five toes. The front foot is shorter than the rear, which is long and narrow. Claw marks may or may not be visible.

Look for tracks in soft earth or around mud puddles, and for claw marks on smooth-bark trees or rotten logs that have been ripped apart for insects. It’s also easy to recognize a black bear’s sizeable droppings of partly digested berries, vegetation, corn, or animal hair.

Adult black bears make a variety of sounds that include woofing, growling, and jaw-popping. Female bears communicate with their cubs by using low grunts or huffs. Cubs whimper, chuckle, and bawl.

FEEDING HABITS

Bears may be on the move at any time, but are most active at dusk and dawn. Bears are omnivorous, eating almost anything, from berries, corn, acorns, beechnuts and even grass, to table scraps, carrion, honey and insects. During late summer and fall, black bears fatten up for winter hibernation. Intentionally feeding bears is against the law in Pennsylvania. It is also against the law to put out any feed, for any wildlife, that causes bears to congregate or habituate to an area.

Reprinted from: pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/BlackBear/Pages

Where is the Wissahickon Bear and why Dunkin’ Donuts makes for tantalizing bear bait! Read it at fow.org/news/
You couldn’t miss them on April 30: Sixty-three volunteers roaming the banks of the creek in Wissahickon Valley Park, armed with plastic bags, searching for litter and debris. And they found it! In the creek, beside the creek, and in the woods, over 50 bags of litter and some unusual items of debris were collected, including two beer kegs, two chairs, a weird statue, and a full trash can of recyclables from a popular gathering spot.

The Annual Creek CleanUp is sponsored by FOW and the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA). This spring marked the 46th anniversary of WVWA’s Annual Creek CleanUp, which was sponsored by Merck & Co. It was the seventh 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 to clean the creek!
WISSAHICKON CLEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH A SUCCESS

By Gina Craigo, Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association

For the past six months, the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) has spearheaded a voluntary partnership of the 16 municipalities and four sewer authorities that are located in the Wissahickon Creek Watershed.

Although the Wissahickon Creek beautifully meanders through the gorge in Philadelphia, the headwaters are a different picture. Home to almost 250,000 people and highly developed, stormwater runoff poses the greatest challenge to water quality. Stormwater runoff from roofs, driveways, lawns, and parking lots picks up contaminants such as motor oil and grease from automobiles, lawn chemicals such as fertilizers and herbicides, pet waste, and other pollutants and washes them into the Wissahickon Creek and its tributaries. Additionally, stormwater runoff causes stream bank erosion, which results in soil breaking away and entering the stream as sediment that harms fish, aquatic life, and other wildlife, and causes flash flooding conditions that endanger valuable public recreation areas and puts residents and businesses at risk.

In 2015, in response to these conditions, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) released new regulations and standards for the amount of nutrients and sediments allowed in the creek, updating the previous Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment. A TMDL is a regulatory term in the U.S. Clean Water Act, describing a value of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards.

This draft TMDL sparked an exploration and discussion of an “alternative” approach to improve water quality starting in March 2015. This opportunity placed WVWA in a leadership role to foster a collaboration of the stakeholder group of municipalities and wastewater treatment plants to discuss the water quality needs of the Wissahickon Creek.

To ensure efforts were successful and an open dialogue maintained, WVWA met over a period of seven months with township managers and commissioners, attended public municipal sessions, and worked with the local stakeholders and the US EPA, PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), and Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Meeting the January 29, 2016, deadline, all 16 municipalities and all four of the sewer authorities in the watershed committed to pursuing a TMDL alternative plan, now known as the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership.

The Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership is an unprecedented opportunity for communities to develop local solutions designed to restore the Wissahickon Creek. This voluntary partnership aims to develop a watershed-wide plan to make significant water quality improvements and public investments while evaluating the causes of the problem. A coordinated solution will both improve water quality and help municipalities, sewer authorities, and taxpayers keep costs down.

Throughout the spring, WVWA will provide planning and educational outreach assistance to watershed municipalities. WVWA will also work closely with watershed townships and wastewater treatment plant operators to identify opportunities and develop approaches to improve water quality until the alternative TMDL strategy outline is submitted to PA DEP and the US EPA in June 2016.

