This summer also brought sadness to the FOW community with the passing of our dear friend Chris Bentley. He showed his love for the Wissahickon through his tremendous contributions on the board for many years. We pay tribute to this smart, talented, charismatic man on p. 2.

Although uncertainty continues with new COVID-19 variants and changing mask mandates, we know that the outdoors remains the safest place to be. And that’s where you’ll find FOW.

The worst humidity in our area since 1995 (according to the National Weather service) may have tried to zap our energy levels this summer, but we were invigorated by the knowledge and enthusiasm the travelling educators from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics brought to our Hot Spot Weekend in July (p. 4). Through their community-building cleanup and educational events, we gained national perspectives on mitigating trash and reducing other human impacts, such as avoiding rogue trails (p. 3), and discovered that sharing individual outdoor values has tremendous collective benefits for keeping the Wissahickon Valley Park sustainable, beautiful, and welcoming for everyone.

There’s a lot you can do in the Wissahickon this fall:

• Join a Trail Ambassador on a guided excursion or other volunteers on regular or special service days (p. 6).

• The sixth annual All Trails Challenge is in full swing - see this year’s details and great prizes on p. 5. If you want to show your love for the park, joining the Challenge is a great way to do it.

• Check out the fall Habitat Monitoring Scavenger Hunt on p. 12.

• Take the kids along. See the calendar of activities from the Wissahickon Environmental Center on p. 8 and Let’s Go Outdoors on p. 7 (indoor fun, too).

Join us for a discussion on the latest information about spotted lanternflies (yes, there really were less this year) in October and for a presentation I’ll be co-hosting on charting the park’s history through maps. See p. 12 for details.

Enjoy the abundance and beauty of the season. And let’s continue to be great friends.

Ruffian Tittmann, Executive Director
Friends of the Wissahickon is deeply saddened by the loss of one of our long-serving directors. Chris Bentley, a member of the board since 2007, passed away last month after a five-month battle with acute myeloid leukemia.

In the days and weeks following his passing, FOW was flooded with tributes to and remembrances of Chris, like this one from fellow board member and long-time friend Christine Bamberger, which sums up who Chris was and how much he meant to so many.

“Chris was a cherished member of our FOW family for a very long time. His playful sense of adventure, creativity, generosity, and love of nature, combined with his contagious joie de vivre, made him a great friend and FOW board member. His life’s glass was always half-full.

Chris cared deeply about the Wissahickon and the mission to conserve its wildness, and he kept a watchful eye on the woods from his storybook park-side home.

He was a great family man to [his wife] Wendy and their children Charlie and Robin. Chris and Wendy hosted countless FOW events, that always felt like Thanksgiving Day with an abundance of beautifully displayed food, wine, and candles.

We will miss him always, but the memory of his humor, kindness, commitments, and thoughtful contributions will remain with us as part of his legacy.”

Chris was devoted to the Wissahickon Valley Park. As his wife Wendy told the Chestnut Hill Local, “It meant a lot to him to live here because he loved the history so much… Almost every day during Covid, we went into the park. If Chris saw a tree down, he would take a picture of it and send it in. He would get upset if he saw that people had left their trash on the ground.”

Board President Alyssa Edwards described Chris’s many contributions to the park through his FOW board work as “wide-ranging and truly impactful,” emphasizing that he “left his mark on FOW and we are very fortunate to have experienced his wisdom and leadership.” Chris had served as chair of the Development Committee, co-chair of both the Conservation and Easement Committee (a joint committee with Chestnut Hill Conservancy) and the 90th Anniversary Celebration in 2014, and served on the Executive, the 95th Celebration, and other committees over the years.

To say that Chris was a man of many talents is an understatement. An artist, chef, sailor, gardener, real estate agent, a lover of nature, books, and history—the list goes on. It seemed there was nothing Chris couldn’t master, and his signature graciousness, generosity, and style were evident in everything he touched.

“Whether it was knowing the right masons for stonework, advice on real estate issues, or hosting a fabulous party, Chris brought all of his many interests and experience to his work on the board. And he did it all with excitement and joy,” said Ruffian Tittmann, FOW’s executive director, who worked with Chris on the Development Committee. “Chris was a good friend, and he is truly missed and most certainly remembered.”

