

# A word from Wildwood

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



Help celebrate Wildwood with a nature-themed day at the Nature Center! Learn about butterflies, birds and more. Participate in pumpkin painting, children's crafts, live musical entertainment and guided walks. Children will enjoy a storywalk along the Delta Boardwalk. There's something for the whole family!

Music with Shine & Grace 10:30am –11:30am & 12:30pm –1:30pm

Food Vendor: B&L Dogz

Guided Walks:

- Bird Walk with Appalachian Audubon Society Birder Glenn Mitzel 8am –10am
- Flower Walk with Jane Earle 10am–11am
- Native Plant Walk with Master Gardener Kevin Kelly 11am –12pm
- Watershed Restoration Walk with Chesapeake Bay Foundation Education Coordinator Kassie Fenn 1pm –2pm

Wildwood Partners: Appalachian Audubon Society, Astronomical Society of Harrisburg, Capital Area Greenbelt Association, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Dauphin County Library System, Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Penn State Extension Master Gardeners

Thank you to Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority for sponsoring this event.



## Summer Day Camps

Each summer we look forward to our Summer Day Camp Program serving children ages 4-14. This year we hosted a record 169 campers during the 8 weeks of day camps. Little Sprouts ages 4-5 spent their half day reading stories, making crafts and learning about the unique wildlife at the Park. Nature Explorers ages 6-8 learned what it means to be an explorer, hatched their own dinosaur eggs and met live reptiles from



Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary and raptors and owls from Miller's Wildlife. Junior Naturalists ages 9-11 heard the stories of famous Naturalists, learned how to journal, identified park wildlife, went fishing

and met rehabilitated animals from West Shore Wildlife Center. The Outdoor Week campers ages 12-14 learned survival skills, paddled the Susquehanna River, traversed the Appalachian Trail, met an AT Thru Hiker and had a special opportunity to meet Biologists from the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Vector Management Group.



Photo: Outdoor Week Campers With DEP Secretary Shirley

## *A word from Wildwood*

is published quarterly by

Friends of Wildwood

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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 Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is closed Mondays and holidays. Wildwood Park's trails are open from dawn until dusk. Programs can be viewed at [explorewildwoodpark.org/events](http://explorewildwoodpark.org/events) and questions directed to [wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov)

### **County Commissioners**

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Richelle Curanzy, Environmental Educator

Theresa Alberici, Part-time Environmental Educator

Jessica Picone, Part-time Environmental Educator

Molly Sutton, Part-time Environmental Educator

Evan Wilson, Part-time Environmental Educator

## *A Word from the President*

Do you have a favorite tree at Wildwood? I do.

Managing the Wildwood forest is no small effort. Consider the maintenance required for supporting young tree growth, trimming back of overhanging and dangerous limbs, addressing pest infestation and removal of dead and dying stock. All of this points to the ongoing need for new tree plantings to maintain a healthy forest environment, an effort that is part of how The Friends of Wildwood support the Park.

It's easy to take Wildwood's trees for granted, but it's important to realize and recognize the enormous amount of work carried out through Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department and the Friends to keep providing the Park's visitors everything the forest provides: cooling shade during oppressively hot summer months, habitats for countless species of flora and fauna, a laboratory for biological study and an environment for quiet therapeutic relaxation (also known as forest bathing).

Wildwood has an ongoing program of forest management, which over the years has included planting a buffer zone along the south entrance drive to help soften the impact of Route 81 on the Park and hundreds of trees as infill to the forest canopy throughout the Park. The Friends are always looking for grant funds to support new tree plantings as well as treatments for sick specimen trees.

Most recently, the Friends of Wildwood have been fortunate to have been awarded a grant through the GIANT Company and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful as part of the 2025 Healing the Planet program. Wildwood received almost \$4,000 for urban wetland tree planting which is being matched with a \$1,000 commitment from the Friends. This planting will be undertaken before the end of the year and will include a variety of White Pine, Eastern Redbud, Norway Spruce, Pagoda Dogwood, Swamp White Oak and Eastern Red Cedar. We hope our visitors will be able to enjoy all the new trees along the trails.

