

MAY - AUGUST · 2017 · VOLUME 31 · NUMBER

### Every Child Knows

Nature is a school, a playground, a refuge, a challenge, a triumph, a hiding place, a place to get found. Nature is growing bones and balance, a language, a nursery, a bakery, a science lab, a wonderland and a home. Nature is a secret and a discovery, an adventure, a lifelong companion. Children know this in the same way plants know to turn toward the sun.

#### On Your Mark - Get Set...

RUN through the Woods! Baltimore Woods 5K Trail Run

Sunday, August 20

5k Race 9:00am 1K Fun Run 8:45am

Pre-register online at www.baltimorewoods.org

See page 12 for details.



4007 Bishop Hill Road PO Box 133 Marcellus, NY 13108-0133 315.673.1350

www.baltimorewoods.org

# Bird Banding Is Back!

by Tom Meier

Those of you who have been with Baltimore Woods from a long way back may remember Doug Whitman. If that name is unfamiliar, maybe you remember a man holding up a pileated woodpecker in the sun, taking some measurements, and placing a lightweight, numbered aluminum anklet of sorts on the bird's leg. Doug banded birds at Baltimore Woods in the early 1990s, establishing not only records on bird populations at Baltimore Woods, but also one of our most loved, and most requested programs.

When Doug retired, the bird banding program stopped. You need special licenses and a good reason to band birds, and without Doug we were at a loss as to how to continue this activity. Ever since leading my first bird walk here at Baltimore Woods, people have been asking, "When are you going to bring back bird banding? That was a great program..." To which I could only respond, "Yeah, I've heard that. I don't know..."

A few months ago, I was approached by two PhD candidates at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry. As it turns out, Alison Kocek and Michelle Stantial are not only PhD candidates and members of the Onondaga Audubon Society's board of directors – they are bird banders! And – they want to reestablish the banding activities at Baltimore Woods!



Why do we band birds? Bird banding helps to monitor breeding bird populations, their breeding and survival rates, and movement patterns. All this gives important information on habitat quality and diversity, and even how birds are responding to issues like climate change, which helps us to make better land management decisions.

Alison and Michelle both have extensive experience working with birds, especially the coastal migrants and residents along the Atlantic. We are very excited about the partnership they have started between SUNY-ESF, the Onondaga Audubon Society, and Baltimore Woods to establish consistent data on our local bird populations. We have a formal program scheduled on June 17th, but you can also stop by on Saturday mornings during June and July to meet the banders and see them in action.





### About Us

Baltimore Woods
is a premier
educational organization
that transforms individuals
and communities
by cultivating
a personal connection
to the
natural world.

New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week July 9 - 15

Learn more on our website.

# **Creating Connections**

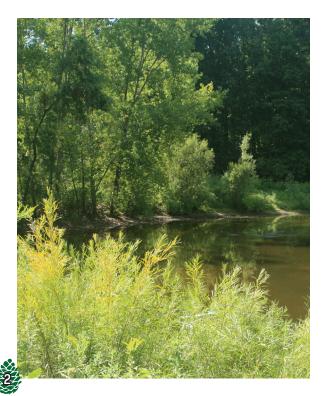
By Whitney Lash-Marshall, Executive Director

Baltimore Woods Nature Center is more than a physical location in Marcellus; it's a model for environmental education that impacts people throughout Central New York. While each member, camper, or visitor may only see a snapshot of day-to-day activities at The Woods, my first few months as Executive Director have taught me that there is always work happening behind the scenes to connect you to the wonders of nature.

Each of us can probably think of a place that still has a powerful influence on our memories, whether that memory is triggered by a season, a certain smell, or the mere mention of a name. It is amazing how even our earliest experiences outdoors stay with us and transform us throughout our lives. Throughout this edition of the Overlook, you'll see evidence of how we cultivate these types of connections to nature here at Baltimore Woods: campers are signing up for day camps to discover new adventures across our 182 acres; new and exciting public programs led by our

talented environmental educators explore our species and systems; and we continue to bring hands-on science exploration to local schools through on-site field trips and in-the-classroom lessons with our *Nature in the City* program.