In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made in Chris’s name to FOW at fow.org/membership-donations/donate/ or to leukemia research at the Abramson Cancer Center can be made at pennmedicine.org/giving. Discussions are underway about how to recognize Chris’ contributions to FOW and the park. Details will be provided once plans are finalized.
LITTER LIFE SPAN

• **Apple core = 2 months.** Harmful to wildlife, it can change animals’ behavior, even bird migration schedules.

• **Orange or banana peel = up to 2 years.** Like apples and other food items, including nuts and seeds, they pose dangers to wildlife.

• **Monofilament fishing line = ~600 years.** It can contaminate water sources; animals can get tangled in or ingest it.

• **Plastic bottle = indefinitely.** The bottles decompose into microplastics, which have been found in 100 percent of sampled Pennsylvania waterways, including the Wissahickon Creek, noted the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Wildlife that consume plastic bottles can stop eating and starve.

According to Leave No Trace, “With over 13 billion trips into the outdoors in the U.S. alone every year, people are causing significant preventable damage, and that damage is adding up.”

The organization’s Hot Spots Program identifies places across the country that are suffering from severe human-related recreational use but have the potential to thrive again through new conservation and educational practices. Places like Wissahickon Valley Park, especially the heavily visited Valley Green area, including Devil’s Pool and Magargee Dam, fit this definition.

With more than one million visitors to the park each year, FOW is confronting a host of mounting challenges from human impacts every year, including trash, dog waste, trail erosion, and damage to vegetation, threatening long-term ecological damage and regular-user conflict.

“The Hot Spot Weekend provided an opportunity to learn together as a community about what works nationally to reduce these impacts, and how to speak to these issues so that everyone who visits the Wissahickon becomes invested in the conservation of this special urban green space,” said FOW Executive Director Ruffian Tittmann.

Our relationship with nature is subjective, formed through exposure, experience, and influences, both positive and negative. As the Leave No Trace educators explained, less than ideal outdoor behavior generally stems more from bad habits, lack of awareness, or misinformation than malicious intent. That’s why Leave No Trace builds on establishing common ground through shared values to help influence behavior, inspire change, and have the greatest overall impact.
“Although we use outdoor spaces for different activities like hiking, biking, photography, we desire similar benefits—peace, exercise, stress relief, mental health,” said Collier. “In other words, what we find special, others might, too.” It’s this common ground that Leave No Trace builds on to help influence behavior, inspire change, and have the greatest overall impact. It begins with having people get in touch with their outdoor ethics.

**What are Outdoor Ethics?**
The concept of outdoor ethics is not a set of rules, but rather a framework of guidelines for good decision-making to prevent avoidable impacts and minimize unavoidable ones to reduce our environmental imprint when engaging in outdoor activities.

We each have a different set of personal outdoor ethics, as Collier and Esplin illustrated during an interactive exercise with participants during the weekend’s community building activities. Sharing them can be instructive in important ways: it enables us to become more mindful of how we interact with a given space and feel empowered to care for the places we love; and it allows us to discover both commonalities and differences in the ways we and others enjoy the park, which builds community and respect, and creates a more positive experience for everyone.

“The Leave No Trace weekend of activities provided a chance to listen to our friends, neighbors, and partners about what they want for the future of Wissahickon Valley Park and incorporate their ideas into the conservation process,” said Tittmann.

That’s how Leave No Trace works and how big changes happen—by modeling behavior and sharing core values at Wissahickon Valley Park and other Hot Spots across the country, one invested community at a time.

**What Can You Do to Help?**
- Teach someone something you learned about Leave No Trace principles.
- Adjust your personal outdoors habits.
- Incorporate lessons learned into your work or studies.

**ON THE TRAIL? DON’T GO ROGUE**

Staying on designated trails is a key component of Leave No Trace education.

The 50 miles of trails throughout the Wissahickon Valley Park are classified as official trails. This means they are specifically designed to follow along contour lines, preventing channelization of stormwater and promoting a sustainable trail that doesn’t cause mass sedimentation down the hillside.

However, park visitors often create rogue (or “social”) trails to create shortcuts along fall lines and gain access straight down the hillside. Whether done intentionally or inadvertently, these unofficial trails are responsible for increased erosion through channelization. This increases the incidence and velocity of stormwater during and after weather events, contributing to high sedimentation and runoff in the Wissahickon Creek.

