

River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Spring 2016

Bringing Butterflies to Dinner

The Greenway's annual dinner will be held April 21. This year's speaker will be Colleen Wolpert on the topic of caterpillar gardening. Colleen's first foray into butterflies, moths, and the plants they require to keep their lifecycle was inspired by Harriet Marsi, considered by many as "Broome County's First Lady of Conservation". With the introduction of close focusing binoculars, digital photography, and the internet, the study of Lepidoptera went from a hobby to a full-blown passion for Colleen. She has been the Regional North American Butterfly Association (NABA) co-editor for NYS butterfly counts for several years and is constantly working to improve habitats and educate others about what they can do to provide butterflies and moths what they need to continue to survive in our region. Colleen received her undergraduate degree in Psychology and a Masters in Social Work; and has been a social worker at Catholic Charities for 26 years. She currently lives in Apalachin with husband Paul,



where she continues to find ways to renew her interest in birds and butterflies, and tutors small groups on how to identify and count butterflies. The focus of her presentation will be gardening for butterflies and moths (i.e., Lepidoptera aka "leps") is more than planting nectar sources for adults. Learn how you can assist them in all stages of their lifecycle as well as distinguish them from pests, so that all of us can enjoy these beautiful creatures in the future. Please join us at Tomasso's Restaurant in Waverly for this informative presentation.

Students Create Artist-inspired Birdhouses

Art Instructor George Vanhouten and his elementary students are collaborating with the Greenway to decorate and deliver birdhouses to the community. The beautiful houses are designed and built by Waverly craftsman Ralph Geiger.



Student artists are creating designs off the technique of a famous artist such as Picasso, van Gogh, da

Vinci, Monet and more. The houses will be delivered to locations in the Owego area by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Tioga County Master Gardener Program under Director Barb Neal. We thank Ralph Geiger, George Vanhouten, Eleanor Ernest, and Barb Neal for

helping to bring this wonderful project together.

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Wildlife Habitat Being Created at Muldoon Gardens

The Carantouan Greenway has been funded by the Tioga County Senior Citizen Foundation in support of wildlife habitat development for senior residential living. Many seniors leave behind their own gardens, perennial beds, and green space in exchange for residential living. This project aims to give some of that back. Based on a needs assessment conducted with residents of Muldoon Gardens, the project includes the design and development of wildlife habitat that will include native plant pollinators, a bird feeder, nesting box, birdbath, and an architectural design to complement the historic Muldoon building. The garden is being developed at the entry to the original school door entrance; adjacent to existing seating and picnic areas. Residents have expressed interest in maintaining the gardens, feeding the birds, and relaxing in the enhanced outdoor space. Upon completion this spring, the garden will be certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

Youth Butterfly-Lifecycle Curriculum Receives Grant

The Carantouan Greenway is working with the Waverly Central School District's Lincoln Street and Elm Street elementary schools as well as the Waverly Little League to provide resources designed to enrich butterfly-lifecycle curriculums. The project will include the procurement of classroom educational supplies, digital resources specific to native plants, butterfly facts and wildlife habitat restoration, an on-site wildlife garden, and certification of the garden by the National Wildlife Federation as an Official Wildlife Habitat. This grant from the Floyd Hooker Estate Fund of the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers supports that vision, and hundreds of Tioga County's youth, for many years to come.



Fungi – Part Two

Soon after writing about the role of fungus as recyclers in the fall issue of our newsletter I happened upon the largest puffball (Giant Puffball) I had ever come across. I took it home and diced it up with a pound of butter in 1/4 pound batches and stuck them in the freezer. All puffballs are edible provided they are white and have not yet begun to turn brown, which is an indication of the spore maturation process. The oak *Daedalea* is one of the many so-called bracket fungi because the fruiting structures extend out as shelves off the decaying hardwoods. The more common turkey tailed fungus is much smaller than the oak *Daedalea* brackets and tends to grow in overlapping groups with their upper surfaces banded in many different colors of brown, green, red or grey. All fungi join the bacteria in helping to recycle life's molecules.

Pollinators Resource Portal on Our Website

Check out our new information resource portal on the website titled "Resources: Pollinator Plants, Butterflies, and Wildlife Habitats". The source spotlights pollinator information including: 1) President's National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators, which includes a 2016 budget of over \$82 million in funding specifically targeted to address pollinator health; 2) pollinator-friendly plant lists for Zone 5 planting in the Northeast; 3) teacher resources for Monarchs and Painted Ladies and more. For more information visit www.carantouangreenway.org/butterfliespollinators.html. This great resource was made possible by a grant from the Floyd Hooker Estate Fund of the CFTT.