Our personal connections to nature and the mission of Baltimore Woods are what tie us together as a community: this place has impacted each of us and our own connections to the natural world. Perhaps you have seen the excitement of children exploring our forest or heard the wonder in a child's voice as they tell their stories of a day of nature play during our camps. Perhaps you are inspired by your own experiences here: the soothing sounds of the stream or the thrill of watching a pileated woodpecker land on a nearby tree. I invite you to continue sharing stories of your experiences at Baltimore Woods Nature Center as well as your ideas for our future. I look forward to working with you to continue to build on the power of this place!



# Shifting Focus: Restoration

By Fran Lawlor, Land Manager

On Earth Days past, we pulled garlic mustard. This year, we also removed honeysuckle and other exotic invasive plants along the trail, from the lower parking lot towards the gravel pit. Sometimes it may feel like we are fighting the same battle against invasive plants, but this year, instead of just removing plants and eating garlic mustard, we planted dozens of native shrub seedlings from the NYS DEC's Saratoga Tree Nursery.

Our spring restoration project is startling! Massive shrubs are gone, replaced by lots of little seedlings protected from browsing deer and mice by many mesh tubes. Up at Phillips pond we will do more planting in the fall with the help of the Plant Propagation Club at SUNY-ESF. Our restoration goal at The Woods is to gradually replace our invasive exotic plants with native plants that support the insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.

How can you help? Even small efforts add up. If you hike here, think about learning to identify honeysuckle, barberry and privet and join us in helping to cut back these plants. You could adopt a plot, anything from a few square feet to a 1/10 acre is welcome. Talk with Fran Lawlor, our Land Manager, if you would like to help.

# This Season at Baltimore Woods... Searching for Salamanders

By Pat Burke

This summer will mark my 10th year at Baltimore Woods. Though there have been many changes during my time here, there has remained one constant - my insatiable search for salamanders. From the first warm days of spring until the final days of summer when autumn falls into winter, I am constantly stopping to turn over every rock and log that I see. While at The Woods you may come upon one of three species of woodland salamanders: the northern red-back, northern two-lined or northern dusky.



Dusky salamander

The red-backs are the most common and easiest to find; it's not unusual that the right log or stone may yield several in the same spot. In some areas across the eastern states they can surpass 1,000 per

acre. Red-backs are easy to identify, with a long reddish orange stripe that runs just below its eyes to the tip of its tail. The female lays between 4–17 eggs per year, and the young, known as neonates, often remain near their original birth site throughout their lifetime.

The northern two-lined and dusky salamanders are often found closer to water. They live under rocks, logs, or leaf litter, and usually venture out at dusk or during the evening which lessens their chance of contact with predators. They lay their eggs in small ponds, or shallow streams, and the young subsist on a yolk sac until they become old enough to feed on the benthic invertebrates living in the water.

All three salamanders possess an adaptation that helps them escape predators: their ability to lose their tail, known as autotomy, where the tail drops off and allows them to escape, leaving the predator preoccupied with the salamander's wriggling remains. The tail eventually grows back, but it takes a lot of energy. So, for all fellow log-rollers out there, enjoy the fun and surprise of finding salamanders, and remember to be careful with them.

#### **Currently in the Gallery**

### Student Art Exhibit

May 5 - May 26

Opening Reception: May 6, 2 - 4pm

Presentation: 2:30pm

Baltimore Woods Nature Center Student Art Exhibit celebrates both nature and the artistic achievements of students in the elementary grades through high school. The gallery will be filled with a colorful and varied array of nature-related artwork in a variety of media including painting, printmaking, collage, photography, ceramics and drawing.





Amellia Hullihen-Demperio

Mia Johnson

## Native Plant Sale

at Baltimore Woods

Birds, Bees, and Blooms!

Shop for native plants to attract & provide habitat for birds, bees, & butterflies!

