

# A word from Wildwood

The goal of Friends of Wildwood is to preserve and support Wildwood Park and the Benjamin O'Levine III Nature Center.

## Wildwood Restoration Summary

**Problem**—Wildwood Park's wetlands have undergone a high rate of sedimentation over the last 100 years. Due to the accumulation of silt, the Lake's depth has shrunk from 4 feet to 3 inches. Therefore, it no longer functions as a large catch basin for storing floodwaters keeping pollution, including sediment, from reaching the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay.

Recreational opportunities and wildlife habitats have also diminished from the Lake's succession-transforming the once deep waters, into marsh and upland environments.



Photo: Larry Imes

**Solutions**—Restoration efforts are underway both in Wildwood and throughout the Paxton Creek watershed.

### Implement best management practices to restore Paxton Creek's natural ecological functions:

– In 2019 Paxton Creek municipalities drafted a *Joint Pollution Reduction Plan* to address how to restore Paxton Creek while addressing municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) regulations. Capital Region Water (Harrisburg), Lower Paxton Township and Susquehanna Township prepared the plan with the short and long-term goals of reducing sediment by 10% and 35% respectively.

– Also in 2019, DEP funded the *Paxton Creek Streambank Restoration Project* in Wildwood which stabilized a 200 foot section of Paxton Creek's deeply eroded streambank.

– *The Paxton Creek Restoration Master Plan* provides a comprehensive strategy to restore the natural ecological function of the creek's southern reach, downstream from Wildwood.

### Determine how to best restore Wildwood:

– In 2015 a *Feasibility Study* of Wildwood Restoration was completed.

– By December 2021 the *Wildwood Restoration Design and Permitting Plan*, currently underway thanks to a DEP Growing Greener Grant, will detail how to best incorporate Wildwood's wetland restoration design.

### Design concepts include:

- Creating sediment catch basins
- Restoring the historic Paxton Creek channel
- Floodplain reconnection to manage where the water is going
- Retrofit outlets for flood storage
- Restoring the area between the Middle Lot and Susquehanna Spillway to provide deep pools for flood storage, aquatic habitat and recreation

### Wildwood restoration construction:

– Implement the *Design Plan*. This will restore Wildwood's wetlands to again function as an important flood mitigator for Harrisburg. The goal is to maintain Wildwood as a lake and wetland, improve Paxton Creek's water quality, and advance on-site recreation and aesthetic enhancements.

This phase is not yet funded. Initial estimates are between \$5,000,000 and \$12,000,000.

## New Park Interpretive Signs

The final pieces of the park improvement projects have been completed. You may have noticed the five new interpretive signs installed along trails in June.

One is located along the Paxton Creek Bridge, two are located on the North Boardwalk, one is by the Susquehanna Spillway and one is located at the Middle Lot.

Thank you to the following photographers: Bill Carl, Karen Carlson, Steve Dale, John Fritchey, Sherri Hendricks, Larry Imes, Shannon O'Shea and Lauren Sim for their beautiful photo contributions to the signs.



## *Δ word from Wildwood*

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Friends of Wildwood

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**DAUPHIN COUNTY**  
P E N N S Y L V A N I A  
**PARKS & RECREATION**

Wildwood Park and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center are part of the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department. The Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. Wildwood Park's trails are open from dawn until dusk. Programs can be viewed at [www.wildwoodlake.org](http://www.wildwoodlake.org) and questions directed to [wwstaff@dauphinc.org](mailto:wwstaff@dauphinc.org).

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Chris Rebert, Park Manager

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Kayla Harbert, Environmental Educator

Theresa Alberici, Part-time Environmental Educator

Christina Schwindinger, Part-time Environmental Educator

## *A Word from the President*

With school back in session, I thought we should have a *Friends of Wildwood Pop Quiz*:

- What year were the Friends of Wildwood established?
- What was the original purpose of the Friends?
- What was the first major project completed by the Friends and what year was it completed?

