



PEEC
Pocono Environmental
Education Center



Spring Equinox 2015

Seasons

A Quarterly Publication to Advance Environmental Literacy



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Celebrating 'A Sense of Place' and 'Opening Doors'

By Flo Mauro

I have been thinking long and hard over what to write about for what is more than likely the last, or one of the last, articles I write for PEEC Seasons because I will be retiring this spring. I recalled another time I was asked to 'reflect' on and talk about some things that my colleagues thought were important. In 1999 I was named the recipient of the New York State Outdoor Education Association's Gold Award. It is the Association's highest honor, given to individuals who have '... demonstrated outstanding leadership, contributed to, and made significant achievements in the field of outdoor education...'

At the time, I wondered 'why me'? I thought then, and still do now, that this is simply what I do. I do not consider it special by any means and while I have been at it for quite a while, it has never been just about me, I was never alone. The energy, passion and commitment to do what I do is intrinsic, but it's a part of me that has always been nurtured and coddled, supported, awarded and challenged from the people, places and things I have met, seen and done all along the way.

While I always thought I wanted to teach and do great things with kids, I was pretty disillusioned with my student teaching experience and thought there must be something more to this. I began working in 1972 in an 'alternative' school setting in a classroom of twelve 11 year old boys, each with a different and challenging learning style. It was challenging to say the least. My very visionary Head Teacher, an Outward Bound graduate, thought we might be able to do something 'out of the box' with the class and sent me to an Outdoor Education Conference in Margaretville, NY and my love affair for teaching took off. Imagine...I could teach math, science, language and history outdoors and my kids did not have to know how to read or write to succeed and learn. It was an epiphany!

My career took on a very different path, on an outdoor journey with many turns, twists, challenges, highs and lows. And for the past 40 years (27 of them here at PEEC), several compass points have helped me find my way on or back to that path. Artist, author and co-founder of the Friends of the Earth, Alan Gussow's 'Sense of Place' resonates with me, guides me, supports what I believe and always grounds me. I was also inspired by noted educator and motivator, Lew Losoncy's basic tenet for teachers in 'Have You Opened a Door for a Kid Today'. I took this to mean anyone and everyone I had the opportunity to work with-not just 'kids', but colleagues and staff alike. Rachel Carson's 'Sense of Wonder' inspired me then and still does now-how can it not?

A sense of place.....

There is a great deal of talk these days about saving the environment.

We must, for the environment sustains our bodies. But as humans we also require support for our spirits and this is what certain kinds of places provide. The catalyst that converts any physical location – any environment if you will – into a place, is the process of experiencing deeply. A place is a piece of the whole environment that has been claimed by feelings. Viewed simply as a life-support system, the earth is an environment. Viewed as a resource that sustains our humanity, the earth is a collection of places.

We never speak, for example, of an environment we have known; it is always places we have known – and recall. We are homesick for places, we are reminded of places.

It is the sounds and smells and sights of places which haunt us against which we often measure our present.

Alan Gussow

Founder – Friends of the Earth

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Message from the Executive Director

Jeff Rosalsky



Flo Mauro, who has been at PEEC for 26 years, is retiring this spring and she will be greatly missed. She has been a lifelong educator, environmentalist and advocate for children. She has filled many different roles during her career at PEEC and has influenced hundreds of thousands of young lives, both directly and indirectly. She has been an instructor, an education director, an inspirational grant writer and an advocate and cheerleader for both her students, their teachers and her colleagues. For those of you who have attended the PEEC golf outing she has organized for the past 15 years, or heard her impression of a black bear raiding a garbage can, she also has a mischievous sense of humor that we will miss.

Flo has helped to refine PEEC's role in using hands on education in a National Park to promote scientific inquiry and raise the environmental consciousness of the thousands of students we interact with each year. We guide students to examine and to engage with the natural world so they are amazed by what it has to offer and are encouraged to preserve it for themselves and the next generations of stewards. Then we provide them with examples of current strategies for sustainable living and inspire them to create the sustainability strategies of the future.

While I know that Flo will never truly leave PEEC, as the place just stays with you in your memories and your blood, she will be greatly missed by all of us. As Flo's golf handicap continues to decline in her retirement, Flo's legend at PEEC will continue to grow and flourish; influencing students and instructors she has never met.



