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# Conservancy Currents

## *Fall 2016*



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### Help Wanted

With **YOUR** help, we can do **More** to Protect Local Land, Water and Wildlife



We are working in many ways to protect our beautiful landscapes, conserve open spaces and monitor wildlife populations. But we can do more! Won't you join us as a volunteer? Together, we can make a greater difference! These committees need your help:

- **Publicity** – attend events and staff a Conservancy table (just once, or several times...you decide!)
- **Events** – help set up for Conservancy events (special programs, annual meeting, trail clean-up, etc.)
- **Membership** – develop member events, help with annual membership campaign

Please contact Kristi Sullivan at [kls20@cornell.edu](mailto:kls20@cornell.edu) or 607-255-5508 if you would be willing to volunteer.

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## 2016 Annual Meeting at Greenwood Sanctuary



On July 30th, the [Conservancy's Annual Meeting](#) was held at the Greenwood Sanctuary property in Dimock, PA, south of Montrose. The meeting had a business component which included reports on the previous year's activities and initiatives. In addition, Wally and Dana Woods were presented with a sign as a thank you for donating a conservation easement on their property this spring. Their land will now be conserved for future generations to enjoy in perpetuity. Following the business meeting, Kristi Sullivan and three Cornell summer interns (Nicole Tu-Maung, Cory Snyder, Briana Binkerd-Dale) presented a variety of live, local reptiles and amphibians native to the Greenwood Sanctuary site. Conservancy members got up close to the critters and asked questions about animal behaviors, populations, and what the amphibian field monitoring data indicates about the health of the local environment. This summer's dry weather affected the local amphibians, who need to find moist locations in the forest to survive. A walk through the beautiful hemlock forest followed, with a discussion of the hemlock woolly adelgid and treatment plans/options to control this pest. Participants also learned to identify ash trees and to recognize signs of infestation by the emerald ash borer, a relative newcomer that is killing ash trees in the county. Members had the chance to enjoy the updated barn, too. The barn at the Greenwood Sanctuary has a new roof and painted inside floor that makes for a great meeting place. The space is bright and airy for a pleasant meeting setting, and makes a good refuge from the rain! If you missed the annual meeting this year, please join us next year. The meeting is held the last Saturday of July so mark your calendar today! We would love to see you.



Education program on  
local reptiles and  
amphibians



A bullfrog decided to join  
the party



Thanks to board member  
Jim Haley for cooking  
lunch in the rain!



Wally and Dana Woods  
donated a conservation  
easement on their  
property this spring!

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## Nature Day Camp at Greenwood Sanctuary





Greenwood Sanctuary was a beautiful and valuable addition for [Endless Mountains Nature Center's Nature Day Camp](#). Of the thirty-two campers and two counselors-in-training, most were new to our program, which accomplishes our goal of reaching a wider audience. Campers ranging from the ages of four to twelve years old enjoyed five days of exploring, playing, and learning on the wooded trails, in the lawns, and especially around the pond. The staff consisted of two counselors-in-training, Colleen Cole of Clarks Green and Liddie Cooper of Tunkhannock, and Environmental Education Specialists, Brooke Sundance of Mehoopany and Montana Cole of Meshoppen. The campers were mostly from the local communities: Montrose, Dimock, Meshoppen, Springville, Factoryville, and Clarks Summit. A few campers from New Jersey and SE Pennsylvania were visiting relatives in the area and attended camp. Our theme, Feathers and Wings, started with Endless Mountains Nature Center's live bird program presented by Rebecca Lesko. The children met three live birds of prey including a red-tailed hawk, a screech owl, and an American kestrel. The second guest speaker was from Susquehanna County Bee Association. He gave a presentation about beekeeping and the importance of pollinators. In addition to the presentations we played a game that explained how bats use echolocation to hunt. We also made a variety of crafts including fashioning bird feeders from popsicle sticks and making nature journals from paper bags. The children greatly enjoyed walking along the pond and foraging wild berries. We only wish there were more trails to hike. These campers wanted to go for miles. The Nature Center staff enjoyed teaching at Greenwood Sanctuary and hopes to return in the future.

By Rebecca Lesko Director, Endless Mt Nature Center



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## Conservancy Wine and Art Fundraiser



Creativity and conservation came together on October 24th for the Conservancy's first Wine and Paint Fundraiser! Twenty-one Conservancy and community joined us at the Broome County Cornell Cooperative Extension center, where we learned to paint 'Bluebird in a Birch Tree' from the wonderful art instructor at Uncorked Creations. We uncovered some people's hidden artistic talent, and enjoyed watching some *unique*, more abstract, takes on the bluebird painting. Needless to say, everyone left with their own work of art!

