

BULLETIN

FALL / WINTER 2018-19



In this issue: Feeding Birds—Best Practices

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With so many types of bird seed out there, how do you know which to choose? Audubon helps to guide you to the right foods for our local birds.



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This Audubon View

This Audubon View is usually dedicated to one of our new education or conservation programs, an update on the construction projects on one of our centers, or an important policy issue or environmental challenge. This time, we focus on something a bit more mundane, but important nonetheless—Bylaws!

As part of our commitment to best practices, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania reviews its bylaws and other organizational documents on a recurring basis. The last major revision of our bylaws was in 2010. At that time, we adjusted the number of board members, allowed for remote participation (teleconferencing) in board meetings, and made other changes to bring our practices up-to-date. Since then, we have made small changes to reflect the growth of the organization and to stay in compliance with current nonprofit law.

A new draft of our bylaws will be presented at our October board meeting and will be finalized at the December meeting. In addition to updating and simplifying the language, we are proposing a change to how board members are elected. For as long as anyone can remember, a slate of candidates has been presented by the board nominating committee and voted on by the members in attendance at the annual business meeting. Few members participate in this activity and no candidate has ever been rejected.

Most newly-formed nonprofits have what is known as self-perpetuating boards, in which the board is responsible for sourcing and electing its members. ASWP proposes to formally switch to this style of governance to better reflect our actual practices.

All of the bylaw changes will be listed on our website (aswp.org) on October 3rd and comments may be made via the website through October 31st. Also, if you are interested in serving on the ASWP Board or have questions about any of the organization's practices or policies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

—Jim



DIRECTIONS TO *Our Reserves*

Trails are open year-round, 7 days a week, dawn to dusk.

BEECHWOOD FARMS NATURE RESERVE:

Take Route 28 north from Pittsburgh to Route 8 North/Butler exit. Turn right at first traffic light on to Kittanning Road, which becomes Dorseyville Road. Travel 4.3 miles and Beechwood will be on your left.

SUCCOP NATURE PARK: Take Route 8 North from Pittsburgh or South from Butler and turn on to West Airport Road. Once on West Airport Road, Succop Nature Park's driveway will be the first road on your left.

TODD NATURE RESERVE: Take Route 28 North from Pittsburgh to the Butler/Freeport Exit I7. Turn right at Route 356 North, and then right at Monroe Road. Travel about 2 miles, and make a right at Kepple Road. Travel 1.5 miles and Todd Nature Reserve will be on your right. Park in the lot and please sign in at the informational kiosk at the cabin. Trail maps are located at the kiosk.





BIRD FEEDING:

Providing the Right Food for our Feathered Friends

If you are like us, you love to feed birds. We all enjoy hosting a migrating grosbeak for a few days, watching goldfinches molt into their stunning yellow nuptial feathers, seeing our local female hummingbird defend “her” nectar feeder, or even noticing our first juncos of the season. These types of events are what make bird feeding exciting and keep us watching for more. While some of us are year-round feeders, and others are winter-only feeders; and while some of us have been feeding for many years, and others are just beginning, we all can benefit from a refresher course on appropriate bird feeding practices as we approach the season. After all, appropriate practices keep our birds healthy and our feeder stations free of unwanted critters.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU FEED BIRDS?

ASWP’s proprietary Beechwood Blend was specifically formulated for the birds in western Pennsylvania. Using data on the type and frequency of seeds selected by local birds, we mixed our Beechwood Blend to match those preferences. Therefore, the blend provides only those seed preferred by local birds in a proportion that greatly reduces waste. So, what is in Beechwood Blend that makes it the preferred seed?

Black Oil Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*, *Peredovik*): By far the seed preferred by the widest variety of birds. This type of seed delivers high levels of crude fat (28%) and protein (15%), as well as calcium, potassium, iron and vitamins B and E. The seed hulls will be left behind, which does create some maintenance.

Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*): another favored offering, especially among Jays and Woodpeckers (and squirrels). Peanuts provide birds will high levels of protein and fiber, as well as a great source of needed calories.

Millet (*Panicum miliaceum*): Proso Millet is a very small round seed that is contained in most blends. It is a preferred seed of ground-feeding birds such as sparrows and juncos. Millet is often tossed aside by birds using the feeder, making it fall to the ground, right where sparrows are waiting. Millet provides similar nutrients as sunflower seeds but is also rich in manganese.