Gina Craigo is Events & Communications Manager for WVWA.

Stormwater runoff from roofs, driveways, lawns, and parking lots picks up contaminants such as motor oil and grease from automobiles, lawn chemicals such as fertilizers and herbicides, pet waste, and other pollutants and washes them into the Wissahickon Creek and its tributaries.
TOOKANY/TACONY-FRANKFORD WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

By Akire Bubar, TTF Watershed Partnership

At the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF), we are connecting people to their creeks. Our mission is to improve the health of our watershed by engaging our communities in education, stewardship, restoration, and advocacy.

Across our watershed—from the headwaters in upstream communities in Montgomery County, to downstream neighborhoods in North, Northeast, and Northwest Philadelphia—we implement programs that educate the community about clean water issues and how we can all make a difference in our backyards, parks, and neighborhoods.

The number one source of water pollution is stormwater runoff. Rain carries chemicals, trash, and other materials over land and into storm drains, washing them into our creeks, streams, and rivers. This runoff hurts everything from plants and wildlife, to the water we drink.

Our mission is to improve the health of our watershed by engaging our communities in education, stewardship, restoration, and advocacy.

TTF works with many partners to restore the health of our streams by controlling runoff. Many of our projects involve planting buffers. These are areas of land next to streams planted with native trees, shrubs, and grasses. Buffers filter and slow runoff, provide wildlife habitat, and cool streams. We also install green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), which uses plants and soil to filter stormwater. We have planted four rain gardens (shallow gardens that store runoff from parking lots and roofs) across Philadelphia and Montgomery County and installed over 60,000 square feet of creek-side buffers at local schools, parks, and homes. Our projects serve as outdoor classrooms for people of all ages!

We have a special focus on Tacony Creek Park, inviting neighbors to discover this historic urban watershed park, creek, and trail through a range of programs and improvement efforts. Activities include regular bird, nature, and history walks as well as park cleanups and annual block parties. As you can see, we share many of FOW’s goals and are proud to partner with FOW on a number of efforts.

Akire Bubar is Communications Coordinator at the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership. To learn more about TTF, visit ttfwatershed.org.

WHY I AM A FRIEND OF THE WISSAHICKON

I am a friend of the Wissahickon for many reasons. Chief among these is the many years of joy that the Wissahickon has provided those of us who love birds. From common species like the Wood Duck and Eastern Screech-Owl to rarities like the Olive-sided Flycatcher and Golden-winged Warbler, the Wissahickon has been a classroom where countless observers have come for over two centuries to observe and learn about the almost 200 species of birds that have been recorded there. For over 90 years, FOW has played a critical role in maintaining the Wissahickon as a place where birds continue to thrive. For that reason I am glad to be among the many people that support FOW and its work.

—Keith Russell, Program Manager for Urban Conservation at Audubon PA

Photo by Nick Kelsh
VISITING THE PARK?

- 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) 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 are 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. Below is a list of some public pools near the Wissahickon. Find more at: www.phila.gov/pools

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

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

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

WINEBERRIES: A Summer Treat

By Trish Fries, Wissahickon Environmental Center

It’s that time of year again, when the children visiting the Wissahickon Valley become captivated with a certain red berry called wineberry. “Do they taste like wine?” Some ask. “Do you make wine with them?” (We don’t but some people do.) Once they are convinced they won’t become intoxicated by eating them, the children tentatively taste the berries.

It takes a lot to convince most urban children that it is okay to eat certain plants from the woods. “Isn’t it dirty? What if something pooped on it?” But once they have tasted a ripe wineberry, we have created wineberry monsters! We try to schedule most groups for early July when the wineberries will be ripe. This way all kids get the opportunity to taste something picked directly from nature.

Wineberry (Rubus phoenicolasius) is an invasive plant. Also know as wine raspberry, the plant was introduced from eastern Asia in 1890 to be breeding stock for new cultivars of raspberries. Birds, reptiles, and mammals contribute to the spread of wineberries by eating and dispersing the seeds. It can also reproduce when its long arching stems lay on the ground and take root. This multistemmed, arching shrub is covered in tiny reddish hairs. Its Latin name means “raspberry with purple hairs.” It has compound leaves with three leaflets, green on the top and white underneath. White flowers appear in late spring. Wineberries grow in sunny patches in the forest, in fields, and along roadsides.