While exploring their artistic sides, attendees also got to enjoy some fine New York wines and cider, donated by Black Bear Winery, Bellwether Wine Cellars, Americana Vineyards, Treleaven Winery, Pleasant Valley Wine Company and Johnson City Liquor. A huge thank you to all our sponsors, Uncorked Creations, and the CCE Broome County! Thanks to the generosity and enthusiasm of our sponsors and attendees, we had a successful, fun night and we raised over \$300! The money



raised will help fund the Conservancy's continued efforts to conserve land, water, and wildlife in Pennsylvania and the Southern Tier of New York.



[Click here to see Channel 12 news coverage of the event](#)

[Click here to see more pictures from the event](#)

## Upcoming Events



### **Enriching Woodland Values**

**Pennsylvania Forest Landowners Conference**

**March 24-25, 2017**

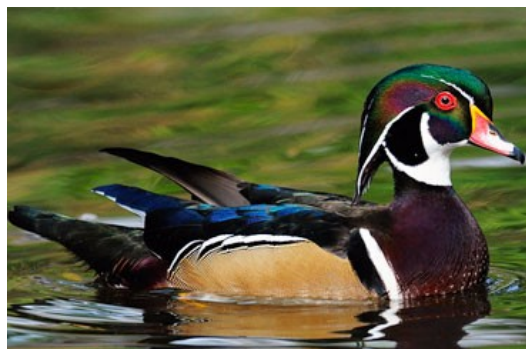
*Blair County Convention Center*

[More info here](#)

*The region's foremost gathering of woodland owners, forest practitioners, and others interested in woodlands and the wildlife that use them!*

*Through presentations and discussion with other landowners and experienced woodland professionals, you'll learn how to:*

- Improve wildlife habitat
- Restore degraded woodlands
- Get invasive plants under control
- Create "goods from your woods"  
firewood, edible mushrooms, value-added wood products



### **Build a Duck Nest/House**

**Saturday, April 29, 2017 9:00am**

*Master Gardener Building at Harford Fair Grounds*

Fee: \$5.00 cost of materials: \$25.00

Instructor: Master Gardener, Jim Kasten & Jim Kessler

[Register here](#)

Wood ducks, Barrow's goldeneyes, common goldeneyes, hooded mergansers, common mergansers and buffleheads are all cavity nesting ducks, meaning they build nests in natural tree cavities caused by disease, fire, lightning or woodpeckers. However, they'll also use a constructed nesting box! We'll be building one of these houses, which can help attract ducks or even other cavity nesting birds to your property! Deadline to order materials: April 14th.

- Gain tax tips and financial insights
  - Learn about tools and tech. for the woods
  - Hear conservation strategies for the legacy of your woodland
- 



### ***Make Your Own Bat House***

*Saturday, May 6, 2016 10:00am*

*St. Paul's Church, Montrose*

*Fee: \$5.00, cost if materials: \$35.00*

*Instructor: Amy Boot, Master Gardener*

[More info](#)

Come learn about the mysterious life of bats!

They are highly beneficial creatures, consuming enormous amounts of mosquitos and crop damanging insects. However, more than half of the bat species in the US are in severe decline or listed as endangered. Learn more interesting facts plus build a house for up to 100 bats. Bat houses make nice gifts too! Deadline to order materials: April 22nd.



### ***Emerald Ash Borer: What You Can Do***

*Saturday, June 10, 2017 at 9:00am*

*475 Lake Avenue, Bible Conference in Montrose*

*Fee: \$5.00*

*Instructors: Master Gardeners and Joe Pipitone of Top Notch Tree Service*

Learn about the invasive pest that has already destroyed millions of ash trees and has caused high economic impact to homeowners and municipalities? Learn the important facts, observe this pest up close, and examine the damage it can do. Then watch Top Notch Tree Service perform a live demonstration on what measures can be taken to protect your trees!

