

Pennsylvania Wildlife

WINTER 2023

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and more!





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The mission of the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation is to promote wildlife conservation and education in Pennsylvania.

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Cover photo: Northern Cardinal by Mark Hale. Mark Nale is an award-winning outdoor writer and photographer living in Centre County. He loves trout fishing, hiking, kayaking and observing nature. Mark has had over 1000 photos published during the past three years and he is a past president of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association.

Who Is *Wildlife For Everyone Foundation?*

As I sit here preparing to answer that question from a different perspective this November 15th 2022, we are being blessed with our very first winter snow storm. It is beautiful to see how the flakes pile up with absolutely no wind. The 50-foot-tall-spruce that I planted in April of 1967 make a perfect scene for a Christmas Wonderland. They also make a wonderful thermal cover for the many species of wildlife we have here in Pennsylvania. Nothing more beautiful than a bright red Cardinal sitting on a snow covered branch of a Blue Spruce tree.

As a young man growing up in Western Pennsylvania I looked forward to the snow-day cancellations of school. As soon as they cancelled, I would get my Brownie Hawkeye camera, put on my heavy coat and boots, and head out to take photos of the wildlife in the snow covered terrain. I would follow the fresh tracks of a rabbit moving around the grounds ending in the hole it called home.

I might see raccoon tracks along the creek or hear the chattering of a gray squirrel—letting me know that I had invaded his territory. I would spot him jumping from a snowy limb to the trunk of a big black oak where he tried to hide on the back side. The loud call of a Blue Jay caught my attention. I can still see all those vivid colors from those days even though my Hawkeye camera film was just black and white. I loved getting the developed film back and would sit and look at them in my mind's eye as full color.

The above comments could have been written by any one of our board members, including our business manager Judy. Each of us have a deep love and commitment to the creatures that share this earth with us. In some cases they are vigorously protected as endangered species and in other cases they are the source of food on our table. That is how it should be in the order of things.

However, we have learned a great deal during the decades of our modern development here in Pennsylvania. Fortunately, we have the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Wildlife For Everyone shares and supports their goals of habitat protection for all

the species. Our most recent thrust in Central Pennsylvania has been the Soaring Eagle and Galen

and Nancy Dreibelbis Wetlands project that is well under way. This is only one of our many projects we have been involved with during our more 16 year existence, however it is our signature property and we are quite proud of it. It is very unique in that is designed to meet all Americans with Disabilities Act-approved requirements. So it is one place that all of our physically challenged citizens can come and enjoy observing wildlife in a natural setting. Plus the new fishing peer and stream improvements done by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service make it possible to enjoy a day of safe fishing.

So who are these board members? The names are not important. Their various walks of life and occupations are what makes them an interesting cohesive group of about 15 people. We have various educators including those specialized in wildlife in secondary and college level. We have several people from the business community not normally associated with formal wildlife education. We have biologists and hydrogeologist. We have corporate leaders/owners in mining industry, banking, lawyers, accountants, agra-tourism, architectural engineering, insurance industry and laborers. We have former military officers and a former Executive Director with the Game Commission as well as current ED with a Pennsylvania conservation organization. The beautiful thing about it all is that their common commitment to wildlife over shadows any other difference they may have in their everyday lives.

And that, my friends, is the Wildlife For Everyone Foundation,

Russ Schleiden

*Chairman of the Board
and Charter Member*



Leave It To Beavers –Engineers of Biodiversity

by Michael Kensinger

C*astor canadensis*, more commonly known as the beaver, is our largest rodent. Averaging 40–50 pounds, there have been records of beavers in Pennsylvania weighing as much as 70 pounds. Prior to the settlement of European colonists, this species had an expansive range, stretching from the border of Mexico to the Arctic.

Beavers do not hibernate. Instead, they rely on food caches of branches and vegetation they've stored around the under-water entrance of the lodge. With the winter air freezing the surface of the pond, the beaver need only swim a short distance outside the warmth of the lodge to bring food back inside to the inner chamber. The inside room of the lodge is above water level, and sometimes reaches 5 feet high. The spacious, and warm home may house the entire colony which consists of a family of five or six beavers.



Experts in their craft, the beavers even leave a vent at the top of the lodge to allow ventilation from the main chamber.

Enormous demand for beaver pelts drove market trappers on vast expeditions into western reaches of the US—eliciting some of the first expansions of America. Each pelt would've brought trappers around four dollars apiece, which today would equal roughly \$100. The pelts were used for clothing and felt hats. Castor oil was used in perfumes, medicines, and scent lures for trapping.

Historically speaking, the beaver is considered to have played a major role in every geopolitical event between the first colonists' arrival, to the Civil War.