Friday, June 2nd, 4-7pm Saturday, June 3rd 9am-3pm Sunday, June 4th, 10am-2pm

Native plants, perennials, flowers, trees, shrubs, vegetables, herbs, & hanging baskets
Sunday - plant sale only • Master Gardeners on hand •Artisanal Gifts • Raffle •

Bake sale • Garden café • Free parking • Rain or shine

Members receive a 10% discount on plant purchases!

**Upcoming in the Gallery** 

# Woodland Magic

Nature photography
by Rod Best
with
Fantasy Wood Carving
by Arlie Howell

September 8 - October 28 Art Reception: September 9, 2 - 4pm



# May

#### 2-June 6

Homeschool Adventures in Nature Series: Lifestyles of the Early Settlers

10-11:30am

Come out to Baltimore Woods to add some environmental education to your biology, ecology, and geology curricula! We will meet every Tuesday for six weeks – a great opportunity for hands-on science learning, outdoor exploration, meeting other homeschool students, and getting help with projects. Visit our website for full details and weekly themes. Ages 5 and up, participants must register for the full series and be accompanied by an adult. \$35 members; \$50 public.

#### 3-June 7

### Nature's Little Explorers Series: Who Lives in the Water?

10-11am

Join us for Nature's Little Explorers Mini Adventures! This fun-filled, six-week series will engage your preschooler through Imaginative play and hands-on exploration that will awaken their senses to the wonders of the natural world. Visit our website for full details and weekly themes. Two session offerings on Wednesdays or Thursdays. Ages 3-5, participants must register for the full series and be accompanied by an adult. \$35 members; \$50 public.

#### 6 Spring Birds

8-10am

Come along for a naturalist-led bird walk on a fine spring morning! This introductory walk will teach you the basics of birdwatching just in time for spring migration. Bring binoculars. Recommended for ages 10 and up. \$6 for members, \$9 for nonmembers.

To register for a program, visit www.baltimorewoods.org

#### 6,7 Weekend Wildflower Walks

2-3pm

Baltimore Woods Nature Center's premier woodland wildflower garden is a local treasure. Join caretaker Audrey Loewer for a pleasant walk through one of the wonders of spring. Each week new species will bloom, and Audrey will reveal their past and present medicinal and culinary uses. The garden is wheelchair accessible; please call ahead if you need assistance. *Donations appreciated*.

# 14 Mother's Day Garden Tour at Sycamore Hill Gardens

11am-4pm

An annual tradition for many, the Mother's Day Garden Tour at Sycamore Hill Gardens in Marcellus is a perfect opportunity for guests to spend the day outdoors, honoring their mothers and celebrating nature while supporting Baltimore Woods Nature Center in its mission of environmental education. Visit our website for a list of ticket selling locations or to purchase online. Children 8 and under are free. Free parking. Picnicking encouraged. No pets please. \$6 through May 7th; \$12 after May 7th and at the gate.

#### 19 Star Party: Spring Skies

8:30-10:30pm

Spring skies offer a large number of galaxies to be viewed, plus interesting star clusters, and the giant planet Jupiter will be visible all evening. We may also get a look at Saturn later in the program. Back-up date May 20th. \$6 for members, \$9 for nonmembers.

#### 20 Salamander Search

10:30am-12pm

Slippery, slimy, and sleek! Join us as we lift logs and roll over rocks in search of red-back, two-line, and dusky salamanders. Learn about their habitats, what they eat, and a special adaptation to escape predators. Meet at the lower parking lot. Recommended for ages 3 and up. \$6 for members, \$9 for nonmembers.

#### June

#### 2,3,4 Plantasia:

**Annual Plant Sale** 

See page 3 for more details on this annual gardening event!

# 3 Container Gardening Workshop

10-11am

Enjoy the wonders of fresh food from the garden without the need for a lot of space or weeding. Practically anything grown in a traditional garden can be raised in containers, with less work. You'll mix soil and take home your very own "Salad Bowl" garden! Bring 15" pot, gardening gloves, and trowel. Recommended for ages 7 and up. \$20 members; \$30 public.