Any bird seed with combinations of these seeds, and particularly with over 50% black oil sunflower by volume would make our list as a premium bird seed. But there are a few types of seed that you will want to avoid. These are strictly fillers, helping to fill the bag to a certain volume with low-cost seeds.

Milo (*aka sorghum*): Milo is a filler seed; it is used in place of more valuable seeds because it is a larger seed that takes up more space in a bag. Milo is ignored by birds and because it then sits on the ground, is a primary source of spoiled, bacteria ridden waste.

Photo courtesy of Marcy Cunkleman, Great Backyard Bird Count (2016).

Cracked Corn: Although wild turkeys and pigeons will gobble it up, cracked corn is also a filler. It does not have a purpose in birdseed blends. It should be offered alone, on the ground or on platform feeders and any corn that has not been consumed should be cleaned away within a few days.

IMPORTANT BIRD FOOD CONSIDERATIONS:

- Not all seeds are created equal, and there is a wide assortment of options from which to choose. Seeds are available in mixes, which can feed a wider variety of birds, or they are available in bags with only one type of seed. Choose the type of seed based on the type of feeder you use, or your own preferences for the types of birds you attract.
- There is a big difference between the premium seed you buy at your local nature store and economy seed you buy elsewhere. Bird seed is priced by volume, meaning you pay for what is inside the bag. If you buy premium seed, you can be assured the seed is clean, fresh and free of dirt and debris. If you buy economy seed, you may be paying for sticks, dirt stuck on the seed, or even filler seed—seeds such as milo can actually be unhealthy to birds!

IMPORTANT BIRD FEEDER PRACTICES:

- To reduce the chances of fatal window strikes, bird feeders should be located either within 5 feet of windows, or greater than 25 feet from windows. At these distances, birds are either not able to build enough speed before striking a window, or they are provided enough distance to escape a potential predator before striking a window.
- Bird feeders require routine maintenance. Bird seed that has become clumped or stuck in the crevices of feeders can hold harmful mildew, mold and bacteria. Remove this seed each time you fill your feeders, or at least on a monthly basis.
- Feeders also require routine cleaning. Using a brush to clean the surfaces of your feeder will remove small deposits. A diluted bleach solution (no more than 1-part bleach to 10-parts water) will remove harmful bacteria. Hummingbird feeders can be cleaned with the same bleach dilution. Be sure to thoroughly rinse your feeder with fresh water after cleaning with the bleach solution. We recommend a monthly cleaning routine for your seed, fruit or tray feeders, and a weekly routine for nectar feeders.

IMPORTANT BIRD FEEDER PRACTICES (CONTINUED):

- Keeping the area under the feeder clean is also important. Uneaten seeds and empty seed hulls are an unhealthy scenario for your wild birds. Seeds can spoil and grow bacteria, and the excess seed on the ground can also attract unwanted critters.
- IF feeders are used in your gardens or in patio area, consider using a hull-less seed that has no shells—and leaves nothing behind. We offer Patio and Deck Mix birdseed in our nature stores.
- When using a finch feeder (also known as a thistle feeder), make sure to use a mix that contains Nyger. Nyger is the trademark term for Niger seed—it's seed that's been heat treated so that it won't germinate.
- If shopping for new feeders, ask for feeders treated with Microban technology—it inhibits the growth of mildew, mold and bacteria.

Additional information regarding feeders, seed, and practices is available at the Audubon Nature stores at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve and in Yellow Jacket Square in Sarver. Our staff would be happy to make recommendations to help you feed the birds!

Not all seed is created equal. Beechwood Blend is specially formulated for the birds in our area.



Fall/Winter

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

REGISTER FOR PROGRAMS ONLINE AT ASWP.ORG
OR BY CALLING (412) 963-6100.

Special Events

AUDUBON'S NATIVE PLANT NURSERY DISCOUNT DAYS

The Month of October / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Did you know that you can purchase native plants anytime the Audubon Nature Store is open—and that fall is a great time to put plants in the ground? During the month of October, we're offering an additional 10% off on our native plants. That's 10% off for nonmembers and 20% off for members! While supplies last.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT FAMILY-FRIENDLY HALLOWEEN

October 19 and 20 / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
October 26 / Succop Nature Park
October 27 / Todd Nature Reserve Buffalo Creek Nature Center
Start Times: 6:30, 7, or 7:30pm

Creatures of the Night is a non-scary Halloween adventure that takes you through our reserves to meet larger-than-life costumed nocturnal creatures. You'll be led by a friendly firefly from stop to stop, hearing stories from creatures which may include a Great Horned Owl, Flying Squirrel, and Little Brown Bat. Refreshments are provided and treats will be given along the way. Come in costume for twice the fun. This event takes place even if it's raining. Registration is required. \$6 per member; \$10 per nonmember; under 2 is free.