Unfortunately, by the 1900's, the demand for beavers led to them being considered extirpated from Pennsylvania.

The species was first reintroduced to Cameron County, with a pair from Wisconsin. Reintroductions ensued from 1918–1925, with over 100 beavers gradually added to the landscape. Since its reintroduction, the beaver is making a comeback, and the native fauna are prospering because of it.

The benefits of beaver ponds are abundant. To begin with, the building of a beaver dam raises water levels which restore incised streams, with steep, dry banks. These kinds of streams lose water more quickly as it absorbs into the bank. When a dam is built by a beaver, the area floods, the banks become



Beaver Dam Benefits

- Promotes ecological diversity
- Retains sediment and contamination
- Promotes ground water retention
- Creates nutrient cycling
- Slows current during floods
- Provides outdoor recreation

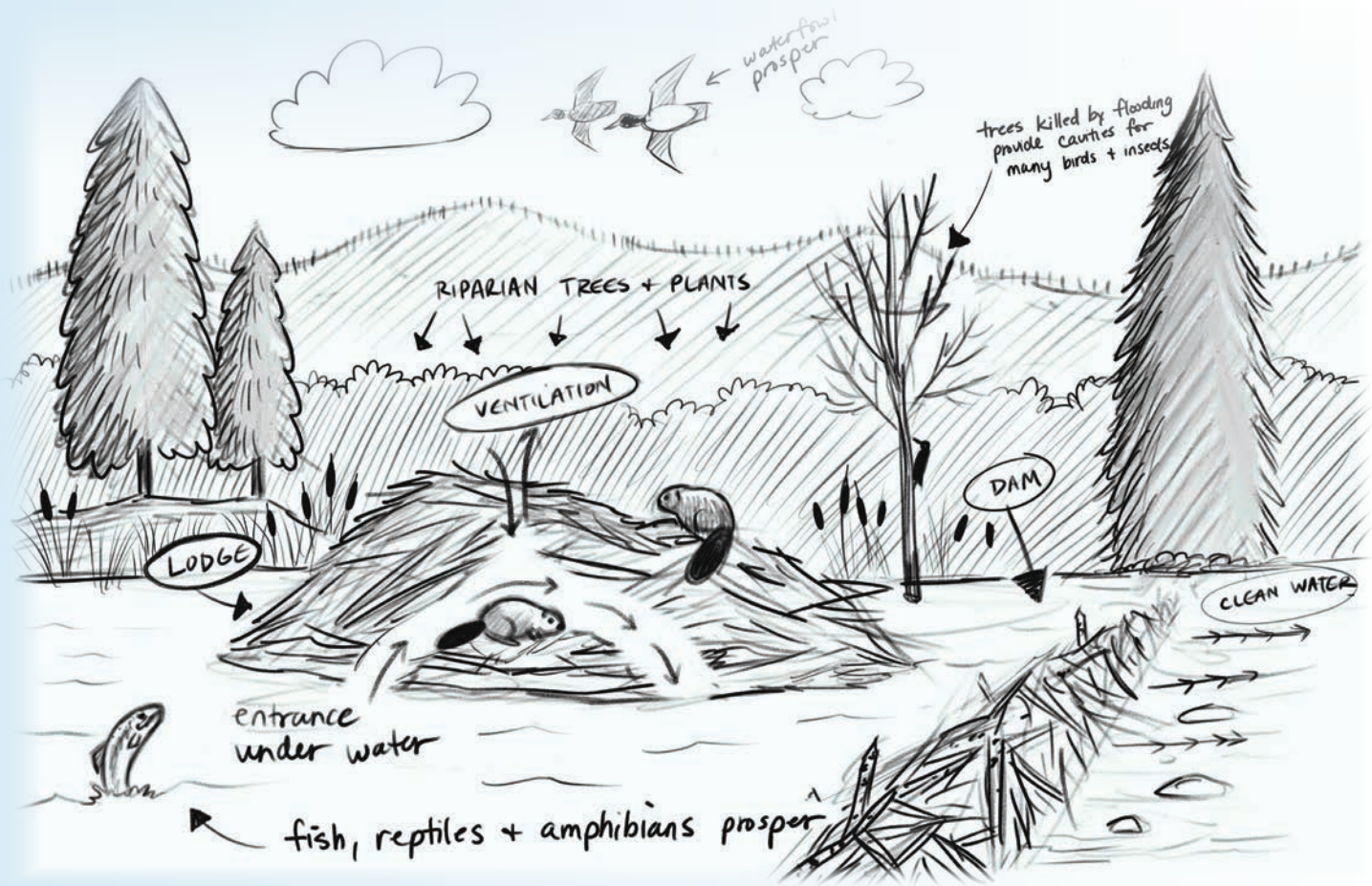


soaked and there is a massive increase of underground water retention. In areas of the western US, where drought is often more severe, this kind of benefit is highly appreciated. Keeping a steady water supply present is so valuable, that devices have been developed to encourage beavers to build dams in these areas. Having beavers in an area increases groundwater recharge by a significant amount.