Maybe one of these new trees will become your favorite.

See you at Wildwood,  
Jim

## Wildwood Restoration

Wildwood Restoration is a long term project to address the sedimentation of Wildwood Lake. Currently, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is reviewing and modifying the proposed restoration design plans.

These design plans propose a three-phased approach to dredging: Phase 1, the highest priority, takes place around the south lobe of Wildwood Lake, commonly referred to as the Morning Glory Spillway area. It is broken down into Phases 1A, 1B and 1C. Phase 2, connects the south lobe to the north end of the Park by establishing a channel parallel to the Towpath Trail. Phase 3, comprises dredging the north end around the Susquehanna Spillway.

Although applied for, no dredging funding has been secured. However, Phase 1A funding has been obtained through a grant with DEP's Growing Greener program. This is for streambank stabilization measures along the muddy banks of Paxton Creek upstream from the Nature Center. Project details and updates can be found at [explorewildwoodpark.org](http://explorewildwoodpark.org). Click on About, News & Updates.

## Bird-Friendly Windows

Bird window strikes are one of the leading causes of human-related songbird deaths. We are happy to announce that nearly every window and door at the Olewine Nature Center is now retrofitted with bird-friendly glass. Approximately 500 square feet of window and door glass has been covered with deterrents designed to make windows visible to birds.

We experimented with a variety of products and chose one that makes glass visible to birds while providing clear viewing through the windows. The product from Feather Friendly is 1/4 inch white reflective markers spaced about every two inches. Birds are now able to see there is a window, instead of seeing it as a reflection of nature. The markers are designed to reduce bird/window collisions by 95%.



Thank you to our project sponsors: Appalachian Audubon Society (AAS) and Friends of Wildwood. Thank you AAS for your support to make this project a reality! Visit [appalachianaudubon.org](http://appalachianaudubon.org) to learn about local Bird Safe Harrisburg initiatives including Lights Out Harrisburg.

## Night at the Nature Center

Take an after-hours walk through the Olewine Nature Center on **Saturday, October 18** and watch the Exhibit Hall critters come to life! Kids will meet these fun talking animals and visit other stations including a campfire to make s'mores, sip apple cider, a craft, and a not so scary Halloween story. Everyone is encouraged to dress as their favorite animal or in a Halloween costume. Don't forget your trick or treat bag!

Register for one of the following timeslots: 5:30pm–6:30pm; 6pm–7pm; or 6:30pm–7:30pm. The program costs \$8 per participant, chaperones are free, pre-register at [explorewildwoodpark.org/events/](http://explorewildwoodpark.org/events/) each timeslot is limited to 25 participants.



Interested in helping the Nature Center come to life for this fun evening...by dressing up as an animal that calls Wildwood Park home? Contact Savanna at [slenker@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:slenker@dauphincounty.gov).



## Species Spotlight: Swamp Rose Mallow

Have you noticed the showy white and pink blooms growing along the edge of the Lake and Canal? These hibiscus-style flowers belong to Swamp Rose Mallow, a wetland plant of the Mallow Family. Their 4-7 inch flowers exhibit long showy stamens that form a column with 5 rounded petals. The plant itself can grow 3-8 feet tall. The leaves are 4 inches long, toothed and pointed with a white underside. This plant enjoys marshy areas of inland freshwater bodies. It can be found in New England all the way to Florida and the Great Lakes. The colorful blossoms add such a nice contrast against the large pizza-sized green leaves of the American Lotus and its creamy yellow flowers. Both bloomed in mass this summer and were a highlight for all Park users. Additionally, this flower is a favorite of butterflies, bees and hummingbirds who are the perfect size to pollinate it.