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The Colors of Spring

By Derek Scott

Have you heard the expression, April showers bring May flowers? Well that's because it's true! Warming weather encourages plants to emerge from what seems like a winter slumber. By the time May rolls around, many of these plants have already begun flowering. The result is a beautiful landscape of vibrant colors. Of all the flowers that bloom in the spring, there are several that truly stand out.

One of the more commonly sought after spring flowers is Pink lady's slipper. This flower is a member of the orchid family, one of the largest and most widespread families of plants. Flowers in this family are notorious for having colorful and fragrant blooms. Pink lady's slipper is no exception, having a showy, pink labellum, or lip. This petal stands out from the others because of its size and shape, and is used by the flower as a method of attracting pollinators. Pink lady's slipper can tolerate a range of shade and moisture, but is commonly found in coniferous forests where they thrive in the acidic soil conditions.



Red trillium is another flower that draws attention every spring, especially in the Northeast. Trilliums are a type of ephemeral plant, meaning that it has a relatively short life cycle. In the spring, these flowers quickly emerge and reproduce before dying back to their underground vegetative parts. Their short annual blooms make them popular among flower enthusiasts. Red trillium can be identified by the 3 distinct petals it has above a whorl of 3 pointed leaves. Although the petals are typically a deep red, there is a white petal morph that is considered a rare find. If you're unsure of whether you've stumbled across a trillium, give it a smell. The flowers have the smell of rotting meat, as the flowers are pollinated by flies.

Red columbine is one of my favorite spring flowers. These eastern woodland natives are prized for their vibrant red and yellow trumpet flowers, which bloom in late spring. These flowers are sought after by butterflies and hummingbirds for the nectar located in the flower spurs. The spurs are said to resemble eagle talons and explains the origin of the genus name, *Aquilegia*, which comes from *aquila*, the Latin word for eagle. The flowers grow on the ends of the plants' slender stalks face down and are surprisingly odorless. Red columbine can grow in shaded or sunny conditions with adequate moisture so it makes a great garden perennial!

Spring truly is such a magical time of year. Take an opportunity to look around this year to see what may be growing in your backyard. With so many different colors and fragrances, it's hard to choose favorites!



Celebrating 'A Sense of Place' and 'Opening Doors'

Continued from Page 1

Doors and opportunities have been opened for me by many mentors, kids, family, colleagues and staff alike – too many to mention and for that and to each of them I will always be grateful. My sense of place and wonder is and has been nurtured and nurturing, inspired and inspirational.

And I often wonder...did I open the doors, provide at least one opportunity, eliminate the barriers and create an atmosphere for 'kids' of all ages, abilities, disabilities, advantages, disadvantages, status or whatever, to succeed and hopefully learn something along the way. I know I have been privileged to be in a time and place, as David Sobel so eloquently encouraged me and us '...to teach hope, not fear...'. And did I mention that it's been a blast!

Spring Skies

By Laura DeWolff

While Winter is one of the more popular seasons for star-gazing, Spring offers up many opportunities and events. The season kicks off on March 20, the Spring Equinox. This is the day where the sun is above the equator, and night and day is relatively equal across the world. A number of cultural spring festivals are held at this time.

This year, there are a few special events coincidentally on the Spring Equinox. We will have a new moon, so the sky will be very dark. Also, there will be a total solar eclipse. Unfortunately the eclipse will not be visible from the Americas, but if you happen to be traveling or living in the Northern hemisphere between Greenland and Russia, mark your calendars!

Just two weeks later, on April 4th, a partial lunar eclipse will occur. The eclipse will be a quick one, with totality (where it is visible) lasting for only 4 minutes and 43 seconds, making it the shortest eclipse of the century. It will

be partly visible just before moonset, starting at about 6:19 AM, and ending when the moon sinks below the horizon at 6:39 AM at PEEC's location. Check timeanddate.com for information about the eclipse's timing near you. If you want to observe this event, be sure to find a spot without many hills or trees blocking the horizon, as the moon will be low.