A plethora of plants, insects, birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians all thrive in or around beaver ponds. Trees that cannot adapt to such ponding, will die in a few years as roots are flooded. The snags produced will provide homes for specific cavity-nesting birds and mammals that rely on them to reproduce. The beaver ponds provide protective habitat for brook trout and many other native fish species. If it is not too open, deep water stays cool and allows for trout to grow large and healthy on the aquatic buffet. Aquatic plants and felled trees provide cover for young fish fry at this vulnerable stage of development.

Another benefit of having beaver habitats is the opportunity for public wildlife viewing and education. So much can be learned about our plants, wildlife, and overall ecosystems through simple observation of such habitats. These habitats in turn provide a myriad of outdoor recreational opportunities.

All the while their dams aid in managing violent stream currents during periods of flooding, and work to prevent erosion. The dams also aid in the retention of sediment and potential contaminants.



For all the benefits to having beavers, they can pose a very real problem when their dams flood homes, roads, or gardens. If flooding is the issue, flow managing devices are available. Such methods are non-lethal and more publicly palatable with PR and education opportunities. In addition, these are effective long term, and people and local ecosystem can continue to benefit from beaver presence. If tree damage is the issue, you can consider wrapping the base of the tree with rolled fencing. This method is 100% effective and simple to resolve. It is also affordable, long term, and low maintenance.

It is important to recognize the positive impacts of the beaver. This industrious creature, not only helped in the foundation of our country, but aids in preserving what is left of our natural habitats. Without the beaver, the land we know would have likely been shaped much differently, and a large portion of our native species rely on its existence for their very survival. To protect the beaver's future, is to protect our own, and shall we continue to praise the beaver's recovery and management for the sake of all that is wild. 🌿

Michael Kensinger is a writer and award-winning artist based out of Altoona, Pennsylvania. Working in a variety of mediums, Kensinger's work aims to bring awareness and appreciation to wildlife and habitat conservation. Michael can be reached at MichaelKensinger@gmail.com.

“Conservation

In Scouts, I am an Outdoor Ethics Guide. The skills I have learned from Wildlife Leadership Academy really improved my knowledge. Photo shows my teaching Leave No Trace to a new troop in my area.

What is Conservation? The dictionary defines it as, “prevention of wasteful use of a resource.” The true meaning is what is in you and me. How do we make an impact to protect our resources? The Wildlife Leadership Academy is just the place to learn this. The Academy sets out to make its participants Conservation Ambassadors. With this role comes large responsibilities, but most importantly, a lifetime of opportunity. I have learned key methods on how to lead others to live a good, earth-loving life. With



Because of WLA one of my favorite hobbies is nature/ wildlife photography. This is one of my favorite photos that I have taken. Named “Window into the Wild.”

Means Something” by Sam Prescott



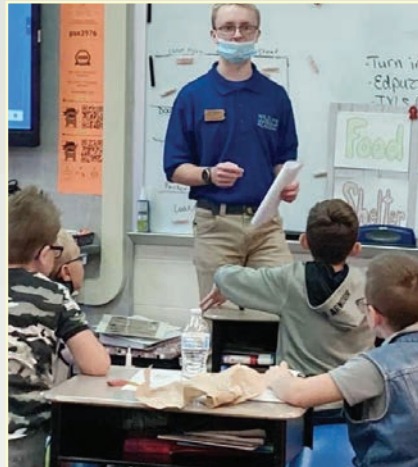
*This article, written by Sam Prescott, attended the Pennsylvania Ursids field school, offered by the **Wildlife Leadership Academy**, this past summer. The mission of the WLA is to engage and empower high school age youth to become Conservation Ambassadors to ensure a sustained wildlife, fisheries and natural resource legacy for future generations. The Academy offers high-achieving youth, ages 14-17, a comprehensive study of specific wildlife species, including classroom and field-based, hands-on education. Led by experts, including biologists and educators from across the state and beyond, the program also engages participants in team work, friendly competition, and an awareness of their natural world.*

The WLA has opened its exclusive Youth Conservation Ambassador nomination process to the public and is currently seeking referrals of motivated students ages 14 to 17 to become Certified Conservation Ambassadors. Nominations are now being accepted online at wildlifeleadershipacademy.org/nominate.

the leadership skills and values I have learned at the Academy, I help promote others to get involved.