The Friends of Wildwood were founded in 1987 and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) in 1991. The vision of the Friends was to construct accessible boardwalks and a Nature Center. The Friends began fundraising toward these goals in 1993 and by 1997, with the aid of additional grant monies, the Friends completed the North and Delta Boardwalks. And as we celebrated last year, the Nature Center goal was accomplished in 1999.

So how did you do? Without the generous support of our Friends over the years, Wildwood Park would certainly be a different place than it is today! However, overtime things wear out and park improvements and repairs need to be made. This is true today for our boardwalk trail system. If you visited the park in 2020, you may have noticed a portion of the North Boardwalk is closed.

Due to age and weather events causing flooding and natural changes in the stream's path, this portion of the boardwalk is no longer able to be repaired. Understanding the importance of the boardwalks, the Friends are committed to raising money toward the replacement and relocation of this damaged section of boardwalk as part of our "Save The Boardwalk" campaign. Please consider making a donation towards this project (more on page 6).

Speaking of the Friends of Wildwood, I wanted to give a shout-out to our Board members. The Board is a hardworking group of multi-talented volunteers who play active roles on committees, meetings, and can often be found volunteering and/or participating in many of the parks' activities. While we've been unable to hold in-person meetings during the pandemic, the Board continued to accomplish many behind the scenes tasks and have adapted to new challenges that were faced.

Next time you see one of the Board members listed to the left, please be sure to thank them for their service and dedication to Wildwood. And be sure to join us for our upcoming virtual Annual Meeting on **Thursday, November 5th.**

Heather

## Greenbelt Ribbon Cutting

Friday July 17 marked a momentous celebration as Dauphin County Parks and Recreation recognized the Grand Opening of the 2-mile extension of the Capital Area Greenbelt, connecting Wildwood Park to Fort Hunter!



Wildwood visitors, especially those who frequent the North Lot, are sure to have noticed the progress over the past several months along Industrial Road and Route 39.



The \$4.5 million Fort Hunter extension project is part of \$7.5 million in Greenbelt upgrades funded by the state departments of Transportation, Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Community and Economic Development. Commissioners Jeff Haste, Mike Pries and George P. Hartwick, III provided \$310,000 in gaming grant funding. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission donated ten educational signs along the connector as part of the upgrades. It is our hope that this provides even more recreational opportunities for the public!

For more information about the Greenbelt visit <http://caga.org/>.

## Website Update & Rebranding

After careful consideration, the Friends of Wildwood Board selected Pixel & Hammer—a small website design, development and branding company based out of Carlisle, PA to redesign the Friends website and logo. The board and website committee



members are excited for this process to continue to unfold. The refreshed website will be a great asset to the Park and the Friends' mission.

## Truck Parking on Industrial Road

A big thanks to the City of Harrisburg and Mayor Popenfuse for installing delineator posts along Wildwood Park on Industrial Road! Stakeholder meetings were held with Wildwood, the City of Harrisburg, Police, and neighboring warehouses to come up with a plan. The City, who owns the roadway, did a terrific job!



## Osprey Nest

Osprey are birds of prey often referred to as “sea hawks”. They spend much time near water looking for the perfect fish to capture in their talons and eat. A pair has nested this summer along Industrial Road, just across from the Middle Parking Lot at Wildwood. The parents have successfully fledged two chicks. Wildwood photographers have been hard at work to capture the perfect shot of the nest—quite a challenge considering how high it stands.



Photo: Larry Imes

## Wildwood Lake Flickr Page

Can't get enough photos of Wildwood? Start following Wildwood Lake on Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/groups/wildwoodlake/> or join and share your own photos from the Park.



## Birds of the Mudflats

What an incredible summer it has been for Wildwood birders. In particular, the mudflats of the south end of the Lake have drawn in quite a unique and exciting variety of wading birds and shorebirds. The list includes: Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Dunlin, and for the first time ever the Pacific Golden-Plover.