## Intern Jay Barker

This summer Wildwood welcomed Intern Jay Barker to our Staff. Jay is no stranger to Wildwood and was previously introduced in the Autumn 2024 Issue mentioning Jay's research work on the *Galerucella* beetles that eat Purple Loosestrife, an invasive wetland plant found in local waterways. Jay helped this summer with all ages of day campers from 4-14 years and worked independently on a variety of projects within the Park. Jay returns to Pitt University this fall for the start of his sophomore year. He is currently pursuing a B.S. Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Thanks for your efforts at Wildwood this summer!



## Girl Scouts Outdoor Art Event

On May 31, Wildwood welcomed over forty Girl Scouts representing Daisies on up through Seniors. While meeting the requirements for their badges, they spent time with past Art In The Wild Artist and high school art teacher, Naomi Spahr. With her help they collectively contributed to creating an upcycled bottle cap mosaic featuring everyone's favorite prehistoric turtle, the Snapping Turtle! Thank you to all who contributed and to our volunteers, Linda, Carol L, Pat, Jim, Carol B. and Pam for helping the day run so smoothly. You can check out this beautiful work of art outside the Nature Center along the parking area. It is mounted on display in one of the flower beds adjacent to the Center.



## Used Books/Puzzles Wanted

The Friends continue to collect used or new books and puzzles to sell in their on-going Used Book Sale in the downstairs portion of the Nature Center. Field guides, children's books and other nature-related books are appropriate. Donations can be dropped off at the Nature Center Front Desk.

## Recent Bird Sightings

This year Wildwood enjoyed a few "rare" to the Park bird sightings. Those include but were not limited to: Sora, Black-necked Stilt, White Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Pied-billed Grebe and Black-crowned Night-Heron. To keep up in real time as these birds are spotted by park users, check out Wildwood Lake Park's Hotspot on eBird by visiting [ebird.org/hotspot/L231741](https://ebird.org/hotspot/L231741).



Photo: White Ibis, Sherri Hendricks

eBird is a project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It is a free, global database of bird observations that allows birders to record and share their sightings. It also serves as a platform for scientific research and conservation efforts.

## Friends of Wildwood Bus Trip: Off the Beaten Path

There's still time to join the Friends of Wildwood for their 4th Annual Bus Trip on Saturday, October 25! Celebrate the beauty of autumn with a full day of adventure and discovery! Travel in comfort aboard a luxury coach as we explore the natural and historic treasures of Central Pennsylvania.

- **First Stop: Penn's Cave & Wildlife Park – Centre Hall, PA.** Experience America's only all-water cavern tour, where you'll glide through the stunning limestone cave system on a flat-bottom boat during a guided, interpretive tour. Afterward, hop aboard the **Farm-Nature Tour** to explore the wonders of native North American animals in a carefully preserved, habitat.
- **Lunch Options:** Enjoy lunch on your own at Penn's Cave. Pack your own meal or visit the Cave Café for delicious, casual dining.
- **Sweet Stop: Meyer Dairy.** On the way to our next destination, we'll swing by Meyer Dairy—a local favorite—for a refreshing ice cream break!
- **Final Stop: Shaver's Creek Environmental Center – Petersburg, PA.** Nestled in the heart of Central PA, Shaver's Creek offers up-close encounters with live animals, educational exhibits on conservation and a scenic tour of its beautifully preserved grounds.

**Cost:** \$110 for FOWW Members or \$115 for Non-Members. Use Discount Code: **Caves2025** for \$5 discount.



# Upcoming Events

## Online Registration!

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

### Mushroom Identification Hike at Detweiler Park

*Sunday, September 7*  
*1:00 pm – 3:00 pm* *\$2 per participant*  
Join Brian Scott of Deep Hollow Forest Farms for an afternoon walk at Detweiler Park. Register at [detweilerpark.org/events/](http://detweilerpark.org/events/). For more information about the farm visit <https://deep-hollow-forest-farm.square.site/>

### Volunteer Work Days

*Saturdays, Sept. 13, Oct. 11 & Nov. 8*  
*10:00 am – 1:00 pm* *Free*  
Take this opportunity to work outside and help Wildwood's continued park and habitat enhancement projects. Tools and work gloves provided. Register online.