Early Renewal Prizes

Thanks to all who responded to the early renewal appeal. Member donations are vital to our continued success, and your early contributions help us to prioritize our projects for the coming year. Congratulations to Nancy Arcesi and Nancy Brittain, this year's winners!

Summer Birds

During the peak summer months of July and August 53 different species of birds were observed. Most of these were probably nesting summer residents. The confirmed nesting list would include wood ducks; Canada geese; green heron; morning doves; hummingbirds; kingfisher; red-bellied, downy and hairy woodpecker; flicker; wood-pewee; willow flycatcher; great-crested flycatcher; yellow-throated, warbling and red-eyed vireos; blue jay; crow; chickadee; nuthatch; titmouse; veery; robin; catbird; brown thrasher; cedar waxwing; yellow-throat; redstart; yellow warbler; song and swamp sparrows; cardinals; redwings; grackles; oriole; and goldfinch. Three other warblers were seen on one occasion each, ovenbird, blue-winged, and black and white. Wood thrushes and rose-breasted grosbeaks were also seen during July. The most interesting nester is the tree swallow, which is present in July but disappears after that. One of their nest boxes (initially put out for bluebirds) was re-used later this summer by our black-capped chickadee. Looking forward now to fall migrants. One should always remember that October appears to be the best month at Wildwood to see different sparrows.



Cedar waxwing
Photo by Earlbirt

Dam Maintenance

Originally constructed in the late 50s or 60s the earthen dam had been let go wild with lots of briars and shrubs making passage on the dam to the pine woods almost impossible. The dam had failed in the late 90s but beavers restored the eastern edge raising the water level above the intended drainage. In 2006 a major storm took out the beaver dam as it was not maintained due to a lack of quality bark to sustain the beavers. In 2008 the Tioga County Soil and Water District in cooperation with and funding by the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and the US Fish and Wildlife Service the dam was restored, a new corrugated plastic pipe installed and reconstruction of the auxiliary spillway with clay, fabric and stone. The Greenway signed a contract with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain the structure until December 9, 2023. In 2014 and 2015 the Greenway facilitated an educational program to encourage kids to come out with their family and learn to fish and enjoy the full outdoor experience. We soon learned that time and silt had crept up on our shoreline and that cattails had extended out from the edge making it fairly impossible for kids to cast out into the pond. This is where our partner and neighbor, Ralph Porter, comes in. On December 8th Ralph called and said he was sending his 70-ton excavator over to remove the cattails. That was a lot of weight and the wonderful machine left a few ruts that Greenway volunteers evened out on Sunday the 13th. Thanks to Ralph the Carantouan Greenway anticipates our youth experiencing many very successful fishing opportunities in the future.

Apple Tree Orchard

In cooperation with Parents at Waverly Schools (PAWS), the Greenway is developing a domestic apple tree orchard at Wildwood Reserve. The program has been funded by the sale of apple tree certificates; which include an apple tree honoree, recognized on the Greenway's website.

Trees will be planted by Greenway experts with special care in spring of 2016. All Profits go to (PAWS), working to provide support and resources to the school for the benefit and educational growth of the children.

Upcoming Events

Annual Dinner

Please join us for our annual meeting on April 21 at Tomasso's Restaurant in Waverly. Guest speaker will be Colleen Wolpert discussing how to attract butterflies to your garden. Registration may be made on our website or by calling Jim Daly at 607-742-8309.

4K Run

The third annual trail run will be taking place at the Wildwood Reserve on Shepard Road Saturday, March 19, with the addition of the new trail to be included. Random prizes will be drawn. Register online or by calling Marty at 607-565-2636.

Friends of the Carantouan Greenway

Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!

- Mighty Oak \$500/year
- Golden Eagle..... \$75/year
- Stargazer \$50/year
- Trailblazer \$25/year
- Other \$ _____
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Gifts to Carantouan Greenway are fully tax deductible! (Tax ID Number 23-2750872)

Please send all contributions to Carantouan Greenway, P.O. Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441 or P.O. Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827 or on-line at carantouangreenway.org/joinonline



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