Rogue trails can also be responsible for habitat loss and disturbance. The Wissahickon is a delicate ecosystem that faces the pressure of high use along designated trails. Increasing the density of trails can mean the destruction of habitat for both flora and fauna in an area already under tremendous pressure.

Finally, rogue trails can be a source of user conflict between the three primary categories of park users: hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Because they are unlabeled, rogue trails can cause confusion and lead to right-of-way issues. This can be dangerous with horses or speedy bikers. When in doubt, always yield.

Staying on designated trails to avoid stepping on plantings is an important component of Leave No Trace principles, which are dedicated to teaching the responsible enjoyment of the outdoors for the benefit of people and the natural environment.
ALL TRAILS CHALLENGE IS OFF AND RUNNING, WALKING, OR RIDING

Welcome back to the All Trails Challenge (ATC)! Now in its sixth season, this event has grown in popularity over the years for two simple reasons: love for the Wissahickon Valley Park and because the ATC is fun!

Find out how to participate at fow.org/alltrailschallenge and keep up with the ATC fun by following @FOWissahickon and #FOWAllTrails on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

PRIZE LEVELS
Become an ATC challenger and be entered to win some of these prizes...and more!

GRAND PRIZE*
(minimum raised $5,000)

Ultimate outdoor experience package: complete with 2-person tent, sleeping bag, hydration pack, gift card at an outdoor retailer and a weekend at a PA State Park Campground of your choosing!

*Location may be dependent on availability at time of booking.

SECOND PLACE
(minimum raised $2,500)
Outdoor entertainment with a mini projector and 100” screen

THIRD PLACE
(minimum raised $1,000)
A new Fitbit Versa 2

FOURTH PLACE
(minimum raised $500)
Outdoor portable game sets

Ultimate outdoor experience package: complete with 2-person tent, sleeping bag, hydration pack, gift card at an outdoor retailer and a weekend at a PA State Park Campground of your choosing!

Challengers must raise or donate $50 to qualify for prizes.
All challengers who raise or donate $50 get FOW membership benefits (including the Wissahickon Valley Park map) and an invitation to the virtual ATC Awards in December.

Every ATC participant that completes all 50 miles of trails in Wissahickon Valley Park is entered into a drawing for a weekend stay at a resort in the Poconos (good for next year). Take time to hang out in the great outdoors, ski, or enjoy in the summer at the waterpark! Every 50 miles of trail completed equals one drawing entry!

All challengers who raise or donate $50 and complete all 50 miles get a free pizza and beer from Chestnut Hill Brewing!

Thank you to our sponsors!

Opportunities to sponsor this fun event are available by contacting Maeve Pollock at pollack@fow.org.
It was a long, hot, humid summer in the Wissahickon. This season is always the busiest in the park, with many people wanting to escape the city and cool off in the shade of the Wissahickon Valley. Fortunately, our amazing volunteers balanced the scales rocked by the impact of the increased number of park users.

FOW’s regular volunteer service days occur on most Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings. These events attract a wide variety of individuals, whose love for the park inspire them to brave the summer heat and make a positive impact. On these days, we cut back invasive plants, cleared drains along Forbidden Drive, beautified trailheads, removed litter, cleaned out stormwater infrastructure, improved the trail system in Houston Meadow, and cleaned up several historic landmarks and picnic areas. Whew! Our volunteer service days are open to anyone who wants to show some love for the park. Find a day that works for you and register to attend on FOW’s events calendar.

One of the biggest volunteer service days of the season took place during the hugely successful Leave No Trace Hot Spot Weekend. From July 23 to 25, FOW organized multiple workshops, hikes, and service projects with the amazing travelling educators from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. On Saturday, July 24, 47 volunteers performed a huge cleanup in the wider Valley Green area, removing 46 bags of trash from the forest and Wissahickon Creek. See the event recap on p. 3.

So far, 2021 has been FOW’s biggest year for corporate group service projects. This summer alone, eight groups participated, including Victrex, Baker Tilly, Boston Consulting Group, Willis Tower Watson, Integrated Project Services, Thomas Jefferson University, ZS Associates, and Xylem Inc. Along with providing financial support to FOW, these groups helped us maintain planting sites, remove invasive plant species, clear trail corridors, remove litter, and much more! If you are interested in organizing a private service day for your company or organization, learn more here.