**Register:** Montrose Adult

School [www.montroseadultschool.org](http://www.montroseadultschool.org)

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### ***Cultivating Mushrooms in Your Woods***

*Saturday, June 3 from 1 to 3 p.m.*

*Greenwood Sanctuary, Dimock, Pa*

*Instructors: Dr. Ken Mudge and Dr. Steve*





*Morreale, Cornell University in partnership with  
the E. L. Rose Conservancy*

Fee: \$5.00 plus \$15.00 for materials

Would you like to learn more about growing your own mushrooms? Join us for an afternoon presentation on successful cultivation of shiitake and oyster mushrooms for home or small-farm scale production. Learn the proper tree species and techniques for cultivation. Students will get to inoculate their own log to take home.

**Register:** Montrose Adult

School [www.montroseadultschool.org](http://www.montroseadultschool.org)

## Wild Things in Your Woodlands *The American Toad*



The American toad is a chunky, brown, warty frog, with dry skin and black spots on its back, and a white belly with black markings. Each of the largest black spots on its back contains one or two large warts, and there are additional large warts on the rear legs between the knee and the ankle. Adults usually measure from 2-4



inches and mainly are seen hopping about on land, except during the breeding season when they enter shallow bodies of water. Males generally are smaller than females and have a dark throat and hardened, dark pads on their thumbs for grasping females. The American toad first reproduces at an age of two to three years. Individual toads can survive for 10 years or longer in the wild.

Common and widespread, the American toad occurs throughout New York State, except on Long Island. Toads are active from mid-March through October. They are most active and moving about in the rain or on moist nights. Breeding adults begin to show up at bodies of water after the first warm rains, often migrating by the hundreds to their breeding sites. The peak of the breeding season is usually around mid-April. At this time, males call day and night. Males call to attract females, usually while sitting in shallow water or at the edge of the pond. The call of the male is a long, musical, high trilling “bu-rr-r-r” that lasts up to 30 seconds. Occasionally, you may encounter a ball of males in the water, all entangled and holding tightly to each other, with a lone female somewhere in the mix.

Like most North American toads, female American toads lay long strings of eggs. The eggs, often numbering from 2,000 to 10,000, usually are in two strings sitting at the bottom of the breeding pool. Eggs hatch quickly, usually developing within two to 14 days. The larval tadpoles, small and black, often swim in large groups feeding on algae and plankton for 35 to 70 days, until July or early August when they transform into miniature versions of adult toads and leave the water.

On land, toads hunt and catch a variety of prey. They are considered to be beneficial to humans because they eat many things, including insects, centipedes, and slugs, that are considered pests. They use a quick flick of their tongues to catch insects and other prey, and they use their front feet to stuff the bigger items into their mouths. They are voracious feeders and easily can be observed feeding, especially when they station themselves near outdoor lights on a summer night.

American toads are abundant, widespread, and tolerant of a wide array of environments. They live in almost any moist shady area on land, from the most remote country areas to yards in crowded cities. Their choice of aquatic breeding sites is equally broad, ranging from

still areas of rivers, to ponds, ditches, and ruts in dirt roads and parking areas. During dry days, they usually remain under cover, slightly burrowed into soil, or under a rock or other cover object. They frequently hop around in the open at night and during rainy days. Thousands of toads are killed each year while crossing roads during spring migrations or during the summer months.

Toads are an important component of many ecosystems, functioning both as predator and as prey. The American toad has enlarged paratoid glands, which look like very large warts on the head, directly behind each eye. These glands contain steroidal chemicals that can affect the blood and heart of unwise predators, causing illness or death in some mammals. To avoid sickness, some clever mammals (like skunks and raccoons) avoid the milky secretions and eat only the legs and the bellies of toads. Some snakes, fish, and birds eat toads without any ill effect. People can touch toads safely but the secretions can be irritating to the eyes or mouth. To manage habitat for toads, maintain or create cover items such as rocks and logs in both open and forested areas. Preserve shallow pools of water, and prevent pollution of streams, ponds and wetlands on your land.

By Kristi Sullivan

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## Ways to Help the Conservancy



### ***Planning on doing some holiday shopping on Amazon?***

When you shop at AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Edward L Rose Conservancy Inc.

Bookmark the link

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2517879> and support us every time you shop!

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### ***Make a gift towards conservation***

Do you love wild places, clean water, and a





healthy environment? We do too. Help us preserve our local natural resources by [making a donation](#) this holiday season. [Donate here](#)

Thank you for all your support this year! Happy holidays!



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**Our mailing address is:**

[elrosepuplic@gmail.com](mailto:elrosepuplic@gmail.com)

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Edward L Rose Conservancy · P. O. Box 8 · Montrose, PA 18801 · USA