### Kids Discover: Herons & Egrets (Ages 5-10)

*Thursday, September 18*  
*10:00 am – 12:00 pm* *\$5 per child, chaperones are free*  
Join a Naturalist to discover the amazing world of herons and egrets and examine their super abilities to survive in the wetlands, rivers and streams. Explore their wetland habitat as we take a hike in search of these large, beautiful birds. Register online.

### Bird Walk: Fall Migration at Wildwood

*Thursday, October 2*  
*7:30 am – 9:30 am* *Free*  
Join Rick and Peggy Price to look for fall warblers and other songbirds heading south, raptors and year-round resident birds. Meet in front of the Nature Center. Register online.

### Eucalyptus Magic

*Saturday, October 4*  
*10:30 am – 1:30 pm* *\$50 per participant*  
Join Natural Dyer Carol Reed for her signature Eucalyptus Magic Workshop. Participants will get to naturally dye a one-of-a-kind 14" x 72" silk scarf using fresh eucalyptus leaves to create a unique pattern. While the scarves are dyeing, you'll have free time from 11:30am to 1:00pm to explore Wildwood or get lunch nearby. All participants should return at 1:00pm to remove the scarves from the bath and have the "big reveal". Program is limited to 18 participants ages 14 and up. For more information on Carol visit <https://www.carolreed.org/>. Register online.



### Preschool Storytime: Fall at Wildwood

*Wednesday, October 15*  
*10:00 am – 10:45 am* *Free*  
Join a Dauphin County Library System Librarian and Wildwood Park for a fun story session for children ages 2-5. This program is sponsored by Altrusa of South Central PA, providing a book for each participant. Each participant will go home with a theme-related book. Register online.

### Fort Hunter Conservancy Fall Foliage Hike

*Sunday, October 19*  
*1:00 pm – 3:00 pm* *Free*  
Join a Naturalist for an afternoon hike at Fort Hunter Conservancy. Our adventure at this lesser-known park will include a look at plants, trees and whatever other interesting things we can find! Please bring water, a snack and proper footwear as the last section of the trail is very steep and has a lot of loose rock. Register online.

### Tree Walk

*Sunday, October 26*  
*1:30 pm – 3:00 pm* *Free*  
Join volunteer Jane Earle for a fall tree walk to view the leaves in their full color and learn how to identify them. Meet in front of the Nature Center. Register online.

### Persimmon Walk

*Tuesday, November 4*  
*1:00 pm – 2:00 pm* *Free*  
Take a walk with a Naturalist along the Towpath Trail to view and taste these curious fall fruits known as persimmons. Meet at the South Lot trailhead. Register online.

### The Cat in the Hat Learning Series

*Thursdays, Nov. 6, 13 & 20*  
*10:00 am – 10:45 am* *\$5 per child, chaperones are free*  
Join a Naturalist for fun interactive story session for children ages 3-5. Stories, rhymes, and a craft/activity will introduce science through the eyes of the Cat In The Hat. Classes are offered during 3 consecutive Wednesdays. This program is sponsored by Altrusa of South Central PA, providing a book for each participant. Register online.

### Birds & Coffee with Appalachian Audubon

*Saturdays, Nov. 8 & Dec. 13*  
*10:00 am – 11:00 am* *Free*  
On the second Saturday from November - April, join Appalachian Audubon at the Bird Viewing Area inside the Nature Center to observe and count common feeder birds as part of Project FeederWatch. Pre-registration not required.

### Kids Discover: Get Ready for Winter! (Ages 4-6)

*Sunday, November 9*  
*1:30 pm – 3:00 pm* *\$5 per child, chaperones are free*  
Discover how the animals in Wildwood Park prepare for the winter-from making dens to storing food to migrating south! Register online.