Wineberries taste a lot like raspberries, but are usually more tart. They start out a white color, then move to an orange, and then to a reddish color. They taste sweetest when completely ripe, but sometimes we’ll try an orange one, and it’s just a bit too sour! Wineberries have vitamin C, antioxidants, fiber, and minerals. If you can’t eat them fast enough, they can be frozen.

Like any wild food you find to eat, there are precautions and courtesies to follow. Make sure you know what you are eating! Leave some for the wildlife, don’t trample and damage an area in your quest for that next ripe berry, and make sure the area you are harvesting from has not been sprayed with an herbicide. Try some wineberries this summer, but leave some for our young visitors, too!

Trish Fries is an Environmental Education Program Specialist at the Wissahickon Environmental Center (Andorra Tree House).
WIN-WIN
WHEN YOU KEEP DOG ON LEASH

By Maura McCarthy, Executive Director

While hiking and picking up litter in the Wissahickon, part of his 2014 project One Man’s Trash, Bradley Maule was accosted by two dogs that kept growling, baring their teeth, and barking at him as he tried to retrieve garbage about ten feet off the trail. Their owner remained on the trail claiming there was nothing she could do from where she stood. “As I continued to fend off the animals with my trash grabber,” he wrote in an article for Hidden City Philadelphia (hiddencityphila.org), “she finally came to her senses and did come get them, pulling both by their collars back up to the trail.”

Northwest Philadelphia resident and FOW Board member David Dannenberg was relaxing in his garden one evening, when an eight-point buck charged through his yard, head down, running on three legs. Close behind the deer was a small brown dog, chasing it out of Carpenter’s Woods, part of Fairmount Park, and onto Wissahickon Avenue, where it was hit by a car.

In January of this year, Jeff Harbison of Wyndmoor was chased and bitten by two dogs off leash in Wissahickon Valley Park. The dogs are well-known neighborhood hazards who have attacked others in the area; they had escaped from their home into the park. After filing a report with police, he was told that there is nothing they can do, but he is free to sue the dog owner.

Dogs running off leash is a regular occurrence throughout all of Philadelphia’s parks. Although Friends of the Wissahickon cannot account for all instances of dogs running without a leash in Wissahickon Valley Park, FOW Trail Ambassadors documented at least 414 instances of dogs off leash during 251 patrol shifts of two-three hours each in 2015 alone. (Dogs on leash noted during these same shifts totaled approximately 133.) Maule recorded 288 instances of dogs off leash in the Wissahickon during his weekly hikes there throughout 2014. He also noted 78 piles of dog waste. None of this may seem important in a city facing serious challenges, but dogs are required by law to be on a leash within all city-owned parks, and for many good reasons.

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, as well as the protection of the environment and water quality. 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. Keeping dogs on leashes protects our waterways, the natural environment, park users, and the dogs themselves.

When dogs are leashed, it is easier for owners to find and remove their dog’s waste, which, when left in parks, can be washed into streams and waterways. Pet waste contains high levels of nutrients and ammonia that are released when it washes into creeks during rain events. These pollutants reduce water quality and increase algae growth and reduce oxygen levels in the water, which is particularly harmful to fish during warm months when water temperatures rise.

Keeping pets leashed when walking in city parks also helps protect fragile forest habitat, like that found in the Wissahickon, Pennypack, and Cobbs Creek Parks, to name a few. Dogs running off the trails damage plants and reduce the habitat available to wildlife, especially ground-nesting birds. This is of particular importance given that Fairmount Park was designated an Important Bird Area by Pennsylvania Audubon in 2005.

Dogs running off leash can prove dangerous to park users, dogs, and other animals. If a dog startsle a horse, it may be kicked and injured, and the rider may be thrown and injured or even killed. A dog could be hit by a biker if it runs across his/her path, injuring the dog and biker. Dogs off leash are more likely to fight with or chase other dogs or animals, including deer, leading to severe injuries or fatalities for both. Even a friendly dog can injure elderly or very young park users if allowed to jump and run freely. With a leash, a dog owner can remove their pet from such dangerous situations. Dog owners who leash their dog can also reduce their pet’s exposure to deer ticks, which carry Lyme disease, and wild animal populations that can carry rabies.

