

The Natural Observer

Spring, 2018

Newsletter of Governor Dick Park

Springtime Blues

The long, dark nights of winter can bring on the blues for many people, creating a feeling of depression and lethargy. Spring is the perfect remedy! With longer daylight hours and sunshine and flowers, who can resist the tug of the outdoors, pulling one to get outside! Spring, however, has its own style of blues.

BLUEBIRDS! Henry David Thoreau wrote that “the bluebird carries the sky on its back,” and such a beautiful blue is surely an eye catcher. Their large black eyes give them a sweet and gentle look. Birds of open country, they are mainly insect eaters (along with berries) and that makes them a welcome friend in any yard.



The Eastern Bluebird

Eagle Scout Casey Emler placed several bluebird boxes on Governor Dick Park property last year,

two of them located in the wildflower meadow near the Environmental Center. There was a pair of bluebirds eyeing the real estate in January, and they are consistently seen preying upon insects, eating suet, or perching on top of the boxes in the sunshine. A family of bluebirds is anticipated as the days grow warmer. Keep watch with us!



Mark your calendar for April 15 at 2:00 p.m. Ken Leister from the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania will be presenting pictures of bluebirds and information on how to encourage these dazzling birds to visit any yard. If you are interested in monitoring the bluebird boxes in the Park, stop by the office.

A Faded Fox and a Balding Bear

A few of our taxidermy mounts have seen better days. The black bear is losing its fur and the red fox isn't red. Our flying squirrel was stolen. If you have unwanted mounted Pennsylvania mammals or birds, please remember the Environmental Center. We would be proud to display your donations.



NOT!!! MOST WANTED



Photo Penn State Extension

This is the spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*. First discovered in Berks County in 2014, it is now found in 13 Pennsylvania counties. A native of Asia, it feeds on 70 different species of trees and plants and is very destructive. It prefers feeding on the tree of heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, an invasive tree species, and learning to identify this tree is important. If you find one of these insects, put it into alcohol to kill it. If found in an area where it is not known to already exist, notify badbug@pa.gov. Egg masses have one hundred eggs, are found on tree trunks, and can be scraped into a bag containing hand sanitizer and thrown away.



Photo Amy Korman, Penn State

To learn more about the tree of heaven, go to docs.dcnr.pa.gov and enter “Tree of Heaven” in the search bar. Governor Dick Park has been working to eradicate this tree from the property, but if you find one, let someone in the office know its location.



ADA-Accessible Boardwalk

Governor Dick Park has been awarded a \$175,000 grant through DCNR for the construction of an accessible boardwalk into the forest just south of the Environmental Center. No trees or boulders will be disturbed or removed, offering our less mobile friends a woodland experience. As this grant is half of the cost of the walkway, you will be given an opportunity to participate in an exciting fundraising project. Stay tuned for more details as the project comes together! Construction of the walkway may begin in early November, looking for completion in the spring of 2019.

Living Well Nature Rx

Living Well Nature Rx is a guided experiential opportunity designed to inspire people to explore nature as a way to renew their mind, body, and spirit. Nature Rx is more than simply a walk in the woods! This program helps people utilize natural environments in their local community to relieve stress and improve well-being. When people spend time in natural settings and are encouraged to literally “come to their senses”, they can release physical tension, find peace of mind, and improve their outlook on life. This is also a great way to meet new people and connect with others who are looking for new ways to improve their wellness. These walks will be conducted in partnership with the Living Well Institute of Hershey and WellSpan Good Samaritan Hospital in Lebanon. See “Things to Do” below for dates for these walks.

Didja know??? The Eastern Bluebird's range extends all the way to Nicaragua!

DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD!