### Waterfowl Walk

*Thursday, November 13*  
*8:00 am – 10:00 am* *Free*  
Join Volunteers Rick and Peggy Price to search for migrating waterfowl along the Towpath Trail. Meet at the Middle Parking Lot. Register online.

### November Hike

*Saturday, November 15*  
*1:00 pm – 3:00 pm* *Free*  
Join a Naturalist for a hike on some of Wildwood's less-traveled trails. Admire the fall foliage and clearer views of the Lake as the leaves fall. Hike will be around 3 miles. Register online.

### Wild Recipes: Fall Foraging in Your Backyard

*Tuesday, November 18*  
*6:00 pm – 7:30 pm* *10 per participant*  
Join Naturalists at Wildwood Park to learn how to cook with a variety of fall fruits and nuts. Samples of each edible treat will be provided. Register online.

### Kids Discover: Turkey Talk (Ages 2-5)

*Tuesday, November 25*  
*10:00 am – 11:30 am* *\$5 per child, chaperones are free*  
Learn all about Wild Turkeys and what makes these colorful birds unique. Register online.

### Wreath Workshop

*Sat. Nov. 29, Sun. Nov. 30 & Tues. Dec. 2*  
*9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 pm, 1:30 pm* *\$35 per wreath*  
Make an evergreen wreath out of natural materials. Everything will be supplied to make a wreath with decorations from nature. Register online.

### Natural Ornaments

*Saturday, Dec. 6 & Sunday, Dec. 7*  
*10:00 am, 11:30 am, 1:00 pm and 2:30 pm* *\$8 per participant*  
Children and adults are invited to make holiday ornaments using natural materials. Timeslots are limited to 15 participants. Register online.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Jim Allen

“Hi Jim, how are you today...?” “Wonderful Terrific!!” One can expect that level of enthusiasm and joy each and every time they greet Jim Allen. For Jim, Wildwood has been a part of his life for many decades. One of his first jobs in the 70’s aligned him in the County Commissioners Office, when Commissioner Jack Minnich made efforts towards acquiring the Park for the County for one whole dollar. Jim recalls Jack’s foresight, realizing what this Park could become and his careful consideration, not wanting to take something of this scale on that the County couldn’t care for long term.

Some early memories for Jim include walks with the dogs and walks with his daughters. Most notably, each daughter was given a leaf ID project which he worked on with them at Wildwood and at HACC. Jim began volunteering at Wildwood during Volunteer Work Days. VWDs are a popular event which draws many members of the Community on the second Saturday of each month beginning in March and ending in November.



*Photo: Jim & Barbara at Volunteer Work Day this past March*

It was Jim’s wife Barbara, who read a plea for Front Desk Volunteers in a prior Newsletter, that got him volunteering inside the Nature Center. In his retirement, he felt qualified and up for the task. He considers himself a generalist, not a birder per se or a botanist, but someone who knows a little about a lot. Additionally, Jim has volunteered at festival education stations, the 5K/10K as a water server during the race and he has even been in charge

of facilitating VWD on weekends when staff have been unavailable.

What we love most about Jim is his careful attention to detail and his keen eye for fixing things. He shared that meeting a great variety of people is his favorite part of his Front Desk Duties. You never know who will stop in: a couple traveling up the coast for a wedding, a woman attending the Farm Show and looking for other free things to do in the area, folks coming in to let their kids explore using the scavenger hunt – the possibilities are endless.”

In closing, Jim wants to remind folks about Wildwood’s rich history. Pennsylvania claims the birth of the City Beautiful Movement, an initiative which began right here in Harrisburg with goals of improving green spaces in urban areas. As Wildwood continues to grow and flourish, we remember that connection and we cherish how far we’ve come. Volunteering at Wildwood allows Jim to feel like he’s contributing a small part towards the continuance of that goal and mission.

## Hummingbird Banding

One of the rewarding results of bird banding is when a Bander recatches a bird that they had banded in a previous year. This helps us to understand and confirm longevity in a species.