Dog owners may be fined or held responsible for damage or injury caused by their dogs by police officers and park rangers. They patrol the park to increase safety and enforce all park regulations regarding swimming, parking, littering, and walking dogs off leash. But with city resources stretched thin, their ability to enforce park regulations is minimal.

FOW volunteer Trail Ambassadors do their best to educate park users on using dog leashes, but cannot enforce park regulations. Park Rangers can issue tickets, but with only a limited number patrolling city parks, it is impossible for them to enforce park rules effectively. It is up to all of us to be responsible pet owners. Overall, it’s a win-win for pet owners to keep their dogs on a leash in Philadelphia parks.

This essay also appeared in the Mt. Airy Times Express, Chestnut Hill Local, Roxoborough Review, and on Patch.com and Newsworks.org.

A GIFT FOR OUR NEW FRIENDS.

Join or renew at the family level or above and get our brand new children’s book! To join FOW visit fow.org/membership-donations.
2016 BIENNIAL WISSAHICKON PHOTO CONTEST

This year FOW is teaming up with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) to present the Biennial Wissahickon Photo Contest. All photos entered in the contest must be taken within Wissahickon Valley Park, along the Green Ribbon Trail, or on one of the WVWA managed preserves. Participants may enter up to four photos taken within the last three years.

Categories: people; wildlife; landscape; and structures.

Prizes will be awarded for Best in Show, First Place in each category, and People’s Choice (chosen by Facebook voters).

Photographs may be featured in the online or printed publications of both organizations. Photographs will not be returned. Complete rules and other details at fow.org. Entries not following the rules will be disqualified.

Deadline for submissions: October 14, 2016. Visit fow.org/2016-photo-contest for more information and to submit photos.

Thomas Mill Road Covered Bridge by Ronald Rothman. First Prize Structures, 2008 FOW Photo Contest.

Trail Ambassador Walks

Unless otherwise noted, hikes are on rocky rugged trails that may be wet, slippery, or steep. Please wear long pants for protection against poison ivy and possible ticks as well as sturdy, protective shoes or boots. Bring water. Hikes suitable for children are noted in their descriptions. Hikes are cancelled in the event of rain. Registration is not required but is recommended in the event of a cancellation. Please visit fow.org to register and for updated information.

MORE INFORMATION ON P. 8-9 AND AT FOW.ORG.

Hikes in the Wissahickon

Trail Less Traveled II with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, June 12 • 1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at corner of St. Martin’s Lane and Horun St. For GPS and internet, use 7500 St. Martin’s Lane, Phila. 19118. Explore the Cresheim Creek south trails. Level: Difficult. Distance: 3.25 miles.

Wissahickon Geology with Jeff Frazier
Saturdays June 18 and July 2 • 10 am - noon
Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. Learn about the geology of the Wissahickon Gorge. Level: Easy.

Lower Forbidden Drive with Sarah West
Saturday, June 18 • 3:30 - 5 pm
Meet at the small parking lot where Forbidden Drive meets Lincoln Drive, a short distance downstream from Rittenhouse Town. This hike follows lower Forbidden Drive on level ground as far as the Walnut Lane Bridge. Suitable for children 10+ with a responsible adult. Level: Easy

Woods and Meadow Hike with Kimberly Quinn
Sundays, June 19 and September 25 • 1 - 3 pm
Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. Hike through woodards to the Andorra Meadow and then to the Wissahickon Environmental Center to return. Level: Moderate. Suitable for children 8+ with a responsible adult. Distance: 3 miles.

Trails Less Traveled V with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, June 19 • 1 - 3:30 pm
Meet at corner of St. Martin’s Lane and Horun St. For GPS and internet, use 7500 St. Martin’s Lane, Phila. 19118. A glimpse of Cresheim Creek East. Level: Challenging. Distance: 3 miles.

Kid Friendly Hike with Marv Schwartz
Saturday, June 25 • 1 - 3 pm
Meet at the Valley Green Inn. This family-friendly hike will take in many of the most interesting Wissahickon sites. Level: Moderate difficulty on some rocky trails.