“It is against Pennsylvania’s regulations to bring most types of out-of-state firewood into the state. Nearly all types of out-of-state firewood are prohibited via this regulation – hardwood, softwood, kiln-dried, seasoned and green. Packaged heat-treated firewood with a stamp showing treatment of at least a core temperature of 160°F for a minimum of at least 75 minutes is permitted. Pennsylvania’s State Parks strongly discourage bringing any firewood into the parks from outside of the parks, and the National Park Service doesn’t allow any firewood to be brought into campgrounds at Delaware Water Gap. There are multiple county and regional quarantines that **prohibit** the movement of firewood in and around Pennsylvania, **including strict restrictions in and around the southeastern corner of Pennsylvania** due to the severe infestation of Spotted Lanternfly.” *(quoted from the don'tmovefirewood.org website)*

(Fires are prohibited in Governor Dick Park.)



~PLANNED GIVING~

Planned giving is a way to designate a gift to be given in the future, usually through a will or trust. You can create a lasting legacy with your generous contribution, and your gift will make a difference. Please consider investing in the future of Governor Dick Park.

Q: How do trees get on the Internet?

A: They log on!



2nd Annual Hike to Health

Come out June 16 from 9:00 a.m. to noon for our 2nd annual event held in cooperation with WellSpan Good Samaritan Hospital of Lebanon. We will again offer guided hikes, a bouldering class, yoga, granola making, and more. For the children there will be a Bird Olympics program. All programs are free; however, donations are appreciated and will help to offset the cost of running this event.

Things to Do

All programs are free unless stated otherwise. Meet at the Environmental Center on Pinch Rd. **Registration is required:** call 964-3808 or e-mail governordick@hotmail.com.

March 24, 1 p.m. – Intro to Nature Journaling.

March 25, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. For hikers over age 50.

March 31, 10 a.m. – Orienteering Event for all skill levels. Sponsored by DVOA.

March 31, 11 a.m. – Beginning Orienteering Class. All ages welcome.

April 1, 9 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

April 7, 6 a.m. – Sunrise Saunter.

April 8, 1 to 4 p.m. – Music by the Fireplace.

April 12, 2 p.m. – Nature Rx hike.

April 13, 10 a.m. – Toddlers in Tow.

April 14, All Day – Backyard Rain Gardens Workshop. See website for details.

April 15, 2 p.m. – Bluebirds for Every Yard. Presented by the Bluebird Society of PA.

April 18, 10 a.m. – Wildflower Walk.

April 19, 10:30 a.m. – Hands On Nature toddler program. \$5 per child.

April 19, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

April 20, 7:30 p.m. – Sunset Rx hike.

April 21, 9 to Noon – Volunteer Work Morning.

April 21, 1:30 p.m. – Nature Journaling.

April 22, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers.

April 26, 10:30 a.m. – Hands On Nature toddler program. \$5 per child.

April 28, 9 a.m. – Nature Rx hike.

April 28, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Intro to Bouldering Class. Space is limited.

April 28, 1 p.m. – Backyard Biologists family program, “Simply Rotten.” \$5 per child.

April 29, 1:30 p.m. – Wildflower Walk.

May 3, 10:30 a.m. – Hands On Nature toddler program. \$5 per child.

May 5, 10 a.m. – Bird ID Walk.

May 6, 9 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

May 6, 1 to 4 p.m. – Music on the Porch.

May 10, 2 p.m. – Nature Rx hike.

May 10, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

May 11, 10 a.m. – Toddlers in Tow.

May 13, 2 p.m. – Mother’s Day Bouquet wildflower walk. Sorry! No picking!

May 17, 10:30 a.m. – Hands On Nature toddler program. \$5 per child.

May 24, 10:30 a.m. – Hands On Nature toddler program. \$5 per child.

May 26, 9 a.m. – Nature Rx hike.

May 26, 1 p.m. – Backyard Biologists family program, “Home for a Bird.” \$5 per child.

May 27, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers.

June 3, 8 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

June 3, 1 to 4 p.m. – Music on the Porch.

June 14, 2 p.m. – Nature Rx hike.

June 16, 9 a.m. to Noon – Hike to Health event. Rain date June 17.

*Programming subject to change. Follow our website for up-to-the-minute program details.

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