Within the past year I have had amazing opportunities to go and talk to third and fourth graders at my local elementary school about what it takes to be conservation minded. The pure joy of seeing kids wanting to be active in the outdoors makes me excited about my future. By teaching kids and younger audiences, I have been able to promote the Academy, my school's Envirothon team, hunting and fishing values, and above all, getting them interested in the outdoors. The academy has taught me so many other things besides leadership skills. I have always been interested in becoming a game warden, and the Academy has laid a foundation for me. I have learned interesting things which I never could see myself doing before.

Nature photography is one of my favorite things to do now because of this experience. Since then I have made up my own portfolios full of pictures. As a Boy Scout, as well, I have applied what I learned in the Academy to lead others in my troop. My Eagle Project helped out the Game Commission with local game lands. I know for certain that I will always cherish and treasure



A day teaching elementary schoolers about wildlife habitat.

these skills I have obtained. What really matters is how to use them in order to serve and help others.

The future of conservation starts with all of us. We need to get involved locally and do our part to help this planet. Help out with Envirothon. Volunteer at your local conservation district. Lead others in the fight to conserve our natural resources. I want to do as much as I possibly can to help spread the conservation message. For the future of conservation starts with all of us. 🌍



The new fishing/viewing platform provides an excellent vantage point to fish or view wildlife.

An early October view of progress on the fishing/viewing platform.

Major Project Complete at Soaring Eagle Wetland

by Mark Nale



Photos © Mark Nide

Anglers of all mobility levels will now have a clear and easy path to fish Bald Eagle Creek at the newly constructed fishing platform on the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation property. The improved trail also makes it easier for birdwatchers and other nature lovers to enjoy the wetlands and view the stream.

It has taken several years, multiple permit reviews, two expensive archeological studies, contract bids and several months of work, but this \$450,000 project was completed at the Soaring Eagle Wetland in November.

John Claar Excavating, Inc., of Woodward was awarded the contract, with construction beginning in mid-August. Claar's crew built the ADA accessible fishing/viewing platform,

then worked their way back from the stream toward the parking lot. Construction was slow at first, but the pace accelerated in October.

The fishing/viewing platform has two levels – one made of composite decking and one with paver bricks. The highest level measures 12 feet by 18 feet and sits approximately six feet above the water level. The platform overlooks one of the best fishing spots on this section of Bald Eagle Creek, and the stream view is excellent. The second level is a 9x30-foot brick paver pad that is closer to stream level. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service shored up the streambank near the platform with additional hemlock logs and limestone boulders.

The 6-foot-wide trail includes nearly 550 feet of gray brick walkway. The pavers –two

tractor trailer loads– were donated by Nyce Crete and Landis Concrete of Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Janet Nyce is an outgoing board member of the Foundation.

The elevated portions of the trail are constructed with a treated lumber framework resting on concrete supports and topped with composite decking. The elevated portions equal about 240 feet of boardwalk. The gently curving trail begins at the newly created handicapped parking area near the railroad line and ends at the accessible fishing platform at Bald Eagle Creek.