Photo of a juvenile White Ibis: Steve Dale

## Pacific Golden-Plover

The Pacific Golden-Plover sighting in Wildwood marks the first ever recorded species in Pennsylvania! This is just one of the many reasons why Wildwood is so special and recognized by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Pacific Golden-Plover's are medium sized shorebirds. Breeding males, like the one pictured below, have black faces and underparts, bordered with a white stripe which extends from forehead to flanks. Their feathers are mottled gold, black and white. Typical winter range extends across nearly half of the earth's circumference, from California, to Hawaii, to Asia, to northeastern Africa. They are capable of covering over 2,000 miles in a single trip. During these long migrations, they stop to rest and refuel on flooded pastures and mudflats. It is hard to say why or how this guy found Wildwood, but we are sure glad he did!



Photos: Larry Imes

## Coloring Contest Results

The Park was pleased to receive 23 Coloring Contest submissions. Participants ranged in age from 5-12 years old. Votes were cast on the County Facebook page and the winner is Grant Skolnicki age 8 with his piece titled "Osprey Moon." Thanks to all who contributed! All entries are on display in the Olewine Nature Center Exhibit Hall.



## Ready, Aim, Shoot

Photographers are wanted! Wildwood is full of beautiful and interesting scenes and we would like to include your photographs in this year's Photo Contest and display. The contest is open to all including beginners, youth, intermediates and advanced. No camera? Use your phone!

Drop off your matted 8x10 photos between Oct. 1 and Dec. 1, at the Olewine Nature Center. All photos must have been taken at Wildwood Park. Mat kits are available at the Nature Center for purchase. For more information grab a brochure from the Nature Center or one of the kiosks, or visit our website at [www.wildwoodlake.org](http://www.wildwoodlake.org).



**Sunday, September 27 from 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

Enjoy an autumn walk around Wildwood Park with nature activities along the way including live reptiles/amphibians, amazing insects, live music and food. Begin your walk at the Nature Center.

This walk is an annual fundraiser for the Friends in support of the "Save The Boardwalk" campaign. Go to [www.wildwoodlake.org/support](http://www.wildwoodlake.org/support) to donate.

# Upcoming Events

## Online Registration!

Program registration is online at [www.wildwoodlake.org](http://www.wildwoodlake.org). It's easy!  
Click on the "Events" page, scroll through the list of programs, click on the link to register.

Check the website for changes before attending a program please. The Parks and Recreation Department are continuing to encourage and practice social distancing. Precautions will be taken for programs.

### Wildwood Photography Contest

NOW through Tuesday, December 1, 2020

### Art In The Wild "Call to Artists"

NOW through January 22, 2021

### Fall Tree Walk

Monday, October 19

3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Free

Join a Wildwood Park Naturalist for a leisurely walk at Detweiler Park with a focus on trees and their fall foliage. Become familiar with a variety of common species. Masks and social distancing required. Program limited to 25. Register online.

### Kids Discover: Fall

Thursday, October 22

10:00 am - 10:45 am

\$5 per child, chaperones are free

Enjoy a morning outdoors learning about fall with a Wildwood Park Naturalist. Age appropriate activities and a story will accompany this program. Program will occur outside; please dress accordingly. Masks and social distancing required. Program limited to 25. Register online for those ages 2-4.

### National Take a Hike Day

Tuesday, November 17

Anytime

Free

Grab your hiking boots, family and friends, and some water—it's National Take a Hike Day! Get outdoors for some fresh air, scenery and exercise. Take a hike at your own pace on various terrain exploring the trails and wildlife at your local Dauphin County Park.

### Waterfowl Walk

Wednesday, November 18

8:00 am - 10:00 am

Free

Join a naturalist to search for migrating waterfowl along the Towpath Trail. There may be other late arrivals such as Winter Wrens and Rusty Blackbirds. Meet at the Middle Parking Lot. Masks and social distancing required. Program limited to 25. Register online.