In addition to leading all the volunteer service days, the mighty Crew Leaders have been working in small groups to clear the corridors and sight lines on trails throughout the park, as well as making improvements to the Orange Trail and stormwater infrastructure in the Blue Bell Park area.

FOW also salutes the work of the specialized volunteer corps, which continues to be the backbone of our volunteer programming. Our long-running Structures Crew is back in full force, meeting every Tuesday morning to make repairs to fences, signs, bridge handrails, and other man-made structures in the park. Bird box monitors are wrapping up their checks on the habitat boxes in Andorra and Houston Meadows for this year’s nesting season, and we’re excited to dig through the data they collected.

Our trained Trail Ambassadors (TAs) have been keeping their eyes on the park and providing outreach to park users at outreach tables, during hiking shifts, and at larger volunteer service days. At long last, the popular TA-led Guided Walks have returned, with a variety of themed excursions in the park for which you can view and register on the FOW events calendar.
The storm caused a substantial washout at Wises Mill Road where it becomes Forbidden Drive.

HURRICANE IDA HITS THE PARK

FOW and PPR crews worked tirelessly to clean up the storm’s extensive damage and are actively working to repair it.

Community Programs for Everyone

These free, family-friendly programs offer a way to explore new parks/green spaces and engage in fun activities. Registration is requested but not required. An adult must attend with children.

Programs are offered from 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on the following Saturdays:

10/9 - Goat Walk & Interaction, all ages (The Farm at Awbury Arboretum)
11/6 - Beginner Geocaching, ages 9+ (Pennypack on the Delaware)
12/18 - Family Movie

For more information, visit letsgooutdoors.net/events.html.

UPCOMING FREE VIRTUAL AND/OR IN-PERSON PROGRAMS

Watershed Education Lessons

These lessons are best for third graders and up. They can be presented virtually or safely distanced in person.

General Watershed and Book-Based Lessons

Table-top model shows how pollution enters our waterways.

Drinking Water Treatment or Sewage Treatment

Learn how water from our rivers is cleaned and made safe for drinking, and how dirty water is cleaned and sent back to the river.

Storytimes

Water-Related Theme(s)

Water-related stories for school children up to grade five.

Little Friends of the Wissahickon

For children in kindergarten through second grade. Participants receive a Certificate of Participation and a prize pack that includes of copy of the Little Friends of the Wissahickon board book.

Urban Environmental Education Ambassadors

A field trip and education program for underrepresented seventh and eleventh graders in the Philadelphia Public School District. Caregivers or parents of students interested in applying for this program should complete this application.

Hurricane Ida caused the Wissahickon Creek to crest over the wall across from the Valley Green Inn, washing out the stone path and overturning benches, while fencing blown from the Inn’s event staging area added to the debris.

For more information, visit letsgooutdoors.net/events.html.
FALL BIRD MIGRATION II
Saturday, October 16 | 8-10 a.m. | Houston Playground
Meet local birder Martin Selzer to catch another early wave of fall migration in Houston Meadow. All ages. https://birdwalkhouston1016.eventbrite.com.

GEOCACHING FOR HOMESCHOOLERS
Tuesday, October 5 | 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.
Learn the basics of geocaching, a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. At the end of the workshop, you will be able to use a basic GPS, then head out on the trails to find a few caches placed for this event. Garmin E-Trex GPS units will be available for use during the program. Suggested for 2nd grade & up with an adult. Younger siblings welcome. $5 per child.

TREE HOUSE TOTS
Thursday, October 28 | 10-11 a.m. or 1-2 p.m.
Bring your little one for an hour of discovery at the Tree House. Each month we will explore a new topic that celebrates the season. Ages 3-5. Parents stay with their child. $5 per child.

KIDS EXPLORE ALL DAY
Tuesday, November 2 | 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Ready for your kids just to be kids in the woods? Led by our staff, equipped with a few Band-Aids, the kids will climb over fallen trees, scramble over rocks, run through a field, play in the leaves, and much more! Ages 6-12. Drop off.