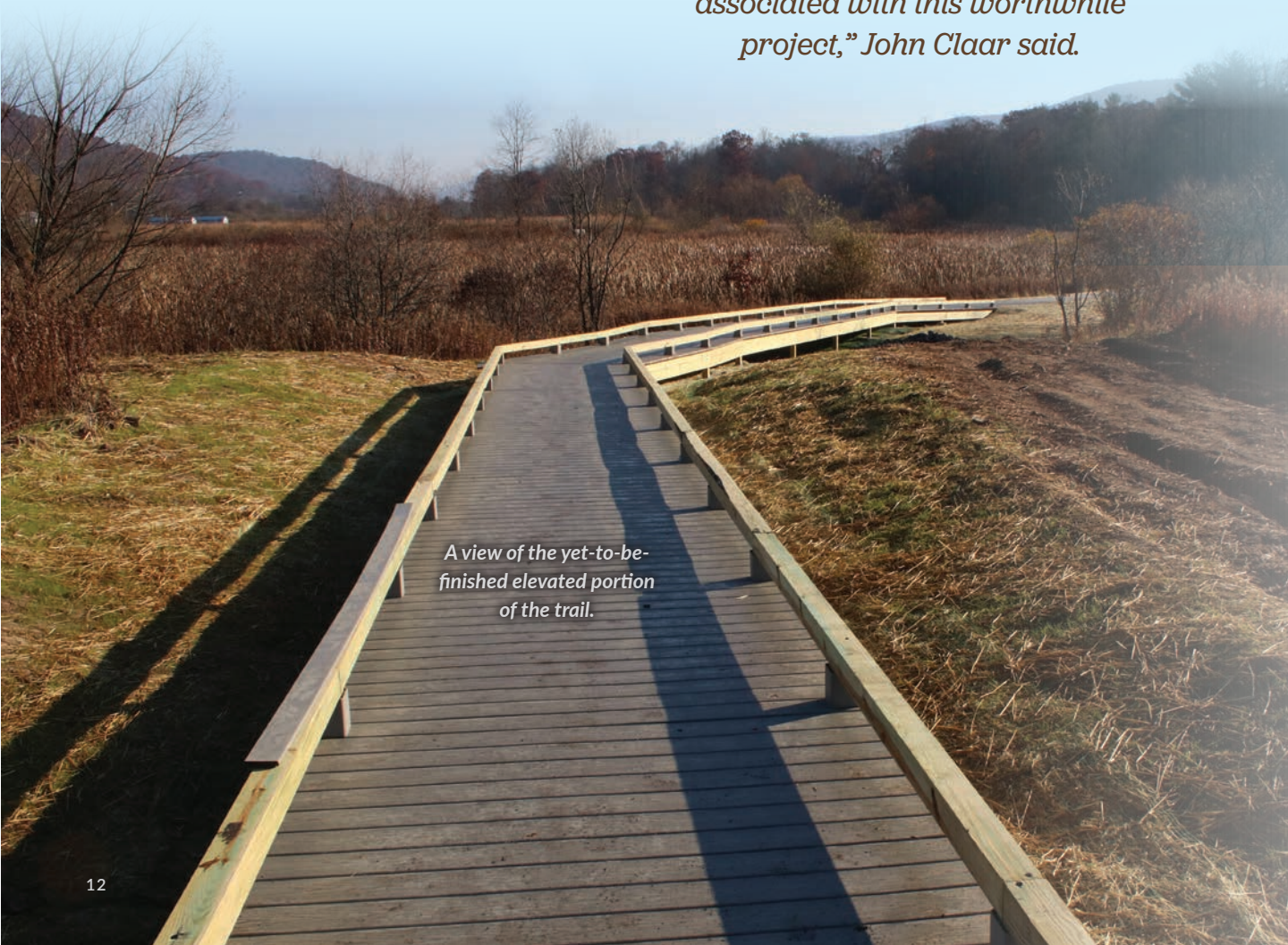
The completion of the parking area, trail and fishing/viewing platform at Soaring Eagle Wetland are big steps to making the

Wildlife for Everyone’s wetland properties accessible for all. The additional .8 miles of grass trails at the wetland are scheduled for improvements as money becomes available.

“The addition of these accessibility features will allow persons with physical limitation the opportunity to engage in passive recreational activities, connect with nature and experience the restorative benefits it offers,” board member Russ Schleiden noted.

All Wetlands Committee members who viewed the work rated it to be excellent.

“The Foundation has been great to work with and I am happy to be associated with this worthwhile project,” John Claar said.



A view of the yet-to-be-finished elevated portion of the trail.

A curving brick trail leads to the fully accessible fishing/viewing platform



Jim and Janet Nyce donated two full loads of paver bricks for the trail at Soaring Eagle Wetland. They were delivered on July 20.

Funding for this \$450,000 project came from in kind labor and services, as well as large grants from the Department of Community and Economic Development and the Pennsylvania Department of Natural resources' Recreation and Conservation fund.

Board member and Wetlands Committee chair Jason Beale sums up the importance of the wetland's project.

"Soaring Eagle Wetland is a perfect example of the interconnected relationship between humans, wildlife, lands, and waters. Since the wetland's establishment, along Bald Eagle Creek, in 2010, the site has become a hub of activity for local residents. Their regular visits had them

enjoying walks to view migrating waterfowl, wildflowers, butterflies and dragonflies coursing the marsh, as well as nesting bluebirds and tree swallows. Even frigid, snow-covered mornings become magic moments, with the tracks of local wildlife and hunting raptors.

"Wildlife for Everyone is grateful for the grants, donations, and dedicated volunteers that have allowed the Foundation to continue to improve accessibility at the site, serving new audiences," Beale added. "The opportunities for accessible wildlife viewing and recreation elevate the wetland as an outdoor destination for all persons regardless of physical limitation." 🌿

Recap

GREAT OUTDOOR PICNIC

Wildlife For Everyone Foundation held their **7th Annual Great Outdoor Picnic** on Saturday, June 25, 2022, at Penn's Cave and Wildlife Park. Attendees enjoyed an afternoon of fun, food, and prizes along with hands-on activities showcasing Pennsylvania's rich outdoor heritage. They also took part in raffles and auctions.



Thank You!

to all those who purchased tickets and sold tickets.