MEMBERS' SALE DAY AT AUDUBON NATURE STORES

December 1 / Audubon Nature Stores at Beechwood & Yellow Jacket Square

One day only! Members receive special savings on all holiday décor. Enter to win a basket of Nature Store goodies! At the Beechwood store, we'll have a pop-up sale & meet and greet with Pittsburgh artist Maria Mangano.

GIRLS AND DOLLS HOLIDAY TEA

December 1, 11am and 3pm / Succop Nature Park

Bring your favorite little girl, along with her doll, for a tea party fit for a princess! We'll have tea, snacks, holiday carols, and a craft. These events fill quickly, so register early. \$20 per member; \$25 per nonmember.

HOLIDAY TEA

December 8, 11am and 3pm / Succop Nature Park

Succop Nature Park is beautifully decorated for the holidays! Join us for tea, snacks, holiday carols, and a craft. \$20 per member; \$25 per nonmember.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Join one of our ASWP Christmas Bird Counts! For all CBC related activities, please visit aswp.org.

Pittsburgh (includes Beechwood): December 29

South Butler (includes Succop Nature Park): December 16

Buffalo Creek Valley (includes Todd Nature Reserve): December 15

Christmas Bird Count Dinner at Beechwood: Check aswp.org for date and time.

Christmas Bird Count Lunch, South Butler: December 22 at noon at Hardwood Cafe.

KIDS' CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

December 15, 10am–12pm / Todd Nature Reserve Buffalo Creek Nature Center
December 16, 10am–12pm / Succop Nature Park
December 29, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Kids and parents are invited to participate in a family-friendly version of the Christmas Bird Count. Our naturalist will guide you. This event is appropriate for school-age and up. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Advance registration is required. Free.

Birding & Nature Hikes

BIRDS & MORE NATURALIST-LED MORNING WALKS

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve: Every Wednesday at 9am; Free

Succop Nature Park: Every Thursday at 9am; Free (No walk November 24)

HARRISON HILLS BIRD WALK

October 7, 8am–12pm / Harrison Hills Park

Join us at Harrison Hills Park, one of the region's most popular places to bird. We will meet in the parking lot at the Environmental Learning Center and bird some of the surrounding trails. Free.



Audubon at Night

OWL PROWL

November 9, 7pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
November 10, 7pm / Todd Nature Reserve

Learn about our local owls inside, then search for them on the trails. This event is appropriate for all ages. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

OWL PROWL AND GROWLER

November 17 / Todd Nature Reserve & Cellar Brew Works (Sarver)
November 17 / Wolf Creek Narrows & North Country Brewery (Slippery Rock)
November 30 / Beechwood Farms & Fort Pitt Brewery (Sharpsburg)
All programs begin at 7pm

Start the program learning more about our local owls as you search for them on the trails. Afterwards, head out to a local brewery and enjoy a glass of your favorite adult beverage as you talk birds. 21 years of age and older. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember. Cost is for program only; participants are responsible for the cost of their food and drinks.

BIRD TRIVIA NIGHT AT FULL PINT BREWERY IN LAWRENCEVILLE

January 24, 7–9pm / Full Pint Brewery, Lawrenceville

So you think you know birds! Head to the Full Pint Brewery in Lawrenceville and put your bird knowledge to the test. Enjoy fellow birding enthusiasts as they answer bird trivia. Adults only. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember. Cost is for program only; participants are responsible for the cost of their food and drinks.

Preschool Programs

FLEDGLINGS PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES: AGES 3–5

Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13, Jan. 10 / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, Jan. 8 / Succop Nature Park
Oct. 10, Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 9 / Todd Nature Store at Yellow Jacket Square
All programs run 10–11:15

Give your 3–5 year old a head start on a lifetime of loving the outdoors. Fledglings programs incorporate stories, a walk, and activities to introduce new and fun nature themes to young participants. Parent or caregiver must be present. \$4 member; \$6 nonmember.