INTRODUCTION TO GEOCACHING
Saturday, November 6 | 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Learn the basics of geocaching, a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. At the end of the workshop you will be able to use a basic GPS, and then head out on the trails to find a few caches placed for this event. Garmin E-Trex GPS units will be available to borrow with a government-issued ID. All ages. $10 per family.

CANDLE DIPPING
Saturday, November 6 | 1-3 p.m.
Candles play a big role in many of the winter holidays. Make your own candles to use during this darker season or give them away as a gift in the spirit of the season! *This is an outdoor program. Ages 6 & up. $10 per family (up to 6 people); $2 per each additional candle.

FALL BIRD MIGRATION III
November 13 | 8-10 a.m. | Tree House
Meet local birder Martin Selzer to catch another early wave of fall migration in Harpers and Andorra meadows. All ages. https://birdwalkandorra1113.eventbrite.com.

TREE HOUSE TOTS
Thursday, November 18 | 10-11 a.m. or 1-2 p.m.
Bring your little one for an hour of discovery at the Tree House. Each month we will explore a new topic that celebrates the season. Ages 3-5 with an adult. $5 per child.
As we continue to learn about COVID-19’s effects on humans, a new mystery illness has surfaced, which is baffling biologists and being called an “emerging wildlife health event.”

First observed in 12 songbird species, primarily blue jays, gray catbirds, northern cardinals, and American robins in Pennsylvania (and 10 other states), this illness presents symptoms that include crusting around the eyes, eye lesions or swelling, and/or neurological signs, such as stumbling and twitching, that are unrelated to any known illness.

Wildlife health experts from the Wildlife Futures Program (WFP) at Penn Vet and officials from the Pennsylvania Game Commission have been investigating this illness, testing for various toxins, parasites (canker), bacterial diseases (house finch eye disease), and viral infections (West Nile Virus or bird flu). Earlier this summer, experts instructed bird lovers to take in all bird feeders and baths to stop the gathering of multiple birds and species in close quarters. This is best way to support social distancing in the bird world while researchers work to solve this mystery. At the time of this writing, bird feeders are not considered to be the source of the illness; however, no cause or transmission method have yet been confirmed.

Social media platforms have been instrumental in spreading the word about this illness and how people can help. Unfortunately, there was a lot of misinformation shared; most common was that the birds were starving without the feeders.

Perhaps in a sterile, lawn-dominated landscape, birds (and other wildlife) may have a more difficult time finding what they need, so they flock to feeders for easy snacks. But they will not starve without them. They will move to a more diverse landscape with nutrient-rich soil, water sources, and native plants of various colors, shapes, and bloom times, where there is everything they need.

Selecting and planting native plants is the best way to naturally feed the birds to support their health and enjoy their presence at home. For various toxins, parasites (canker), bacterial diseases (house finch eye disease), and viral infections (West Nile Virus or bird flu). Earlier this summer, experts instructed bird lovers to take in all bird feeders and baths to stop the gathering of multiple birds and species in close quarters. This is best way to support social distancing in the bird world while researchers work to solve this mystery. At the time of this writing, bird feeders are not considered to be the source of the illness; however, no cause or transmission method have yet been confirmed.

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Fall is the perfect season to plant. There is enough time for the new plants to establish roots, overwinter strong, and emerge in the spring ready to provide food and shelter for birds and all backyard wildlife.

Christina Moresi, M.Ed., is an Environmental Education Planner at the Wissahickon Environmental Center.
How did you decide to volunteer for FOW?
It was a combination of factors. I felt a need for a volunteer opportunity where I could give something back to the community, and volunteering in the Wissahickon seemed like a natural fit. I've been coming to the park for the past few years and honestly still can't get over the fact that we have such an incredible place like the Wissahickon in an urban setting. When I learned FOW was the primary steward of the park, and it was mostly volunteer driven, I knew right away it was an organization I wanted to be a part of.

What do you love most about the Wissahickon?
Just the fact that we have such an incredible green space in the sixth largest city in the country. I love trail running and hiking the trails, and specifically chose to live where I do in Manayunk so I am within walking and running distance of the park.