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Penn's Valley Conservation Association	

A WORD FROM

Eagle Scout project makes wetlands accessible

by Mark Nale

Wildlife lovers of all ages and mobility levels are getting a big boost from a large Eagle Scout project at Galen and Nancy Dreibelbis Birding Area. The area, owned by the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation, is located off Miles Hollow Road northeast of Port Matilda.

The ambitious scout project includes a level trail and an elevated viewing platform that will allow even small children or someone in a wheelchair to have an excellent view of the open water in the wetland. Beginning at the Dreibelbis Birding Area sign, the 800-foot trail snakes its way northeast between the wetland and Alternate Route 220.

The project was a labor of love for Scout Troup 32 member Will English—a senior at State College High. Summer 2021, when he and his father Chris first looked at what would become the trail site, it was a tangle of chest-high weeds, invasive shrubs and multiflora rose. Only the most adventurous souls braved the brush to view the wetland. However, Will English had a vision.

Seventeen-year-old Will, who also enjoys hunting and weightlifting, has a personal reason for selecting this difficult project.

“I chose this project because my uncle lost a leg in a motorcycle accident, and I like the fact that Wildlife for Everyone wants to make their wetland accessible for everyone

– including someone in a wheelchair,” Will said. “My project will help fulfill that mission.”

Last summer, with guidance from Wildlife for Everyone, Will and his dad laid out the trail with flagging and cleared the largest shrubs. Local resident David Swisher saw value in the project and used his brush hog to



Will and Chris English work on platform



Lou Sycz and family on platform

take care of the remaining vegetation. With Swisher's generous help, the impenetrable swath of vegetation became a rough path.

Nearly 200 species of birds have been observed at the wetland. That path was used by many birders in the spring. The trail became even more valuable after a pair of rare common gallinules were spotted from the trail in late April.

Beginning in early June 2022, Will and Chris tacked down 800-linear feet of the six-foot-wide underlayment and started covering it with limestone, using shovels and a wheelbarrow. Wetland neighbors Kari and Jeff Gleason came to the rescue with their small backhoe and distributed much

of the trail base from the first load of 2RC limestone. Jeff Gleason also dug the holes for the platform foundation, which was then constructed by Will, his father, scouts, and friends. Triangle True Value Rental and Building Supplies in Bellefonte donated rental of a backhoe to spread the remaining stone.

The 12-foot by 6-foot viewing platform is about halfway down the path. It is constructed of rough-cut white oak, built on a foundation of concrete pillars and topped with Trex decking. It includes a see-through safety railing. A gradual ramp gets viewers to the top of the 30-inch-high platform. The view from up there is fantastic.



Topcoat on Will
English Trail

Chris sponsored a Go Fund Me page for his son and record-keeping sheds light on the scope of this project. Two rolls of underlayment cloth were tacked down and over 90 tons of crushed limestone were spread, creating 800 feet of trail. Over 300 person hours have been spent on the project. Even with several thousand dollars worth of donated materials and services, the project has cost an additional \$3000, which has been covered mainly by donations.

Sometimes projects such as this have a value beyond what is obvious at the outset. Will's father reflects on that.

"I have watched Will grow quite a bit from the beginning of the project – he has been able to coordinate his friends, family, and scouts to attend the workdays and has put in long hours, especially on the underlayment and gravel spreading. Just the gravel underlayment and footers accounted for over 200 hours of combined work," Chris explained.

"It is also interesting to see his appreciation grow for the natural beauty of this property with its frogs, swallows, herons, butterflies, wildflowers and snakes," Chris added. The platform area is a great location since it is the natural centerpiece of the wetland, with an excellent view of plant and animal life.

Will thanks all of his friends, relatives and birders who donated money and time to help make the project a reality. The following businesses donated or provided materials and services at a reduced cost. Scott's Landscaping donated 800 feet of underlayment. Pine Creek Lumber Company donated all of the white oak lumber. Triangle True Value donated the tractor rental. New Enterprise Stone and Lime delivered four truckloads of 2RC limestone at a greatly reduced cost.

The trail and viewing platform will make an area of the wetland that had not been previously accessible easy for everyone to enjoy. A "grand opening" celebration was held in early fall. 🗓️

Soaring Eagle Wetland Benefits from Scout Projects

by Mark Nale



Wildlife for Everyone's Soaring Eagle Wetland was the benefactor of two Eagle Scout projects this year. One is helping to contain litter and protect birds and other wildlife, while the other provides shade and protection from the elements for trail walkers. Both projects are excellent additions to the wetlands.

The section of Bald Eagle Creek through Wildlife for Everyone property has seen greatly increased fishing pressure since the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission upgraded its status. They made it the state's only Keystone Select Stocked Trout Fishery to permit all tackle types.

