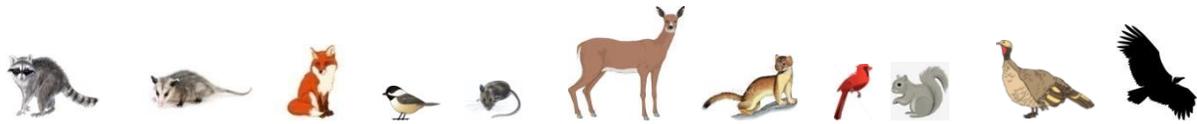


The Natural Observer

News from the Governor Dick Environmental Center



Celebrating Spring, 2020

Nature Is Open For Business!



photo from a Facebook friend



Jack-in-the-Pulpit by Sarah Shirk



Yellow morel by Sarah Shirk



Bloodroot by Sarah Shirk

*Just living is not enough. One must have
sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.*

~Hans Christian Anderson

A note to our friends.....

The bulletin board on the porch of the closed Environmental Center is a reminder that, in the world of nature, it is business as usual.

By now, we all long for “business as usual” in our families, our work places and stores, and especially in the toilet paper aisle! Here at the Center it has been excruciatingly painful and saddening to REMOVE hikes and programs from the calendar. We have a huge wall calendar that displays 8 months and we plan the year ahead in January. Never have we had to take events off the calendar en masse as this spring. It hurts! We were so excited to offer several new things this year, and that quick they are gone.

Through a generous grant from the Mt. Gretna Arts Council we engaged an artist-in-residence, Karen Beall, to connect nature and clay art with spring and fall programs. Fortunately, the Arts Council has granted an extension to the grant and we will be holding the Spring Souvenir Art Walk in 2021! This is a way to exercise our patience! The autumn program is still on the calendar.

Fellow staffer Sally Schach invested many hours in organizing our first Solstice Run fundraiser slated for June only to have those plans dashed and put off until 2021. Hikes, school field trips, family programs, and volunteer work days for our volunteers as well as the corporations that come each year have been cancelled. Imagine a sailboat with a limp sail and that is how I feel. This year held a lot of promise for us to fulfill our mission of connecting people of all ages with the wonderful world of nature, and we have a lot of the year remaining, so we are hopeful for a return to normal.

When you get out on the trails, observe the natural world operating right on schedule. Take deep breaths and enjoy a slow pace. Smile at other folks. At a time like this, nature is SO good for you. Wishing you health and peace!

~Audrey Wells

A New Outdoors Etiquette

To Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

(from the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society)

Access to our parks and green spaces matter more than ever for our mental and physical health. When going outdoors, please follow these tips to keep yourself, others, and our parks and green spaces safe and healthy.

For Yourself and Others:

Check First. Before you head out, check with your park owners and trail stewards on open/ closed access. Pack what you need. Use the restroom at home. Most park facilities are closed.

Be Considerate. Wear a mask to protect others, as recommended by state and federal authorities. Practice physical distancing of six feet or more between individuals. Be friendly.

Avoid Risky Activities. Avoid activities that put you at greater risk of injury, as available help and rescue services may be limited.

Notice Nature. Be more attentive to nearby wildlife activities and the emergence of spring than your electronic devices. Soak up the limited time you have with nature for its fullest benefit.

For Your Place:

Avoid Overcrowding. If a parking lot is full, please go to another lot, or another park or trail. Making your own parking spaces damages the landscape.

Leave No Trace. Please carry out everything you take in with you, including dog waste.

No Fires, No Smoking. Springtime is Pennsylvania’s riskier wildfire season, and this spring follows a mild winter with less snowfall.

If you see one of these....



.....kill them!

Be on the lookout for the spotted lanternfly. There are now 26 Pennsylvania counties under the spotted lanternfly quarantine. The adult, a plant hopper and not a fly or moth, is pictured on the right. An egg mass is shown on the left. The early nymph, the phase you will find now, is black with white dots and the older nymph is red with white dots. Squash them!! Put them in a baggie with hand sanitizer, seal it, and throw it away. Visit the Penn State Extension website for information on lanternfly management for home owners. It is recommended that you call an arborist versus an exterminator. An arborist will focus on killing just the lanternfly; an exterminator will kill any and every insect. And our birds need insects to eat and to feed their nestlings. (Egg mass photo courtesy of Penn State Extension. Other photos courtesy of the PA Department of Agriculture.)



**Governor Dick Park is a clean air park.
Smoking is prohibited.**



Mark Your Calendars Now!!!



An autumn clay art hike focusing on trees will be held on two dates, October 3 and October 10 in the afternoon. Group size is limited so register early for one of those days! Rebecca Urban from Lebanon Valley College will teach you about various tree species in Governor Dick Park and you will make something amazing that will go on display in the Environmental Center.

Note: Our membership drive has been put on hold.



Things to Do

****Check our website for up-to-the-minute additions and changes. Programs on this list may be cancelled due to state regulations concerning the coronavirus.**

Please register for our events by calling the office and leaving your name and phone number clearly. You may also send us an e-mail.

May 21, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

May 23, 10:00 a.m. – Pond Scoop. Group size is limited for this pond exploration. \$5 per person.

May 24, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. 2 to 3 miles for hikers over age 50.

May 30, 1:00 p.m. – Nature Journaling: The Faces of Flowers. Bring your own journal.

June 5 – Full Moon Hike. Time to be announced.

June 6, 1:00 p.m. – National Trails Day Hike.

June 7, 8:00 a.m. – Fitness Hike.

June 7, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. – Music on the Porch bluegrass jam.

June 13, 9:00 a.m. to Noon – Volunteer Work Morning.

June 18, 7:15 p.m. – Monthly Board meeting.

June 27, 1:00 p.m. – A Snake's Birthday. Snoop will be turning 5! Come celebrate!

June 28, 1:30 p.m. – Golden Eagle Hikers. 2-3 miles for hikers over age 50.