What is your favorite place in the Wissahickon?
I enjoy all the overlooks and high points, like Lover's Leap and the Toleration Statue. It really makes you appreciate the impressive geography of the gorge, especially on a cold winter’s day when you can see forever through the empty trees. I especially like getting out to these spots in the early morning or late evening, when you can get a real sense of isolation and solitude in the middle of the big city.

What have you enjoyed most about volunteering?
Too many things to count really. I enjoy the sense of giving back and helping first-time volunteers better connect with the park. The FOW volunteer community is full of talented folks who are passionate about the park, so it’s fun to work with like-minded individuals. It’s also a great opportunity to learn new facts and skills about trail building, nature, and park history. Plus, it gives me a good excuse to spend more time outside in the park!

How do you think FOW contributes to the community?
I think we see that every day with the number of people who come out to visit the park. People need green spaces where they can escape and relax for a little bit. We saw this more than ever this past year during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the Wissahickon was the closest such space for many in the city to get out to improve their physical and mental well-being. I think it was a literal lifeline to a lot of people this past year. The fact that FOW is the primary steward of the park, to me means that they have a huge responsibility toward all these visitors. So even when I am supporting small or unpleasant projects with FOW (like cleaning out Devil’s Pool), I try to remember how these little things add up to make this park special for so many people.
Earlier this year, the Co-op’s Racial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee started contributing short segments on monthly themes related to diversity to our weekly eNews. In August, the theme was “everyday superpowers”—the qualities we all have that can benefit us individually and collectively. The first installment that month, “Making Space for Stillness,” dealt with the benefits of silence—its ability to rejuvenate mind and body and keep negative thoughts and behaviors at bay. The post referenced a January 2020 article from Ideastream Public Media that mentioned those benefits and suggested ways to best use the times of silence in our lives.

We can all appreciate the need for more quiet in our smartphone, social media–driven lives. So many things are competing for our attention all the time, and it’s hard to resist responding to the pings, dings, and push notifications that flash on our screens. Much as we may want to stare into space and think of nothing, few of us can do that for long, especially with our phones and all the distractions so nearby.

Being in nature, whether in the Wissahickon or elsewhere, gives us the opportunity to fill our senses with other, gentler sounds—the beat of our feet on the trail, the bubbling of the creek and its runs, the chirping of birds, and the rustle of the breeze through the trees. You can insert your earbuds and listen to music or talk on the phone while you hike, bike, or run, or you can explore the trails with friends and chat, and doing these things might be restorative and fulfilling. But stepping away and being present outdoors, taking in what it has to offer, might give you a better opportunity to collect yourself, even for a little while.

When I first moved to Philadelphia in 1986, I shared an apartment on Chelten Avenue in East Germantown with two roommates. The street noises—cars, trucks, and buses, barking dogs, amplified conversations—started early and got louder as the day progressed. A handful of times, I hauled my bike downstairs and headed toward Historic Rittenhouse Town, the only part of the Wissahickon I knew. I was always amazed at how quickly I could leave the constant pulse of big city life and visit a wooded area with a bike path that ran along a stream. Bustling Lincoln Drive was steps away, but I felt like I was somewhere much farther away. That’s still one of my favorite things about Philadelphia, and it is one of the reasons I’ve spent all but a few of the 35 years I’ve lived here in the northwest part of the city.

Given the relentlessness of the pandemic and the growing threat of the Delta variant, many of us are still more comfortable congregating outside. The way I see it, that can only be a good thing. As long as we respect and care for the outdoor spaces we use, we benefit from the time we spend in them. Those moments allow us to step away, reset, and return to deal with whatever life throws our way.
HABITAT MONITORING: FALL

FOW’s community-based science program continues this fall. Take a look at the map and photos below to help guide your habitat monitoring and consult FOW’s habitat monitoring page on our website for more details and instructions.

SPECIES SCAVENGER HUNT

What lives in Wissahickon Valley Park? Help us find out!

Use eBird to find:

- Palm Warbler
- Yellow Rumped Warbler
- American Holly
- Eastern Tent Caterpillar

Use iNaturalist to find:

- Gray Catbird
- Mountain Laurel
- Pear-Shaped Puffball
- Turkey Tail

The Fall 2021 Habitat Monitoring Zone is on the forest floor from Valley Green to Lincoln Drive! Check out fow.org/volunteering/habitat for more details.