#### 3 Olde Home Days in Marcellus

Please stop by our booth on Main St. in town and say hello!

### 15 That's Ferntastic! A Fern Walk in The Woods

10-11:30am

Join Naturalist Tom Meier on this easy walk to discover the ferns growing in Baltimore Woods, and to see why their elegant fiddleheads and beautiful fronds have not only survived for millennia but have also fascinated people for generations. Recommended for adults. \$6 members; \$9 public.

#### Volunteer Lunches

Dates: May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16

Time: 12:30pm

One Wednesday a month, in appreciation of our hard-working volunteers, Baltimore Woods serves a lunch of locally harvested foods. All volunteers welcome! Please call ahead to reserve.



#### 16 Star Party: Welcome Summer Skies

9-11pm

Just because it gets dark late doesn't mean we can't enjoy the night sky! Saturn and Jupiter will be easily visible, plus an early look into the heart of our Milky Way Galaxy near the end of the program. Back-up date June 17th. \$6 members; \$9 public.

## 17 Bird Banding at Baltimore Woods

8-10am

Bird banding is essential to helping scientists monitor bird populations and habitats, giving key information about conservation needs. We've partnered with the Onondaga Audubon Society and SUNY-ESF to reinstitute bird banding at Baltimore Woods after 24 years. Come for a pleasant birding walk to the banding station and see the bird banders in action. Recommended for ages 8 and up. \$6 members; \$9 public.

#### 24 Mosses: Tiny but Mighty

10-11:30am

Mosses may be tiny, but that certainly doesn't mean that they aren't still important here at Baltimore Woods. Because of their size, mosses usually don't attract much attention, but these tiny plants play a huge role in biodiversity and forest health. Come learn about the diverse, unique world of mosses, and learn once and for all if moss always grows on the north side of a tree. Recommended for ages 14 and up. \$6 members; \$9 public.

# July

#### 1, 3, 4 Building Closed

# 21 Star Party: Beautiful Summer Skies

8-11pm

Summer skies are at their finest, looking at the rich star fields near the center of the Milky Way, plus a farewell to Jupiter. Saturn will be visible all evening, and maybe even a peek at Mercury. *Back-up date July 22nd. \$6 members; \$9 public.* 

#### 22 Stars, Stories, S'mores and More!

7-9pm

Summer is a perfect time for the family to unplug and enjoy the outdoors. Join us on a summer's eve as we hike into the woods under the stars, and beneath the canopy to a roaring fire, where we'll mix chocolatey marshmallow treats with lively campfire stories. Recommended for ages 8 and up. \$6 members; \$9 public.

#### 29 Barefoot Hike

1-3pm

Come and enjoy the wonders of walking barefoot along the trails of the woods – grass, dirt, mud, wood chips, and use your body the way it was naturally meant to be used. Leave the shoes at HOME for this hike, not in the car! (NOTE: This program is not intended for families with strollers). Back-up date July 30th. \$6 members; \$9 public.

# August

#### 12 Star Party: Perseid Meteor Shower

8:30-11pm

The annual Perseid meteor shower, one of the year's finest. Plus great views of the heart of our Milky Way galaxy, and the ringed planet Saturn. Bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit back and watch for meteors while not looking through the telescope. We may also be able to get good views of Neptune. Back-up date August 13th. \$6 members; \$9 public.

#### 19 Bats!

6:30-8:30pm

Misunderstood by many, repulsive to some, and feared by others, come spend an evening, indoors and out, as we find out why bats are truly beneficial creatures, with undeserved reputations. Meet at the lower parking lot. Recommended for ages 8 and up. \$6 members; \$9 public.

#### 26 Solar Party with Bob Piekiel

1-3pm

Solar observing! Using specially-filtered telescopes, come and see our nearest star as you've never seen it before. View sunspots, solar flares, and magnetic fields on the sun's surface. *Back-up date August 27th.* \$6 members; \$9 public.