October: Chattering Chipmunks

November: Leaf Man

December: Holiday for the Birds

January: Who Gives a Hoot

Hands-on Programs

VOLUNTEER NATURALIST TRAINING

September 17 & 24 and October 1, 8, 15, & 22, 9:30am–2:30pm
at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Join our crew leading school field trips. This training will teach you techniques and basic natural history. This is the first day of the series meeting every Monday for the next six weeks through October 23. Free with a commitment to lead. Dress to be both in classroom and on the trail. Bring a lunch. Audubon Volunteer Naturalists will need to complete a background check before leading a program. Contact Scott, sdewiler@aswp.org, for complete details about the Audubon Volunteer Naturalist program.

NATIVE SEED COLLECTION WORKSHOP

October 6, 10am / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Learn how to harvest native seeds for propagation while you help the Audubon Center for Native Plants replenish its stocks. This event is free for ASWP members and Fox Chapel Garden Club members and \$4 for non-members, thanks to the programs being underwritten by the Fox Chapel Garden Club (FCGC).

DRAWING BIRDS: 2-DAY WORKSHOP

October 21 and October 28, 10:30am–2:30pm / Succop Nature Park

Learn the basics of drawing birds while working with basic shapes using value, line, color, texture and more. Demonstrations of eyes, beaks, feet and feathers will be done to help explain the process from start to finish. Graphite will be used for the first week of the class, second week project in graphite, colored pencil, watercolor or any other medium of choice. References will be available and bring 3 clear references then select one for your project. \$125 per member; \$145 per nonmember. Contact Chris Kubiak at ckubiak@aswp.org for more information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: HABITAT RESTORATION PLANTINGS

October 13 & 27; November 3, 9am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Join ASWP to support habitat restoration at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve. We'll plant native trees, shrubs, and perennials with high wildlife value. No experience is necessary. All materials will be provided. Large groups are welcome.

BETTER BACKYARD BIRD FEEDING

October 27, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
October 27, 2–4 pm / Todd Nature Store at Yellow Jacket Square
November 3, 2–4 pm / Succop Nature Park

Ever want to attract more birds to yard? This program explains the dos and don'ts behind backyard bird feeding, and how the experts get more birds. Participants will also learn about Project Feeder Watch and how it helps scientists monitor bird populations. Appropriate for adults and interested youth. Free.

ACT 48 TEACHER WORKSHOP: CITIZEN SCIENCE ON THE SCHOOL GROUND

November 10, 9am–3pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

ASWP's Citizen Science on the School Ground is a school-focused citizen science program where students learn scientific skills while doing real science by collecting data that professional scientists use to understand patterns and determine trends. This Act 48 workshop highlights ASWP's Citizen Science on the School Ground program, how teachers can use specific citizen science programs in their classrooms, and creating a pollinator garden at the school using native plants. \$60. Act 48 hours available.

BIRDING 101

November 17, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
November 18, 10am–12pm / Succop Nature Park

Birdwatching is one of the fastest growing hobbies in the United States. Come learn the basics of birding and why watching our feathered friends is such a captivating hobby. \$6 per member, \$10 per nonmember.

THE BIRDS AND THE BEANS

November 17, 12–1pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

ASWP's director of education, Chris Kubiak, will give an informal talk about how shade-grown coffee helps birds and wildlife. You'll sample shade-grown coffee and learn how a cuppa joe can help to protect the habitat for migratory birds.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT WARM UP WITH COFFEE AND BAGELS

December 1, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
December 1, 10am–12pm / Todd Nature Store at Yellow Jacket Square
December 8, 2–4pm / Succop Nature Park

Want to participate in the world longest running citizen science program? Come enjoy coffee, bagels, and a bird hike as you learn how you can help count birds for science. Learn or review the birds most likely to be seen for Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Counts. Beginners welcome! This includes a classroom session and a short birding walk, conditions permitting. Appropriate for adults and interested youth. Free.

DECORATE A MINI TREE*

December 1, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
and Todd Nature Store at Yellow Jacket Square

Get into the holiday spirit by decorating a mini tree using natural materials. \$35 per member, \$40 per nonmember. *Registration is required 1 week prior to workshop for gathering of materials.

YULE LOG HIKE AND CRAFT

December 15, 10am–12pm / Succop Nature Park

Hike out into the woods to gather natural materials to decorate a birch Yule log. We will drill candle holes and level your log so that it will stay in proper position when you use it to decorate for the holidays. \$6 per member, \$10 per non-member.

