

Progress report on new headquarters

We are delighted to report that the construction of our new headquarters is proceeding as planned. This project has only been possible because of the generosity of you, our supporters. We are extremely grateful to everyone who has already donated, including a recent gift of \$20,000 from an anonymous source. We still need, however, to raise a further \$84,000 in order to complete the project. If you have not yet donated – or would like to provide additional funds – we hope you will help us in this time of need. All donations for this much needed infrastructure will help to ensure long term stability for the Refuge by providing for office space and accommodations for our residential manager. As many of you who have visited the Refuge know, having someone live and work onsite maximizes our ability to protect this wonderful habitat, which provides a unique haven for wildlife, including species officially listed as endangered or threatened in New Jersey.



Refuge has a new manager



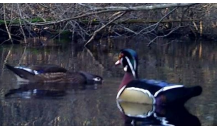
We are pleased to welcome Jen Collins as our new manager! Jen holds a masters degree in biology. Shown here with a kestrel in the process of rehabilitation, Jen is a passionate advocate for the respect and protection of all wildlife, natural habitats and the environment. Her experience working with raptor rehabilitation has given her a unique insight into conservation and public education.

Boy Scout volunteers at Refuge for his Eagle Scout project

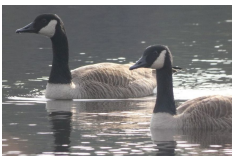
Last October, Boy Scout Ryan Cherfane of Troop 252 (3rd from right in photo), based in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and fellow Troop members, volunteered at the Refuge in order to complete an Eagle Scout project. As part of the Refuge's long-term plan to no longer use trees to mount signs or other devices, Ryan's project was two-fold. First, he and his colleagues removed old Refuge signs from trees along one of the main trails. Then they installed new signs on T-posts. The project also included clearing trails and marking some trees with non-toxic paint to guide visitors. Dave Sauder, the Refuge Trustee who supervised the work, said, "*Although the work was exhausting, everyone appeared to have a good time being in nature and providing the Refuge with this important service.*" Thank you Ryan and company...and Dave!



Refuge visitor declares it to be "very unique"



Richard Moody came to the Refuge last November so that he could hike along the trails and view the wildlife inhabitants. After several hours on the trails, he returned to relax on the shore of the main pond. He was 'rewarded' with a view of Canada geese and wood ducks. Although Richard was unable to get photos, we have included a couple of our file photos. He stated that his time here was a "very pleasant adventure" and that the Refuge was "very unique". Come visit us – we think you will agree.



Annual Unexpected Wildlife Refuge Earth Day Cleanup 19 April 2020



On Sunday 19 April, the Refuge will be hosting our annual Earth Day Cleanup. Rain or shine, we will start at 11 AM on Piney Hollow Road, which is a very busy, two-lane road bordering part of the Refuge. Families are welcome. If you have young children, it will be safer to assign you a small section of our boundary trail, instead of the main road. This is an

important and long-time event for us. We pick up and cut plastic beverage ring holders, particularly hazardous for animals. Items that are recyclable are separated from others for proper disposal. Afterward, we will meet back by the main pond for a potluck vegan lunch. To keep our expenses down, we ask that each volunteer bring one or more vegan items to share with everyone. ***Please be aware that we do not allow any beverages in plastic bottles nor any items in 'black plastic' at the Refuge.*** RSVP by Wednesday 15 April, either to info@unexpectedwildliferetuge.org or by calling our office number: 856.697.3541.

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge joins another important environmental coalition

Although we 'act locally' much of the time, dealing with wildlife issues close to home, we also 'think globally', recognizing that all wildlife and environmental issues are interconnected regardless of locale. Through our association with the Endangered Species Coalition, for example, we have lent our support for issues such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which will reaffirm longstanding protections for birds from industrial hazards and the Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature, a resolution that calls upon the federal government to establish a national goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the land and 30 percent of the ocean of the United States by 2030. We have now added our voice to the Plastic Pollution Coalition, dedicated to educating the public about the negative effects of plastic on the environment and its inhabitants. Even before joining this coalition, the Refuge has always been concerned about the use of plastic, particularly so-called single-use plastic. We have long recognized that recycling is not the answer; *refraining from producing* is the only way to ensure that such plastic does not end up in the environment. We have a strict policy, for example, prohibiting the use of any plastic beverage containers at the Refuge.



Good news on NJ legislation

We supported efforts, including contacting legislators and Governor Murphy, to defeat two appalling bills that would have removed restrictions on the killing of beavers and deer in NJ. We are delighted that both bills were stopped. In the case of S3407/A2731, the beaver trapping bill, Governor Murphy vetoed it despite it having been voted through by the Assembly and Senate.

Under a new law signed by Gov Phil Murphy, shark fins will be banned in NJ from 1st January 2021. New Jersey is the 14th state to introduce such a ban. The new legislation will prohibit the sale, trade, distribution or offering for sale of shark fins, as well as the possession of any shark fin that is separated from a shark who is caught and released.

And the bad news: Bears of NJ still need our support

Tragically, there is no encouraging news for the bears of NJ. Governor Murphy continues to ignore calls for him to fulfill his campaign promise to end this annual slaughter, and 315 of these wonderful beings were hunted and killed during November and December of 2019. Please continue to contact Gov Murphy about his campaign promise; say that you have been encouraged by his actions relative to beavers, deer and sharks and urge him to extend his humanity to bears. Telephone: 609.292.6000; Tweet: @GovMurphy

Ribbon snake on dike of main pond



We came across this ribbon snake while walking along the dike that borders the main pond. Although we cannot be sure, the general body 'thinness' suggested this was a male. He assumed a mildly defensive posture as we got this photograph and then rapidly slithered out of sight. Ribbon snakes are non-venomous and completely harmless to people. If picked up (we strongly discourage this for the snake's sake), they may try to bite ineffectually, but more likely they will expel a foul-smelling excrement in an effort to discourage their

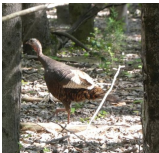
captor. This species is a form of garter snake and is classified in the same genus (*Thamnophis*). They differ from other species of similar-appearing garter snakes in that they are generally thinner, have longer tails and somewhat different stripes and have a prominent white 'crescent' in front of each eye.