Joe Peters, a senior at State College Area High School, constructed and installed three collectors for used fishing line. The collectors are made of PVC pipe and mounted on 4x4 posts, with appropriate signage. They are strategically located streamside at the upper, lower and middle portions of Wildlife for Everyone's property. Carelessly discarded used fishing line has been known to entangle and kill birds and animals.

Shane Rachael, a senior at Bellwood-Antis High School, built a bench shelter along a yet unimproved portion of the foundation's one-mile trail network. The shelter was made with four 4x4

treated lumber posts and roof trusses supporting a pleasing green metal roof. A concrete pad was poured in November to finish the project. There is room under the roof for a bench and a wheelchair or two.

Rachael's bench shelter overlooks a beautiful northeastern portion of the wetland. The Foundation is always open to additional scout projects. 🏡



NORTHERN CARDINAL

If there is a Pennsylvania critter that represents Christmas, it must surely be the Cardinal. Photographs or paintings of this colorful bird, often proudly perched on a snow-covered evergreen bough, grace many holiday greeting cards. The bright red plumage of the male against a white and green background presents a striking image.

The Cardinal is a favorite at other times of the year, too. Seven states have selected the Cardinal as their official state bird, including our neighbors in Ohio and West Virginia.

Cardinals are about eight inches long, measuring from the tip of their beaks to the ends of their tails. Males are bright red with black faces, and females are a subdued tan color with just hints of red. The heads of both

The Christmas Bird

by Mark Nale



sexes are distinguished by their stocky red bills and crests of longer feathers.

The Cardinal (officially named the northern Cardinal since 1983) currently belongs to a family of birds called *Cardinalidae*. Taxonomically, this group is also known as the Cardinal-Grosbeaks or Cardinal-buntings. Relatives found in Pennsylvania include the rose-breasted grosbeak and the indigo bunting. The northern Cardinal is the only Pennsylvania member that sports a crest of feathers in the group.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, who spend just the summer months in Pennsylvania, used to be rare and infrequent visitors to our feeders. This bird is now a regular feeder bird each spring and early summer. We are sometimes treated to as many as four pairs of Grosbeaks. Indigo buntings are also only warm-weather visitors, and although mainly insect-eaters, they occasionally snack at our feeders.

Because of their similarly shaped beaks, it was once believed that the flashy yellow, black and white-colored evening Grosbeaks were another relative, but this bird is now listed in a separate family.

The Cardinal is a year-round Keystone State resident, but it was not always that way. One hundred and fifty years ago, the Cardinal was considered a southern bird. Thomas Nuttall, then director of Harvard University's Botanical Gardens, described the Cardinal as an

inhabitant of magnolia gardens and cypress swamps. He referred to it as the "Kentucky Cardinal" in his writings. In his 1963 book, *Biology of Birds*, Wesley Lanyon wrote, "A recent warming trend in the climate of the northern hemisphere has promoted remarkable northward range extensions of birds." This included the Cardinal and the tufted titmouse.

It is believed that backyard bird feeders have contributed to the northward spread of Cardinals, as well, for they now nest in Maine and southern Canada—an amazing feat for a "southern



Rose-breasted Grosbeak

bird." An Audubon Society poster about Grosbeaks credits the widespread planting of trees such as box elder, which produce winter seeds for Cardinals, as an important role in their range expansion.

It is believed that backyard bird feeders have contributed to the northward spread of Cardinals, as well, for they now nest in Maine and southern Canada—an amazing feat for a “southern bird.”



Photo © JudyK

Little did Lanyon know that the “warming trend” continues to this day, as measured by later first frosts, milder winters and a growing season that seems to begin earlier each year. With this in mind, one might predict a continued northern expansion of the Cardinal’s range.

According to the Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania, Cardinals were first recorded in the state shortly after 1900. They now breed in all 67 Pennsylvania counties, and they continue to increase in numbers across the Commonwealth.

Cardinals live in brushy fields, thick forests, farms and in suburbia. They love edge habitat and are frequent visitors to

bird feeders. Their natural food consists of hard seeds, fruit and insects during the summer. At the bird feeder, sunflowers seeds are a favorite. The Cardinal’s tough beak allows them to crack the seeds and extract the tasty heart with ease.

Males begin to defend territories as early as February. Their song is described as sounding like “pretty, pretty, pretty,” or “what-cheer, what-cheer, what-cheer.” Female Cardinals also sing, which is unusual in a bird world where males usually do the singing. Sometimes the female will repeat the same notes just sung by its mate. According to Chuck Fergus in Wildlife of Pennsylvania, this could serve to strengthen the pair bond.

Males also court females by breaking open seeds and offering the inside to the female.