CO-EXISTING WITH THE WHITE-TAILED DEER

January 19; 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms & Succop Nature Park
January 19, 2–4 pm / Todd Nature Store at Yellow Jacket Square

White-tailed Deer are our largest native grazing mammal. Deer greatly impact our environment and our yards and gardens when they are out of balance with the ecosystem. This program will teach you about the ecology of this abundant species, how to plant and garden with deer-resistant native plants, and other tips to coexist.

CITIZEN SCIENCE: CHIMNEY SWIFT MONITORING

January 26, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms & Succop Nature Park

Our Chimney Swift Towers are located across the region—and we need your help letting us know if birds are using them! Come learn the life history and ecology of this amazing “cigar with wings” and how to help monitor Chimney Swift's nesting activities. Free.

**Citizen Science programs are offered for free through a generous grant from Dominion Foundation.*

Scout Programs

CUB AND GIRL SCOUT BADGE DAY

October 13, 10am–12pm / Beechwood Farms & Succop Nature Park

Choose your nature-related badge or activity! This program is for Cub Scouts and elementary Girl Scouts and is booked by group or den. Contact Scott Detwiler at (412) 963-6100 to make your reservation. \$7.50 per scout; one adult chaperone (free) required per den. (Other dates available by arrangement, subject to minimum fees.)



FALL/WINTER *Calendar of Events*

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

OCTOBER

All Month: Native Plant Nursery Discount Days

- 1, 8, 15, 22 Volunteer Naturalist Training
- 3 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 6 Native Seed Collection Workshop
- 10 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 11 Fledglings
- 13, 27 Habitat Restoration Plantings
- 13 Cub & Girl Scout Badge Day
- 17 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 19–20 Creatures of the Night
- 24 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 27 Better Bird Feeding
- 31 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk

NOVEMBER

- 3 Habitat Restoration Plantings
- 7 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 8 Fledglings
- 9 Owl Prowl
- 10 Citizen Science on the Schoolground
- 14 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 17 Birding 101
- 17 The Birds and the Beans
- 21 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 28 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 30 Owl Prowl and Growler

DECEMBER

- 1 Christmas Bird Count Warmup:
Coffee & Bagels!
- 1 Decorate a Mini Tree
- 1 Members' Sale Day at Audubon Nature Store
- 5 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 12 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 13 Fledglings
- 19 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 26 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 29 Christmas Bird Count
- 29 Kids' Christmas Bird Count

JANUARY

- 2, 9 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 10 Fledglings
- 16 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 19 Co-existing with White-tailed Deer
- 23 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 26 Chimney Swift Monitoring
- 30 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk

Succop Nature Park

OCTOBER

- 4 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 9 Fledglings
- 11 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 13 Cub & Girl Scout Badge Day
- 18 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 21, 28 Drawing Birds Workshop
- 25 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 26 Creatures of the Night

NOVEMBER

- 1 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 3 Better Bird Feeding
- 8 Fledglings
- 8 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 15 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 18 Birding 101
- 29 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk

DECEMBER

- 1 Girls & Dolls Holiday Tea
- 2 Christmas Bird Count Warmup
Coffee & Bagels!
- 6 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 8 Holiday Tea
- 11 Fledglings
- 13 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 15 Yule Log Hike & Craft
- 16 South Butler Christmas Bird Count
- 16 Kids' Christmas Bird Count
- 20 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 22 Christmas Bird Count Lunch
- 27 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk

JANUARY

- 3 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 8 Fledglings
- 10 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 17 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 19 Co-existing with White-tailed Deer
- 24 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk
- 26 Chimney Swift Monitoring
- 31 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk

Todd Nature Reserve

Todd Nature Reserve: TNR

Todd Nature Store: TNS

Buffalo Creek Nature Center: BCNC

OCTOBER

- 5 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk (TNR)
- 10 Fledglings (TNS)
- 12 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk (TNR)
- 19 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk (TNR)
- 26 Birds & More Naturalist Led Walk (TNR)
- 27 Creatures of the Night (BCNC)
- 27 Better Bird Feeding (TNS)

NOVEMBER

- 10 Owl Prowl (TNR)
- 14 Fledglings (TNS)
- 17 Owl Prowl & Growler (BCNC)

DECEMBER

- 1 Christmas Bird Count Warmup
Coffee & Bagels! (TNS)
- 1 Decorate a Mini Tree (TNS)
- 1 Members' Sale Day at Audubon
Nature Store (TNS)
- 12 Fledglings (TNS)
- 15 Christmas Bird Count (TNR)
- 15 Kids' Christmas Bird Count (TNR)

JANUARY

- 9 Fledglings (TNS)
- 19 Co-existing with White-tailed
Deer (TNS)

Todd Nature Reserve will be closed for regular deer season, November 27–December 2.