### Wreath Workshop

Saturday, Nov. 28 and Sunday, Nov. 29

Tuesday, Dec. 1 and Wednesday, Dec. 2

9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 pm

\$25 per wreath

Make an evergreen wreath out of natural materials. Everything will be supplied to make a wreath with decorations from nature, including cones, berries, nuts and seed pods. Wreath assembly will take place outside under a covered pavilion and optional decorating will occur indoors afterwards. Bring personal work gloves and/or decorations. Dress for the weather. Time slots limited to 10 people. Masks and social distancing required. Register online.



## Art In The Wild Call to Artists

Calling all 2021 artists to participate in *Art In The Wild*, Wildwood's outdoor environmental art exhibit. You can participate by submitting a proposal and/or spreading the word and encouraging your artist friends to apply. Participation is open to anyone wishing to submit an idea.

**Applications are due January 22, 2021**, applications may be obtained online or at the Nature Center front desk.

Shop at Boscov's, save money AND support the Friends of Wildwood, all at the same time! The Friends will be participating in Boscov's Friends Helping Friends sale on **Wednesday, October 14 and Thursday, October 15th**. All you need to do is make a purchase in-store or online, receive a 20% discount (10% on exclusions) on your purchase, mention the Friends of Wildwood at checkout and Boscov's will donate 5% of your purchase to our organization. More information is available at: <https://www.boscovs.com/>



## Volunteer Spotlight: Photographer Larry Imes

Larry Imes has been visiting Wildwood since 2007. A local friend first told him about the Park. What started out as a means of exercise, evolved quickly into a newfound love and passion. At the time he first came, there were not as many photographers as there are now. In 2009, three years after retiring, he decided to give photography a shot and bought a cheap camera.

Larry is self-taught and attributes much of the knowledge he has acquired to information he gleaned from other Park photographers and YouTube. He has always enjoyed wildlife and being in nature, camping etc. but he never knew what he was looking at or hearing. He wanted to know whose photos he was taking, so he learned.

One day while visiting the Nature Center, park staff began inquiring after his photos. He said he would be happy to share them and to this day he continues to provide photos of interest for the Park to utilize and the public to enjoy.

His photography, particularly those photos shared on Wildwood Lake's Flickr page have not just sparked interest at Wildwood but have also led to use in N.C. for interpretive signage, to a N.Y. conservation facility and even interest from local painters.

Today he shoots with a Nikon d500, 200-500 mm lens. He continues to find photography fun and exciting– never tiring of the chance to get outside. His advice to aspiring photographers is “patience, patience, patience.” It might not come to you right away. Take time to learn your camera. When Larry first started, he knew nothing– but found a community of photographers here at Wildwood that helped get his feet on the ground.

His favorite photography moment occurred off the Delta Boardwalk early one morning. While standing there with another couple, he witnessed 4 or 5 baby mink. They were very curious about the humans and came right onto the boardwalk and looked them straight in the eye. He was able to witness the mom feeding the kits snakes and frogs, watching the youngsters rip their food apart. It was a morning he will never forget! It is quiet mornings like these which remind us just how unique and abundant the wildlife is at Wildwood Park. If we do not do our part to protect habitats like Wildwood, moments like these will be few and far between.

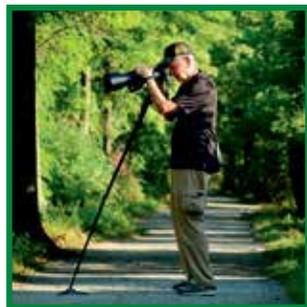


Photo: Shannon O'Shea

## Save The Boardwalk

Why does the boardwalk need saved? After almost twenty-five years of high use and natural wear, a 50-foot unsafe section of the North Boardwalk was removed. The “Save The Boardwalk” campaign will re-open the boardwalk with some exciting new features. Details on our website.