Cardinals are early nesters, probably because of their southern lineage. I once observed young in a nest in early April. The Cardinal nests that I've seen were loosely made from small twigs, vines and roots and lined with grass. The female is the nest builder and usually builds in thick vegetation three to six feet from the ground. I observed one nest in a white cedar about five feet from the ground, while another nest was three feet from the ground in a rhododendron bush at the edge of a forest. During the past several years, Cardinal pairs have unsuccessfully nested in a forsythia bush and a shrubby red maple near our house. However, this past summer, their nesting efforts were very successful.

Females usually lay three or four eggs that hatch in about 12 days. The male tends the female while she nests and also helps in feeding of the young. According to the Atlas, Cardinals might nest up to four times a year.

Although a Cardinal's song sounds pretty to us, males are strongly territorial and very aggressive toward members of their own species. They frequently attack their reflection in windows or hubcaps. One winter, a Cardinal would visit one of our basement windows, pecking at its reflection time and time again. Robert Merritt, a college instructor of mine, told of a male Cardinal in one of his studies. The bird responded to a mounted decoy and tape-recorded song by flying in and

ripping the fake bird's head off. "Pretty, pretty, pretty" —yeah, right.

My observations of Cardinals follow the literature for the most part, but we only infrequently witness the winter flocking behavior often described. This year, I believe that eight is the most Cardinals we have seen together. The other discrepancy I've noted has to do with their tameness. At my feeders, if a Cardinal detects a slight human movement from either inside or outside of the house, it's gone. I would rank the Cardinal as one of our most skittish visitors.

Hopefully, a fresh snow will soon provide conditions for a bright red Cardinal to land on a frosted branch and provide that perfect holiday-card view. The once southern—now northern—Cardinal is truly a living Christmas card. 🦃



Mark Nale is an award-winning outdoor writer and photographer living in Centre County. He loves trout fishing, hiking, kayaking and observing nature. Mark has had over 1000 photos published during the past three years and he is a past president of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association.

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(see form on
page 27)



EVENTS



SOARING EAGLE CELEBRATION (formerly the gala)

Friday, May 19, 2023

Wyndham Garden State College

Guest Speaker: Nicole Ranalli, Theme Turtle(s). Join us for a festive evening of celebrating the Soaring Eagle Wetlands progress, in support of Wildlife for Everyone's mission of promoting wildlife conservation and education.



GREAT OUTDOOR PICNIC

Saturday, June 24, 2023

Penn's Cave & Wildlife Park Grounds

Fun Family Event—Introduce kids to outdoor sports: fly casting and archery, live reptile and wildlife exhibits, environmental and outdoor-themed displays, build a bluebird box, demonstrations, raffles, prizes, youth giveaways and more.



THE JOHN M. FRAILEY MEMORIAL **SPORTING CLAY CLASSIC**

Friday, September 15, 2023

Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays

Come join us in the Lehigh Valley. The stunning grounds have 3 levels of courses artfully etched into an abandoned 1800s cement quarry. Lunch, prizes, raffles and more.

Please sustain our efforts to conserve wildlife in Pennsylvania by including the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation in your estate planning. Call 814-238-8138 for more information.

Seedlings for Schools



Announcing the 2023 Seedlings for Schools Program

Available to all Pennsylvania schools with children from kindergarten to 12th grade. Seedlings for Schools is a partnership program of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Howard Nursery and the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation. Since the Seedlings for Schools initiative began in 2008, 1.8 million seedlings were dispersed statewide to all counties of the Commonwealth. Seedlings are grown and shipped from the Game Commission's Howard Nursery located in Centre County, Pennsylvania. The Seedlings for Schools program provide students the experience as caretaker of the environment while having fun in the outdoor classroom.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission provides enough seedlings for each student to take a seedling home to plant. This year's seedling choices are white spruce or silky dogwood.



PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THIS INVALUABLE PROGRAM:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> River Otter - \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bluebird - \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ruffed Grouse - \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Membership - \$10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brook Trout - \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - \$ _____ |



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BALD EAGLE (\$1,000)
RIVER OTTER (\$500)
RUFFED GROUSE (\$250)
BROOK TROUT (\$100)
WILD TURKEY (\$50)
BLUEBIRD (\$25)
STUDENT (\$10)

GIFT:

Commemorative President's pin, invitation to join the President's Wildlife Circle
Special leather edition of *Gone for Another Day*, excerpts from the journals of naturalist & artist Ned Smith
Embroidered leather bag
The History of the PA Fish and Boat Commission book
Flashlight
Birding guide
Embroidered Foundation patch



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John Claar and his crew work on the brick portion of the new trail at Soaring Eagle Wetland in this October 4, photo. The trail was finished in early November.