

# River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Spring 2025

## Bobcat Research is Topic at Dinner Meeting

*Make your reservation for April 8*

Bobcats are a special presence in New York. They are the only species of wild felines with a breeding population which are still roaming our state. The bobcat is a solitary, medium-sized cat with a short “bobbed” tail, a tawny brown coat, and an elusive lifestyle. Bobcats are a generalist species, meaning they have a varied range of prey, but the bulk of their diet is made up of small mammals such as mice and rabbits. Given their proclivity for nocturnal behavior and apprehension of humans, seeing a bobcat in the wild is a fairly exclusive accomplishment in the northeastern United States. This makes them a difficult species to study, and a great candidate for monitoring through passively activated trail cameras (also called game cameras). Private landowners across New York generously allowed the DEC and Cornell University to deploy trail cameras on their properties, and with the addition of some cameras on state land, over 325 camera sites were active in..

*Con'd, pg 2...Bobcats*



*Researcher and presenter Haley Turner is pictured holding a bobcat she and her colleagues have captured for their research regarding our regional bobcat population.*



## Meadow mice and the food chain

Our most common Wildwood mammal is the meadow mouse, *Microtus pennsylvanicus* where micro means small and tus meaning possession of and undoubtedly first found in Pennsylvania. It lives on the surface of the ground forming tunnels in dense herbaceous vegetation, which also serves as its food supply as this rodent does not eat insects. It quite often stacks its food supply along runways with short spurs for its common latrine. Its populations serve as the number one food supply for red-tail foxes and coyotes, and a host of others. *Microtus*'s reproductive potential is incredible with a female having 17 litters of five to six in a single year and where her female offspring are able to reproduce at three weeks of age. The photo shows the viscera and head of *Microtus* as found on Wildwood's icy trail. Do you know what animal eviscerated and ate its body leaving its head behind?



## Discovering Small Wonders at Wildwood Reserve

Open field or forest floor? Tree climber or not so much? Mouse, mole or shrew? Well, that is what we learned on a Saturday morning hike with Carantouan Greenway president Marty Borko as he explained all this and enhanced the descriptions by bringing along preserved skins of the small mammals who lead relatively unnoticed lives in the acres at Wildwood Nature Reserve. The first subject was the jumping mouse, a rodent with an impressively long tail, preferring meadowland. The forested area of the preserve is where we would find the white-footed mouse. They are good climbers and are known to repurpose bird nests into cozy winter homes. Small piles of dirt seemingly popping up out of nowhere lets us know there is a mole construction site at hand. Moles create deep, underground tunnels, spending little time above ground as opposed to the shrews who forage on land for seeds, insects and worms. The shrew also uses tunnels created by other animals. Marty described how scientists go about collecting and preserving mammal specimens for educational purposes like those he displayed during the hike. He mentioned that intact craniums are especially useful in determining species of these animals, often based on the number of teeth. All shrews have brown-tipped teeth, indicative of the normal presence of iron.

The Greenway frequently offers guided hikes at the Wildwood



*Marty holds a preserved mole skin and photo of the star-nose mole.*

Nature Reserve in Town of Barton. Consider joining us and learn about the wonders of the natural world around us. The nature reserve is open every day from dawn to dusk with well maintained trails.



### Bobcats (con'd from page 1)

New York over the past two years with the objective of monitoring bobcats, work which will aid in estimating bobcat abundance in the state. In addition, the DEC and Cornell University have deployed seventeen GPS collars on bobcats in the state to monitor their movement behavior and to help in estimating their overall abundance. Speaker Haley Turner is a Master's student in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment at Cornell University and has been working alongside the DEC on this project since 2023.

The dinner is taking place Tuesday, April 8 at Yanuzzi's Restaurant, 235 Desmond St., Sayre at 6 p.m. Price is \$25 per person. Reservations may be made by sending a check to Carantouan Greenway, P.O. Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441; through our PayPal account ([carantouangreenway.org](https://carantouangreenway.org)) or by contacting Marty Borko at 607-565-2636. The public is welcome to attend. Deadline for reservations is April 3.



## Winterberry, Winter Gem

The red snow-capped fruits of the Northeastern holly or winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) rises about six to eight feet along the wet shoreline at Wildwood. Surrounded by woody branches with a backdrop of a few cattails and phragmites it offers its fruits to our wintering birds. Both male and female shrubs are necessary for pollination and fruit development.



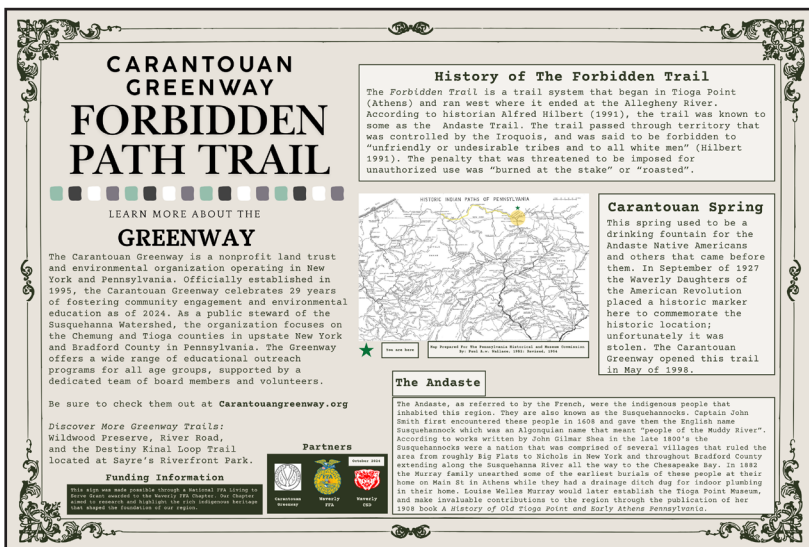
Its foliage is non-leathery and deciduous, which is unlike the commercially planted species.

## Hard to Believe



*Not everyone is appreciative of our green spaces. As winter fades, trash surfaces from the foliage at Wildwood Reserve.*

## A New Sign For the Forbidden Path



On behalf of Waverly FFA, we are thrilled to share the news of the upcoming installation of the Forbidden Path Trail sign this spring. This project is a result of a fruitful collaboration between Waverly FFA, Waverly Central Schools, and the Carantouan Greenway. The sign was created to deepen visitors' understanding of the historical and cultural importance of the trail and its surroundings.

The sign, now completed, is set in a sturdy wooden frame crafted expertly by our carpentry teacher, Eric Ryck, and his talented students. Their efforts also extended to repairing the footbridges along the trail, enhancing safety and accessibility for all visitors.

The Forbidden Path Trail leads to the Carantouan Spring, a site of natural beauty and significant historical value that has served as a gathering spot throughout history. Our new sign provides insights into this rich past and honors the Andaste Indigenous people, the original stewards of this land. By sharing their cultural heritage, we aim to foster a deeper appreciation and connection to this special place.

We warmly invite you to visit the Forbidden Path Trail this spring to see the new sign and experience the trail's beauty and history firsthand. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in making this project a reality. The Greenway's continued support is invaluable in preserving these natural and cultural treasures for future generations.

*Miranda Palmer, FFA Educator, WSCD*

## 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      ☐ Trailblazer ..... \$25/year  
☐ Golden Eagle..... \$75/year      ☐ Other ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Stargazer ..... \$50/year      ☐ **Renewing member**    ☐ **New member**
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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](http://carantouangreenway.org/joinonline)



**Carantouan Greenway**

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