ONLINE FALL VALLEY TALKS

Join FOW for informative presentations for members and the general public on relevant topics such as public land use, environmental advocacy, Pennsylvania wildlife, and more. Register to attend a Valley Talk at fow.org/events. Registrants will receive a Zoom link for these free virtual lectures, which take place from 6-7 p.m.

STOPPING THE SPOTTED LANTERNFLY WITH DR. JULIE URBAN

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12

Dr. Julie Urban will provide an overview of research concerning the impacts and management of the invasive spotted lanternfly in Pennsylvania, beginning with its first detection in 2014 up to the present. She will share insights and examples of her work, and research by others within Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences and in other regional universities and government agencies, to better manage this insect pest.

This Valley Talk is presented by

PRENTISSMITH & CO

Maps of the Wissahickon with Bradley Maule and Ruffian Tittmann

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Join FOW Instagram Editor Brad Maule and Executive Director Ruffian Tittmann on a journey into the park’s past through maps. They will explore maps of the Wissahickon, from the earliest days of Philadelphia and the young Fairmount Park Commission to FOW’s official maps, from printed trail maps to our Map App.

Interested in sponsoring this Valley Talk? Email Maeve Pollack at pollack@fow.org.
**ALERT:**

**NEW CRESHEIM VALLEY DRIVE SEWER PROJECT UNDERWAY**

The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) has begun construction of a new interceptor sewer along Cresheim Valley Drive, which will help protect local waterways and improve infrastructure in the area. The work, being performed by Abbonizio Construction, will take place from Navajo Street to Cresheim Road and is expected to last for approximately six months.

Although road closures and detours are required, PWD does not anticipate any direct impact on nearby residential areas or recreational trails. A traffic detour plan has been developed that will minimize traffic issues. The recently reconstructed Allens Lane Bridge is open and can be used to access Lincoln Drive.

PWD appreciates the community’s patience, and they will strive to complete the work and reopen the road as quickly as possible.

Information is posted to PWD’s active Projects and Construction webpage: phillyh2o.info/cresheim-sewer. Direct any questions to John.DiGiulio@phila.gov.

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**FROM THE FIELD**

This past spring FOW was awarded a grant, through the Xerces Society, for a Monarch and Pollinator Habitat Kit. The Xerces Society is an international nonprofit organization committed to protecting the natural world through conservation of invertebrates and their habitats. The Habitat Kit Program in the northeast was created to address the more than 80 percent decline in the eastern monarch butterfly population since the 1990s. This is the first year Xerces is conducting the program, and FOW is thrilled to have been chosen to plant 650 transplants of various flowering native nectar plants, including swamp milkweed, cardinal flower, tall white beardtongue, cutleaf coneflower, and New England aster, to name a few.

At the end of May, volunteers from Penn State Extension's Master Watershed Steward Program helped plant the plugs around the green stormwater infrastructure retention pond in the Valley Green area. Invasive pressure from mugwort, porcelain berry, and Japanese hops prevails, so FOW is hard at work to ensure these recently planted pollinators continue to thrive and multiply in the coming seasons.

**Trail Ambassador Field Report**

**DATE:** 8/7/21  **TIME:** 9 am-12 pm  **LOCATION:** Southern Section (Mt. Airy Avenue to Ridge Avenue)

**DESCRIPTION:** Started at Paper Trail Bike Cafe in Historic Rittenhouse Town. Walked to landmarks such as Hermit’s Cave, Lover’s Leap, and the 100 Steps. While passing under the Henry Ave. Bridge, there was a smoldering campfire for which I called the rangers and left a message. Sue and I got the embers out, but they kept smoldering. There was some trail blockage on the Orange Trail near the houses and birdhouses due to downed branches. We gave directions to a few people. There were about 5 dogs, ALL of which were on leash. On our way back to the start, the Philadelphia Fire Department was at the spot where the smoldering fire was, making sure it was all out.

**Crew Leader Field Report**

**CREW LEADERS:** Lisa Myers & Aaron Kleiner  **DATE:** 7/26/21  **TIME:** 12-2 pm  **LOCATION:** Orange Trail  **WORK METRICS:** 50 feet of trail corridor cleared, some trash pick-up  **DESCRIPTION:** A blind turn and narrow corridor on the trail was a potential hazard for trail users due to no visibility. We cleared one whole side of vegetation to allow for a better sight line.