Offsite Programs

OCTOBER

- 7 Harrison Hills Bird Walk

NOVEMBER

- 17 Owl Prowl and Growler:
Wolf Creek Narrows

JANUARY

- 24 Bird Trivia Night at Full Pint Brewery

Audubon Celebrates Success of CERTIFIED BACKYARD HABITAT PROGRAM

THE MOVEMENT TO HELP BIRDS AND POLLINATORS CONTINUES TO GROW

In May 2018, ASWP launched our Certified Backyard Habitat Program. This hands-on program has been designed to help residents make real change on their property to support birds, pollinators, and wildlife. The program includes 2 site visits from ASWP staff, a custom report for each property, and additional resources to help program participants create a nurturing environment for wildlife.

We are pleased to report that from May to early August, 85 households enrolled in the program! These properties represent 41 municipalities and 6 City of Pittsburgh neighborhoods across 7 counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. Over 140 acres have been enrolled in the program—an area slightly larger than Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve. Each backyard habitat will function like a mini nature reserve. Collectively, these backyard habitats will serve as a distributed system of mini nature reserves, providing critical habitat, food sources, and safe spaces for birds, pollinators, and wildlife

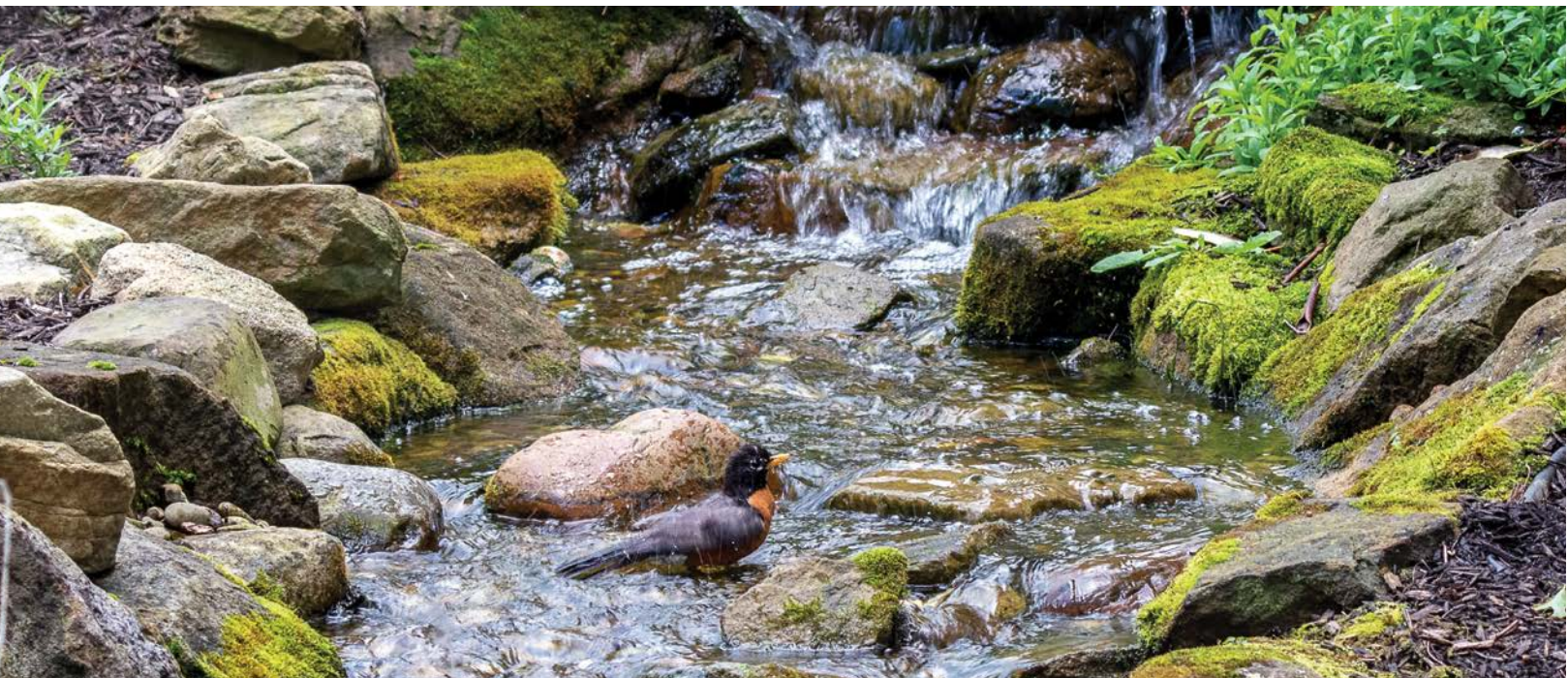
Certified Backyard Habitats can be created in any size yard. Properties that are enrolled range from ultra urban yards with less than 1,000 feet of planting space to rural properties with multiple acres to work with. Each contribution is critical to the health of our region's environment.