Birders of a Feather with Michael Kopena
Sundays, June 26, July 24, August 28 • 4 - 6 pm
Meet at FOW outreach table at Valley Green Inn. Local birding hotspots, with the opportunity to catch a broad range of species. Level: Easy.

Finding Summer Photos in the Upper Wissahickon with Bruce Wagner
Sunday, July 10 • 10 am - noon
Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center; A Mini Nature Safari where you’ll sharpen your senses and learn fascinating facts about butterflies. Bring water, camera, and ID book if you like. Suitable for children 12+ with a responsible adult. Level: Easy.

Butterfly Walk with Kris Sofoa
Tuesdays, July 19 and August 2 • 10 am - noon
Meet at Wissahickon Environmental Center; A Mini Nature Safari where you’ll sharpen your senses and learn fascinating facts about butterflies. Bring water, camera, and ID book if you like. Suitable for children 12+ with a responsible adult. Level: Easy.

Trails Less Traveled VI with Gerry Schweiger
Sunday, August 21 • 1 - 3 pm

Short Geology Hike with Sarah West
Saturday, September 17 • 3:30 - 5 pm
Meet at Cedars House on Forbidden Drive near Northwestern Ave. We’ll walk along Forbidden Drive from Northwestern Ave. to Belle Mill Rd. and visit an 18th century quarry and several other interesting rock exposures. This hike is suitable for children 10+ accompanied by a responsible adult.

Hikes are cancelled in the event of rain. Unless otherwise noted, hikes are on rocky rugged trails that may be wet, slippery, or steep. Please wear long pants for protection against poison ivy and possible ticks as well as sturdy, protective shoes or boots. Bring water. Hikes suitable for children are noted in their descriptions. Hikes are cancelled in the event of rain. Registration is not required but is recommended in the event of a cancellation. Please visit fow.org to register and for updated information.

MORE INFORMATION ON P. 8-9 AND AT FOW.ORG.
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH**  
Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV) lead service projects as part of their on-going reforestation activities. Project details and directions to the worksite will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event: wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For info. to RSVP, contact WRV at 215-798-0044 or wrvinformation@gmail.com.

**EVERY TUESDAY**  
Friends of the Wissahickon volunteers repair and build structures in the Wissahickon from 9am to 1pm. For more info. and to register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**  
Friends of the Wissahickon, Various Park Locations, 9 am–12 pm. Can’t volunteer with FOW on the weekend? Still want to help out? Come work with the Wednesday Morning Crew. This group is ready to take on whatever needs to be done that week. Always a good time! Contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**EVERY SATURDAY**  
Friends of the Wissahickon worksdays in the park are held most Saturdays from 9am–1pm, unless it is a holiday or there is inclement weather. Projects include trail maintenance, invasive weed removal, planting, and cleanups. Visit www.fow.org/volunteer/upcoming-workdays for updates and info on future projects. To register, contact Volunteer Coordinator John Holback at holback@fow.org or 215-247-0417 x347.

**FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH**  
Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers (WRV) lead service projects as part of their on-going reforestation activities. Project details and directions to the worksite will be posted on the WRV website at least one week prior to the event: wissahickonrestorationvolunteers.org. For info. and to RSVP, contact WRV at 215-798-0044 or wrvinformation@gmail.com.

**THIRD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH**  
Friends of Cresheim Trail conduct ongoing workdays in the park in the Cresheim Creek area. Meet at the entrance at Lincoln Drive and Allens Lane at 10 am. Volunteers should wear long pants, long sleeves, sturdy shoes, poison ivy is present. All tools, including gloves, are provided. Coffee and snacks served. Contact: info@cresheimtrail.org or 215-715-9159.