Invasives removed include Japanese angelica, privet and grapevine. We uncovered a rhododendron and a spice bush. Cut debris was placed at start of a rogue trail going up to the road. However, people were still using it while we were working. We spoke to a cyclist who was extremely pleased that we did this, saying that this was a really blind spot. Other hikers passing by thanked us for our work.
CREEKSIDE CHATS
WITH RUFFIAN

FOW invites you to tune in to our monthly virtual Creekside Chats with Executive Director Ruffian Tittmann. Grab your lunch and join her at 12 p.m. on the last Wednesday of the month as she speaks with partners and friends in Philadelphia’s green community about new FOW projects, programming, policy, and more. Join us for this monthly livestreamed event on Facebook and YouTube.

GIVING

There are several ways to make meaningful gifts to advance FOW’s mission.

STOCK
Consider giving a gift of stock. Our DTC # is 0062 and our Vanguard Brokerage Acct # is 23501307.

JOIN FOW’S SUSTAINER PROGRAM
Support ongoing stewardship through our monthly membership program (and receive a special thank you gift) fow.org/sustainerprogram

UNITED WAY DONATIONS
Friends of the Wissahickon can receive donations through the United Way. If your employer offers United Way giving, and you would like to designate Friends of the Wissahickon as your beneficiary, please use our option code #9882.

AMAZON SMILE
If you shop on Amazon.com, use AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) and select Friends of the Wissahickon as the nonprofit organization you would like to support. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to FOW.

SECURE THE WISSAHICKON’S FUTURE – MAKE IT PART OF YOUR LEGACY

As a membership-based nonprofit, Friends of the Wissahickon depends on gifts and grants from individuals and organizations to continue important work throughout the Wissahickon Valley Park. One of the most transformational ways individuals can make a lasting contribution to FOW is through The 1924 Society. The 1924 Society is a group of committed individuals who have included FOW in their will or have named FOW in their estate planning. Created by the late Albert Neff (1929–2005), a Philadelphia resident with a passion and love for the wildness of the Wissahickon, The 1924 Society honors and recognizes the commitment of our friends to ensure that the Wissahickon Valley Park is here for generations to come.

Contributions from members of The 1924 Society make a lasting impact. Over the past decade, these friends have invested over $500,000 to help fulfill FOW’s ongoing stewardship mission in Wissahickon Valley Park. Support from these thoughtful individuals helps provide the robust educational programming and stewardship efforts needed to protect the water quality of the Wissahickon Creek and preserve the native habitat throughout the 1,800-acre park.

Members of The 1924 Society, who include FOW in their estate plans or will, receive a lifetime membership, invitations to special events, and advanced information about FOW programs and projects. Learn more about The 1924 Society at fow.org/1924society or contact Sarah Marley at marley@fow.org.

LET’S BE FRIENDS.

BECOME A MEMBER >
CROSSWORD

Across
3. The process or period of gathering crops.
6. Last month of fall.
7. Vegetable that grows in stalks.
8. Another name for fall.
11. A variety of this fruit is marketed as “Autumn Glory.”
12. You can use it to make a pie or for carving.
13. What falls from a tree in autumn?
14. An organized day or period of celebration.
15. Fall leaf color.

Down
1. Fruit of the oak tree.
2. First month of fall.
4. Likes to store and eat nuts.
5. They fall to the ground in this season.
7. Make or become different.
9. You can gather fallen leaves with this.
10. Spring, summer, fall, and winter are the four_______.

ANSWERS:
ACORN, SEPTEMBER, SQUIRREL, PIN CONE, CORN, CHANGE, RAKE, SEASON

COLOR

quaking aspen
tulip tree
horse chestnut

silver maple

white oak
pin oak
American elm

sassafras
willow
MAZE
Help Squirrel find his acorns.

FOX’S SCAVENGER HUNT
Go for a hike this summer in Wissahickon Valley Park and help Fox find everything on his list.

- ACORN
- MAPLE LEAF
- SQUIRREL
- BRIDGE
- GOOSE
- BIRD BOX
- FERN
- WATERFALL
- FUNGI
- HORSE
- FLOWER
- TOAD