Together, backyard by backyard, we are transforming the region. We look forward to growing the program's success and impact next year. For more information or to enroll, please visit www.aswp.org or call (412) 963-6100.

THANKS TO ALL OF OUR 2018 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS!

The Certified Backyard Habitat Program has been generously supported by the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

Robin in water photo courtesy of Dave Brooke.





We are now scheduling for Spring 2019. Enroll now to secure an early spot on the assessment schedule. After you enroll, we'll mail you a packet of information to help you get started immediately on your Backyard Habitat.



ASWP Announces HABITAT IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

We're excited to announce that we've received three grants to help us with habitat improvements at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve. Thanks to these funders, we've already started the work!

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE'S FIVE STAR AND URBAN WATERS RESTORATION PROGRAM

This grant allows us to work with partners to restore 5 acres of forest habitat, establish baseline ecological data, and educate and engage community members throughout the process. Project partners include ASWP, Tree Pittsburgh, Landforce, Fox Chapel Area Rotary Club, Fox Chapel Area High School Environmental Science students, and Allegheny Watershed Alliance.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S CONSERVATION, LEADERSHIP, AND INNOVATION PROGRAM

With this funding, ASWP will work to improve aquatic habitat and provide environmental education opportunities at Beechwood, which spans the Pine Creek and Squaw Run watersheds. Pond restoration will improve wildlife habitat and opportunities for environmental education.

FOX CHAPEL AREA ROTARY CLUB TREE PLANTING INITIATIVE

Over 100 trees will be planted to buffer the southern property border and along Pine Hollow Trail through this partnership. International Rotary has tasked every Rotarian with planting a tree to mitigate climate change and environmental degradation. We are thrilled that Fox Chapel Area Rotary Club has chosen to make this vision a reality by planting one tree per club member at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve.

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR CALENDAR FOR
OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT THIS WORK—
THE BIRDS WILL THANK YOU.

Audubon's Members in Action: CHIMNEY SWIFT MONITOR DAVE BROOKE

Have you seen Audubon's Chimney Swift towers in Allegheny County Parks and other locations around our region? Sure, they look great but they also serve an important purpose—providing nesting locations for Chimney Swifts, birds that historically nested in hollowed limbs, snags, and even in caves. As cities became more common and mature trees became less common, Chimney Swifts adapted to roosting and nesting in chimneys. Now, they face a new challenge as people choose to cap their chimneys, eliminating the birds' nesting areas.

We need to know if our towers are being used—and invite everyone to be a part of this important project. While Chimney Swifts are leaving our area for their wintering grounds, we hope you'll consider watching a tower starting next Spring when the birds return. It's quick and easy to report whether birds are in or near the tower.

Dave Brooke, one of our Master Birders, says that he monitored the towers every time he visited Harrison Hills Park during the 2018 season.

"I had seen the swift towers around but didn't really realize how unique Chimney Swifts were until I took the Master Birder class."

Brooke adds that when he's checking out a tower, he often has people ask what he's doing. He's found that by just talking to others about the towers and the birds, he can build interest in tower monitoring.

He says that he enjoys watching the birds—especially in the late evening before the birds dive into their chimney home. Brooke mentions that watchers need to be at the tower at "precisely the right minute" to see the birds enter the tower.