### WISSAHICKON VALLEY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

**THE BIRD FEEDING GARDEN**  
**JUNE 17**

**PINE BARRENS DISCOVERY TOUR**  
**JUNE 18**

**EMUS-MUMBOWER MILL OPEN HOUSE**  
**JUNE 19**

**TEX MEX 5K RACE FOR OPEN SPACE**  
**JUNE 22**

**MOTH – THE SILENT MAJORITY**  
**JUNE 24**

**BIRD WALK AT WILLOW LAKE FARM**  
**JUNE 25**

**NATURE STROLL AT CROSSWAYS PRESERVE**  
**JUNE 26**

**EMUS-MUMBOWER MILL OPEN HOUSE**  
**JULY 17**

**MOVIE SCREENING: THE MESSENGER**  
**AUGUST 27, SEPTEMBER 12**

### FRIENDS OF THE WISSAHICKON

**RAIN CHECK WORKSHOP**  
**JUNE 22 • p. 4**

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**  
**AUGUST 17 • p. 4**

**ALL TRAILS CHALLENGE**  
**AUGUST 20 • p. 4**

**VALLEY TALKS**  
**SEPTEMBER 20 • NOVEMBER 2 • p. 3**

**EVERY THURSDAY**  
Wissahickon Wanderers Trail Run, 4–5 miles. Starts 6:30pm sharp at Valley Green Inn. No Fees. All runners, speeds, skill levels welcome! Fun food and Cash Bar afterwards courtesy of the Valley Green Inn. For updates and more info visit wandersrunningsub.com.

**EVERY SATURDAY**  
Shawmont Running Club, Starts at Northeastwe Ave. & Andorra Rd. (north end of Forbidden Drive). From 2nd Saturday in May thru 2nd Saturday in Oct. start at 7:30 am. Distances are at the discretion of runners. All levels welcome. Emphasis is on fun! More info. at www.shawmontrunningclub.com.

**WISSAHICKON VALLEY**

**BUTTERFLY WALK**  
**JUNE 22**

**MEADOW BIRD WALK**  
**SEPTEMBER 19 • 8 AM**

**KIDS GONE WILD: ROCKS AT THE CREEK**  
**JULY 9**

**COLORFUL JOURNAL MAKING**  
**JULY 10, 14, SEPTEMBER 11**

**SIMPLE BOOKMAKING**  
**JULY 14, 17, 21, SEPTEMBER 18**

**JOURNAL MAKING**  
**SEPTEMBER 19**

**FIELD OF FLOWERS**  
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**EVERY SUNDAY**  
Friends of Cresheim Trail conduct ongoing workdays in the park in the Cresheim Creek area. Meet at the entrance at Lincoln Drive and Allens Lane at 10 am. Volunteers should wear long pants, long sleeves, sturdy shoes; poison ivy is present. All tools, including gloves, are provided. Coffee and snacks served. Contact: info@cresheimtrail.org or 215-715-9159.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**YES, I/We want to help preserve and protect the Wissahickon.**

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL**

- **$20 Limited Income/Students**
- **$45 Basic**
- **$75 Family**
- **$250 Sponsor**
- **$500 Patron**
- **$10,000 or above**

**$500 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour.

**$1000 Members** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$5000 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$3000 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$2000 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$1000 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$500 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$250 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

**$100 Patrons** receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of Craftsman Tour or Rittenhouse Town Tour, plus choice of a Hardy Red Bird: Women S M L XL Red Bird: Men S M L XL Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL T-Shirt (circle size)

- **$500 Family**
- **$45 Basic**

**Choice of: Hat T-Shirt (circle size)**

- **S**
- **M**
- **L**
- **XL**
- **Adult**

**$10,000 or above**

**T-Shirt (circle size)**

- **Children S M L**
- **Adult L XL**
- **Warbler & Map: Adult M L XL XXL**

All new members receive a map of the Wissahickon Valley. Limited Income/Student members receive invitations to all events and our quarterly newsletter. Basic members receive invitations to all events; our quarterly newsletter, and membership card with discounts for meals at Valley Green Inn (in the park) and FOW merchandise. Family members receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of two kids t-shirts (S-L, M-10-12, L-14-16). Contributing members and above ($100 or more) receive all benefits of Basic membership plus choice of hat or T-shirt (M, L, XL).

**Method of Payment**

- **Check Enclosed** (payable to Friends of the Wissahickon)
- **Charge my**
- **Visa**
- **Mastercard**
- **AmEx**
- **Discover**

**Card Number**
**Expiration Date**
**Signature**

Please return to: 40 W. Evergreen Ave., Suite 108, Philadelphia, PA 19118-3324 • tel 215-247-0417 • office@fow.org • fow.org

Contributions to Friends are tax deductible as permitted by current laws.

The official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll free, within Pennsylvania (800) 732-0999.