Opossum and Refuge manager meet up in Bluebird Field

Jen, our recently hired manager, has been exploring as much of the Refuge as she can in order to become familiar with the trails and rich habitat. Because she arrived in winter, she has seen a somewhat 'subdued' version of the animal and plant life. As she found her way to Bluebird Field, she came upon this adult North American opossum rummaging around amongst the leaves. Generally not active during the day, this one may have ventured out because of hunger. Rather than take any chances in the presence of a potential 'predator' (not that Jen would ever hurt any animal), this individual quickly scampered off into cover, but not before Jen was able to get a few nice photos.



Wild turkeys and the incident with Trustee Dave Sauder



While patrolling during shotgun week, Dave had an unforgettable encounter with a flock of wild turkeys. "*I was seated with my back to a tree in the forest when I saw about 30 turkeys running single file off in the distance.*" The turkeys probably had become alarmed by Dave's presence. "*As the late afternoon turned into evening and darkness, I headed back towards base. At the boardwalk near Bluebird Field, there was a cacophony of beating wings in the tree branches above my head. I looked up and saw that the turkeys I had seen earlier had roosted in the trees for the night. Unfortunately, my 'intrusion' once again startled them and they were hastily relocating themselves to a 'safer' area.*"



Although there was no need for the turkeys to be alarmed, we are glad that they recognized human beings as a potential threat. Such vigilance may serve them well if they wander off Refuge land. (Dave did not have a camera at the time, but we are sharing some archival photos.)

More evidence of vibrant population of beavers at the Refuge

We may not be able to match the zeal Hope had for beavers, but we must not be far behind. Smiles are involuntary as we watch the beavers play in the main pond, examine a stream with an eye to building a



dam, chew on a poplar or other tree for a snack or building materials. When the kits come out to explore their new world, we may even take on a foolish countenance as our joy at seeing them stretches our facial muscles to the limit. Alas, exploitation by people has caused these normally diurnal individuals to become more active in the evenings and night time. This means that visitors may only get to see indirect evidence of their presence. We have numerous lodges in all the waterways, many having been built within the last few years. Examples of the ingenuity and industriousness abound in the maintenance and creation of new dams. And, the sharpness and strength of the rodents' teeth are evident in the trees that have been cut down for food or building materials.



Unimaginatively named frog



You might wonder why we referred to this frog who was seen near the main pond, as a "green frog". You might argue that anyone who is not colorblind would surely not need to be reminded of the color of this wonderful individual. What you might not know, however, is that this is the 'official' name of this species (*Lithobates clamitans*, for those of you interested in Latin). One of many species of frogs



who live permanently at the Refuge, green frogs add to the multitude of frog voices we hear in the spring.

White-tailed deer browsing at Miller Pond



It is, to our delight, not unusual to see white-tailed deer in and around the main pond. They even come up to the headquarters area and around our iconic Refuge sign, making it easy to view and photograph them. During one of our hikes out to Miller Pond, we were equally delighted to see this doe browsing along the shore of the stream that feeds the pond. Even though we were at a distance and had to use the telephoto feature of the camera, she quickly became aware of our presence and moved out of sight. Although she was not to know that we would never harm her, such alertness will serve her well if she goes off Refuge land and is prey to people who think killing these animals is 'fine sport'.

Bumblebee working her magic on coastal sweetpepperbush flowers

Even though seeing bumblebees is an 'everyday occurrence', it is important that we recognize the critical role these large bees play in the ecosystem. We enjoyed watching this individual as she went about her quiet business of collecting food, knowing that her efforts are responsible for the pollination and health of many other species of plants and, by extension, animals, too. Sadly, these insects are diminishing in number worldwide, partly due to continued use of toxic chemicals (so called pesticides) by people. We do not allow any toxic chemicals at the Refuge, so this bee is safe while she is here.



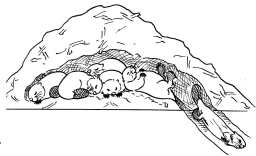
Buttercup oil beetles preparing to add to their numbers



Trustee Dave Sauder came across these two buttercup oil beetles mating. He took a photo and then moved quickly away to give them privacy. Oil beetles are generally classified as blister beetles because they secrete cantharidin, a substance that can cause considerable skin irritation. Just one more reason to observe and protect, but otherwise leave wildlife alone.

Helping wildlife and Unexpected Wildlife Refuge today

The Refuge is home and sanctuary for hundreds of animal and plant species, some highly endangered, and ensures them the best chance possible for survival. We depend on the support of our donors to keep the Refuge safe. We – and the wildlife – could not exist without you. May we rely on your continued support? A donation today – no matter how small – will help us to continue our important work and secure the future of the Refuge. We care for these 767 acres with a very small operating budget, a paid staff of one and a voluntary Council of Trustees.



Helping wildlife and the Refuge in the future



Please remember Unexpected Wildlife Refuge when planning your will and estate. It is an easy, effective and lasting way to help the Refuge... and wildlife. Provide your estate planner with our name, address and tax identification number (23-7025010). This is one of the most important gifts the Refuge can receive. If you have already included us in your future plans, thank you!

This issue of our newsletter is brought to you by a grant from Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics.

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