Audubon is grateful to our Chimney Swift monitors for their assistance in helping us to better gauge how many of our towers are in use.

“ I HAD SEEN THE SWIFT TOWERS AROUND BUT DIDN'T REALLY REALIZE HOW UNIQUE CHIMNEY SWIFTS WERE UNTIL I TOOK THE MASTER BIRDER CLASS. ”

AUDUBON NATURE STORE NEWS

Audubon Nature Stores are the place for all your holiday shopping, featuring nature-inspired gifts for everyone on your list! Stop by to shop our selection of beautiful ornaments and holiday décor—hitting the shelves on Saturday, November 3rd. Once again, the Beechwood Nature Store will be carrying hand-painted glass ornaments by Sheree Daugherty, acclaimed wildlife artist and naturalist.

Expanding your horizons? Visit the store year-round for all your exploration needs, from beginners to experts. You'll find optics and a large variety of books and educational materials.

As always, the Audubon Nature Stores are your go-to place for bird feeding systems and birdseed. Let us help you to find the perfect setup for your needs.

AUDUBON NATURE STORE AT BEECHWOOD
614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh 15238 · (412) 963-6100
Tuesday–Saturday: 9am–5pm · Sunday: 1–5pm

AUDUBON NATURE STORE IN SARVER
Yellow Jacket Square, Sarver 16065 · (724) 295-0019
Wednesday–Friday: 12–7pm · Saturday: 9am–5pm

EMPLOYEE MATCHING GIFT *Programs*

Looking for an easy way to increase your support of ASWP without breaking the bank? If your employer offers it, double or sometimes triple your donation by utilizing your Employee Matching Gift Program!

Matching gift programs are corporate initiatives that reward employees' donations to non-profits while giving employees a voice in where their employer spends its charitable funds.

After an employee makes a donation to an eligible nonprofit, they fill out a matching gift request form and submit it to their company's HR department. As long as your donations fit your company's guidelines, the company will match your gift, most often dollar for dollar.

It's that simple! Each year, companies and businesses support nonprofits by distributing hundreds of millions of dollars in matching gift donations.

ASWP needs your help in identifying local companies and businesses with Employee Matching Gift Programs. Not sure if your employer has an Employee Matching Gift Program? Ask your Human Resources representative and let us know if your employer supports this generous program! Please notify our Development Director, Rebecca Tyers Brown, at rbrown@aswp.org if your company participates in an Employee Matching Gift Program.

Our SUPPORTERS

ASWP gratefully acknowledges the generous support received from the following corporations, foundations and trust funds:

\$50,000+

Allegheny Foundation
Fred J. and Shirley H. Jordan Foundation
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\$10,000–49,999

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Jim Bonner

Loren Smith



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS WHO'VE COME OUT TO HELP US WITH PLANTINGS AND WITH INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL. WE'LL CONTINUE THIS WORK THROUGHOUT THE FALL AND ARE LOOKING FOR GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS TO WORK ALONGSIDE US ON VOLUNTEER DAYS!



AN AUDUBON
MEMBERSHIP MAKES

A Great Gift!

Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP) is a nonprofit organization supported in large part through membership dues. You can also join or renew your membership at www.aswp.org.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS: 10% Discount on Nature Store Purchases & Bird Seed, Subscription to Bulletin Newsletter, Library & Teacher Resource Center Lending Privileges, Tuition Discounts & Advance Notice on Education Programs, Invitations to Nature Store Open Houses & Special Events, and a 100% Good Feeling for Supporting Environmental Education.

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A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



AUDUBON'S
Eco-Tours

Looking to cross more birds off of your life list? Join us for Eco-Tours across the country and around the world. Members get to sign up for two weeks prior to the registration opening to the general public. Wondering where we're headed? These trips are either already planned or we're working on them. Please contact Brian Shema for more information at (412) 963-6100.

- Rio Grande Valley: Fall 2018 – FULL!
- Ecuador: Late Winter 2019
- Maine: Summer 2019
- Southeast Arizona: Fall 2019
- Peru: Winter 2019
- South Florida and the Dry Tortugas: Spring 2020



614 DORSEYVILLE ROAD
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OF THE
NIGHT**

A Family-Friendly Halloween Adventure

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve
OCTOBER 19 & 20

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Take a guided evening walk outdoors and meet larger-than-life costumed nocturnal creatures.

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