# Little Naturalists Welcome!

Before you go for a hike, stop by the Interpretive Center to check out a LITTLE NATURALIST BACKPACK!

(Designed for ages 3-5)





# Nature's Little Explorers Camp

Ages 4 and 5 July 10-August 18 10am-12pm

Specially designed for the youngest nature nuts! Half day programs led by caring counselors.

Session 1 July 10-14 Frogs, Toads, and Salamanders

Session 2
July 17-21
Birds and Butterflies

Session 3 July 24-28 Insect Safari

Session 4
July 3-August 4
Water, Water
Everywhere!

Session 5 August 7-11 Fairyland

Session 6 August 14-18 Nature's Little Artists

# Summer Nature Day Camp

A summer tradition for over 30 years.

# **Traditional Camp**

K-8th Grade Eight weekly sessions July 10-September 1 10am-3pm

This is the core of our summer camp programming: week-long day camp adventures that promote discovery, physical fitness, problem-solving skills, social interaction, and awareness through direct contact with the natural world.





Multiple week and multiple child discounts available.

A Baltimore Woods Family membership is required to attend camp.

Camp is led by trained environmental educators. Counselors are certified in first aid and CPR.

For more details and to register online for a camp, visit www.baltimorewoods.org



# Summer Nature Day Camp

A summer tradition for over 30 years.





# Voyager Camp

5th - 8th Grade July 10-August 11 10am-3pm

For campers looking for a bigger challenge or wanting to try something new.

Session 1 July 10-14 **Mammals!** 

Session 2 July 17-21 Herp It UP!

Session 3
July 24-28
Yuckology

Session 4
July 31 - August 4
Raiders of the Lost Woods

Session 5 August 7-11 Wilderness Survival

# Teen Camp

9th - 11th Grade August 7-August 18 10am-3pm

Nature isn't just for kids; it's for young adults too! Hands-on, action-packed weeks made for teens.

Session 1
August 7-11
Ultimate Outdoor Challenge

Session 2
August 14-18
Teen vs Wild:
Primitive Survival Skills



# Nature in the City Built on Connections!

By Becky Wilson, Education Manager

Our *Nature in the City* educators have been busy through the winter months connecting students to nature. Kindergartners learned to use their senses to explore nature. First graders discovered the changing states of matter as they studied snowflakes and fourth graders tracked wildlife in the snow to learn about predator/prey relationships. As warmer weather approaches, we will turn our focus to third grade as we begin our series of programs designed to help kids learn about our local waterways and how human actions can impact their quality.

In their first lesson, students will experience life as a drop of water, flowing through the water cycle to understand how litter and run-off affect water quality. The second lesson focuses on identifying aquatic creatures in pond water and how they are connected to water quality. The final lesson, a field trip to Syracuse's historic Elmwood Park, allows students to get their feet wet and put their newfound scientific knowledge to work in a unique, hands-on, experiential way – directly connecting their classroom lessons to their local outdoor neighborhood.

Nature in the City is built on connections: connections between our educators and students who sit cross-legged before them in classrooms all over the city; connections between Baltimore Woods and the Syracuse City School District administrators and teachers who schedule a great year of programs that align with student curriculum; and our connections with local companies and individuals who recognize the importance of teaching children to value their environment and are willing to commit their sponsorship dollars to Nature in the City.

Onondaga County Save the Rain is one of those committed community partners, generously funding all 19 Syracuse City School District third grade Nature in the City lessons this year! Through their "Connect the Drops" initiative, Save the Rain is working to show students and the larger CNY community "how the small choices you make have a much larger impact than you might imagine".



Connections matter when it comes to creating communities of people who care about the environment. Singer/songwriter Billy B echoes this sentiment when he performs for students each spring as he sings:

With my hand
I affect how clear the water flows
With my hand
I affect where my trash goes
With my hand
I affect the whole neighborhood
With my hand
I can make it look bad or look good.

\*Excerpted from "With My Hand" from the CD entitled Nature in the City by Billy B.