This happened this summer at Wildwood with a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Last year, Sandy Lockerman banded an adult female on July 1st on the deck of the Nature Center. This year, she caught the same female on June 20th and then she caught her again on July 26th. This recapture made her at least 2 years old. The repeat recapture most likely means she nested close to the Nature Center where she had a steady supply of nectar from the hummingbird feeders on the deck.



Thank you to all volunteers who keep the feeders full of sugary nectar for our 2-year-old female to sip!

## Pin Recipients

Each year at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner we recognize the contributions of our dedicated volunteers and their years of service to the Park. This year we recognized **Linda Walker** (5 years), **Tom Hilbish** (10 years), **Jeremy Lopus** (10 years), **Heather Dock** (15 years), **Jim Haslam** (15 years), **Larry Imes** (15 years), **Shawn Scott** (15 years), **Olivia Susskind** (15 years) and **Cara Martinez-Williams** (25 years). You have all left a lasting impact on the Park and we are so grateful for all you do!

## Volunteering

There are a lot specialized volunteer opportunities coming up in the next few months. There are needs for volunteers to assist with education stations at Celebrate Wildwood or to dress up like an animal at Night at the Nature Center! Additionally, there may be a weekend Front Desk shift waiting for you!

Information is available on our Volunteer Website, Galaxy Digital. [galaxydigital.com](http://galaxydigital.com). If you’re already a volunteer, visit [dauphincountyparks.gov](http://dauphincountyparks.gov). If you’re interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Savanna at [slenker@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:slenker@dauphincounty.gov).



## Calling all Photographers!

It's that time again. Hopefully you have been snapping those pictures for the 2025 Friends of Wildwood Photo Contest. Pick up a brochure at the Nature Center and submit your best photographs during the month of November, beginning on November 1st (all entries must be in by **November 23**). The photos have to have been taken at any one of the 5 Dauphin County Parks (Wildwood, Fort Hunter, Detweiler, Lykens Glen or Wiconisco Creek Park). All submitted photographs will hang in the Nature Center from December 9th through January 24th for visitors to enjoy.



## Looking for Tranquility?

If the hustle and bustle or the general noise of Wildwood is cramping your style...Detweiler Park is just the ticket. Tucked quietly off PA-225 you'll find 400+ acres of lush forest and field habitat to explore on foot, or a peaceful orange Adirondack chair positioned near water to sit and relax. For more information on Dauphin County's newest and largest park, visit [detweilerpark.org](http://detweilerpark.org).











Show your support for Wildwood Park by sporting some Wildwood-themed apparel! Order at your convenience from our online store at <https://bit.ly/3LwL1uk>

Orders will take 2 weeks to process and will be available for pick-up at the Nature Center after email confirmation or shipped to you for additional costs. All sales are final and all proceeds directly benefit the projects and programs sponsored by the Friends of Wildwood.



Interested in receiving weekly emails on programming in all Dauphin County Parks? Scan this QR code with your smartphone and click on the yellow "E-Newsletter Sign-Up" Button.

## Ways to Give

-  Online
-  Cash or Check
-  Sponsor a Program
-  Become a Member
-  Make a Bequest
-  Endowments
-  Memorial Bricks
-  Volunteer our time

## Membership Benefits

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

Your Membership provides the following:

- Reciprocal membership with more than 100 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 Nature Shop purchases

Knowing you:

- Support outdoor educational and recreational opportunities reaching over 100,000 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

## Sign up to receive the newsletter electronically

*A Word from Wildwood* can be sent electronically to Friends of Wildwood members.

Email [wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov](mailto:wwstaff@dauphincounty.gov)

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



Friends of Wildwood  
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Mark your calendars for  
these upcoming events!

Night at the  
Nature Center  
Sat. October 18  
5:00pm—8:00pm

FOWW Bus Trip  
Sat. October 25  
8:00am—5:00pm

Holiday Wreath  
Workshops  
Sat. Nov. 29, Sun.  
Nov. 30, Tues. Dec. 2  
9:00am—3:30pm



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