This accessible, multi-use, recreational trail provides opportunities for walking, hiking, running, dog walking, environmental education school field trip rotations, day camper experiential learning, ADA access, bird watching, flower walks, frog walks, night walks and other environmental education programs for the general public. Simply put, the boardwalks are vital part of the Park and its mission.

In order to “Save The Boardwalk” the plan is to build a new boardwalk to connect the Delta Boardwalk to the North Boardwalk. The new location for this connector section will reduce the risk of future flood damage while aligning with the Park's restoration goals.



Photo: Karen Carlson

The plan is to fund the project with donations to the Friends of Wildwood and grants. All donations are tax-deductible and can be made by visiting our website [www.wildwoodlake.org/support/](http://www.wildwoodlake.org/support/) or by mailing checks payable to: Friends of Wildwood, 100 Wildwood Way, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

## Virtual Run Wild for Wildwood 5K & 10K

Although the second annual Run Wild for Wildwood evolved into a virtual event, we were pleased to have 33 who participated in the Run! The best times were: Ryan Hartzel who ran a 16.29 minute 5K and Jonathan Ferreras who ran a 42.11 minute 10K. A special thanks to the following individuals who donated to the “Save The Boardwalk” campaign: Carol Buskirk, Carmen Gonzalez, James Harbert, Karen Hendricks, David Hiester, Maureen Mascellino, Collen McNamara, Kate McNamara, Kelly McGinley, Mike Romberger, Dave Rubinic, and Alanna Sappe.





Please consider joining the Friends and their efforts by becoming a member. With the recent surge of park visitation, now more than ever the value of greenspaces seems essential to the health of our community. Please consider joining today by visiting [www.wildwoodlake.org](http://www.wildwoodlake.org)

We are pleased to announce the Olewine Nature Center has officially Re-Opened!  
Adjusted hours are **Tuesday–Saturday**  
**10:00 am–4:00 pm** (closed 9/26)

**Sign up to receive the newsletter electronically**  
*A Word from Wildwood*  
can be sent electronically to Friends of Wildwood members.  
Email [wwstaff@dauphinc.org](mailto:wwstaff@dauphinc.org).



**Help save paper and money! GO GREEN!**

### Thinking of Giving to Wildwood?

Here are 7 easy ways to give to Wildwood.  
All are tax deductible.  
Details at [www.wildwoodlake.org/support](http://www.wildwoodlake.org/support)

1. **Become a Member** or give the gift of membership
2. Make a Donation
3. Make a Bequest
4. Purchase a Memorial Brick
5. Contribute to Wildwood’s Endowment
6. Sponsor a Program
7. Volunteer your Time



### Membership Benefits

Your membership supports the ongoing environmental education programs and conservation efforts of Wildwood Park and the Benjamin Olewine III Nature Center.

- Your Membership provides the following:
- Reciprocal membership with more than 125 nature centers throughout the country that participate in the Association of Nature Center Administrators
  - Subscription to *A Word From Wildwood* quarterly newsletter
  - 10% discount off all Gift Shop purchases
  - Knowing you
    - support Environmental Education programs reaching 10,000 people annually
    - have a direct impact on local and migratory wildlife, wild plants, and the diverse people living in our community
    - preserve Wildwood Park, now and for future generations.

**Have you considered Wildwood Park in your estate planning?**

The Friends of Wildwood Lake Nature Center, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization listed with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations, and incorporated within the Commonwealth of PA. It is an advocate for Wildwood Park through preservation, education and financial support.

Friends of Wildwood  
100 Wildwood Way  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
(717) 221-0292  
[www.wildwoodlake.org](http://www.wildwoodlake.org)

Mark your calendars for  
these upcoming events!

Walk for Wildwood

Sun. Sept. 27

12:00-4:00 pm

National Take a

Hike Day

Tues. Nov. 17

Wreath Workshops

Nov. 28 & 29

and

Dec. 1 & 2



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