Billy B.'s upbeat songs, uniquely written for our Nature in the City programs, tie together all of the lessons that our students learned throughout the year and remind them, as they head into summer, to stay connected to nature!

# Nature in the City Sponsors 2016-2017

Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C.
Byrne Dairy
Carrier Corporation
Carrols Restaurant Group, Inc.
Dominion
First Niagara Bank
Key Bank
Lockheed Martin
Lockheed Martin Employee Federated Fund
National Grid

O'Brien and Gere
Onondaga County Dept. of Water Environmental Protection –
Save the Rain Program
SECNY Federal Credit Union
SRC, Inc.
Thank yo

Syracuse City School District
The Jim and Juli Boeheim Foundation
Time Warner Cable –

Connect a Million Minds Upstate Medical University And anonymous donors and friends Thank you to our 2016-2017

Nature in the City Media Partner





clip and save



— clip and save



# Volunteer Spotlight

**By Sue Jones** 

This will be the 17th consecutive year that George and Karen Hanford have graciously opened Sycamore Hill Gardens to the public on Mother's Day to benefit Baltimore Woods. Our largest single fund raiser, the garden tour has provided critical unrestricted income to our operating budget for each of these 17 years. The impact that this amazing volunteer effort has made to our organization cannot be overestimated. Through the challenge of dealing with huge crowds lured by gloriously perfect weather to the challenge of holding a garden tour in the snow, the Hanfords' willingness to support The Woods in this significant way is truly noteworthy. They willingly spend their Mother's Day greeting hundreds of guests, answering questions all day long, driving the cart for mobility impaired guests, and taking care of all of the logistics involved in hosting an event of this magnitude- and all for the benefit of Baltimore Woods.



Since Karen regularly assists in the preparation of our monthly volunteer lunches and also enjoys our programs first hand when she accompanies her granddaughter to our weekly Nature's Little Explorers series, she knows how volunteer effort makes our important work possible. We thank the Hanford family for supporting Baltimore Woods in such a significant way!

### Membership Matters

Baltimore Woods has always been a membership supported organization; from our earliest days, our annual operating budget was built on annual membership contributions. These gifts help us year-round by keeping our buildings and trails in good shape and providing our educational programs for children and adults activities that help connect people of all ages to nature.

We give a warm welcome to our newest life members, Amy and Scott Hafler and Margaret Manring. Life membership donations are added to our endowment with the income supporting The Woods in perpetuity.

If you are uncertain if your membership has expired, simply call Sue at 315-673-1350 or e-mail sue@baltimorewoods.org and she will happily check for you. We greatly appreciate the continuing support of all of our members, both new and renewing.

### Keep nature in your hands: Become a member today!

#### Baltimore Woods Nature Center members enjoy...

- discounted fees for public programs
- discounts on programs, rentals,& gift shop items
- summer and school break camps
- free snowshoe use on site
- discounts at 150 nature centers in the US & Canada
- members-only opportunities
- being involved in the growth and development of important nature educational efforts for all ages
- knowing they are helping preserve our valuable and beautiful environment now and in the future

#### Three easy ways to become a member!

- 1. Online at www.baltimorewoods.org
- 2. By phone at (315) 673-1350
- 3. By mail with a check payable to:
  Baltimore Woods Nature Center,
  P.O. Box 133, Marcellus, NY 13108-0133

Anı	nual Membership Level
Primary Member 1	\$20 Senior/Student \$30 Individual \$40 Family \$100-\$200 Patron \$1000 Life Donation Amount (in addition to membership)
Phone	
Email	
	ike to receive The Overlook newsletter by email er and reduce mailing costs).



Nature in your hands

PO Box 133 Marcellus, NY 13108-0133

The Interpretive Center and Art Gallery are open Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm Saturday, 10am-4pm Closed Sunday

Closed May 27 & 29, July 1, 3 & 4 and September 2 & 4

Hiking trails are open every day from dawn to dusk.

No dogs please. No parking or admission fees.

Find us online at www.baltimorewoods.org









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