If you miss this eclipse, there is good news. This is the third eclipse of a tetrad, a series of four eclipses. The final lunar eclipse of the series will be in September, and it will be a total lunar eclipse. There will be plenty of viewing opportunities while the moon is higher in the sky.

One week after the lunar eclipse is International Dark Sky Week. Celebrate by turning off your outdoor lights and observing the night sky and migrating birds. We all know that birds migrate during the spring, as we are used to seeing flocks of geese fly over during the day. However, many birds fly at night, and light pollution can be a big obstacle. Concerned about safety in the dark? Visit darksky.org for information on how better lighting can prevent light pollution and increase safety.

The spring season also boasts two meteor showers. The Lyrids, an average meteor shower will peak on the evening of April 22, Earth Day. The moon will set around midnight, making this a good show. Shortly after, the Eta Aquarids, a typically busy shower, will peak the night of May 5. Unfortunately, the bright moon will detract from this shower.

The spring season will end with the summer solstice, the point where the sun has reached its northernmost position above the earth, directly above the tropic of cancer, and the days will begin to grow shorter again. Enjoy the lengthening days of spring, and take the time to scan the skies for stars and birds. There will be plenty going on overhead.

For more information about astronomical events, visit seasky.org.

For more information about migrating birds and light pollution, visit flap.org.

For more information about light pollution in general, visit darksky.org


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The Awesome Opossum

By Sheri Bone

Last February, in the early evening, I needed to venture outdoors. Snow on the ground and some ice on the sidewalk, I carefully made my way towards my destination. 'I hope I don't fall' was the only thing on my mind. And then I heard a noise. My thoughts changed to 'I hope it's not a bear that woke up early to check things out!' Turning the corner, I saw a possum! It was just as surprised to see me!

What was this? A possum? In the winter? Aren't they sleepers? What was this one doing fairly early in the evening looking like it owned the world? I made a promise to myself to find out more about opossums. What I discovered was that, like me, many people have misconceptions about this amazing animal.

Opossums (usually called just 'possums') are the only marsupial in North America. Marsupials, as a refresher, are mammals whose females are equipped with pouches, like a kangaroo or koala. There are over one hundred different species of possums in the Western Hemisphere, but the one we see here in Pennsylvania is the Virginia Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*.)

The Virginia opossum is a nocturnal animal; however, it is neither a winter sleeper nor hibernator. Finding possums this far north has not always been the case, as they were thought to be more of a tropical or warmth loving creature. Surviving in the colder climates has meant that while it is active throughout the cold months, it sometimes will modify its behavior in order to keep warm and find food. Hence the fact that I saw one while it was rather early in the evening, not yet very dark.

Possums play an important role in the ecosystem and need more respect from humans than they get. Most people will tell you they are ugly. And they kind of are with their gray and white fur, snout with a pink nose at the end, and beady eyes. But there is more to the possum than just their looks. Here are some facts I discovered (thank you to The National Opossum Society, National Geographic, and Nature Works for posting these fascinating facts on their websites!)

1. Reproduction facts: Thirteen days after conception, females can give birth to up to 25

tiny (bean-sized), not quite fully formed babies. Just as with kangaroos where the joeys have to crawl up to the pouch, possum babies must make a similar trip. Once they find the pouch and get in, they have to find a teat, and they stay attached to the teat for up to two months. Of the 25 that may be born, usually only 7 or 8 survive the trip to the pouch. Of those 7 or 8, usually only 2 or 3 survive to adulthood. It's a tough life being a possum. Females may give birth up to twice a year in our area. In warmer climates, it can be up to three litters a year.

2. More baby facts: Baby possums, once they are old enough to leave the pouch, hitch a ride on momma's back for another four to six weeks! They hang on tight with their hand-like feet. Possums have a kind of opposable thumb (called a hallux) on their hind feet! It helps them with climbing and holding on.

3. Tail facts: Possums have a prehensile tail that also helps them with balance when they climb. It can wrap around branches, when needed, and can even hold them upside down for a short time, if necessary. The illustrations you see with a possum hanging upside down to sleep are not accurate. Their tails are not strong enough to hold them for that long. (Possums make nests of sorts, in a variety of places - in the trees, on the ground, etc. and would prefer to sleep there.) Their tail, like their ears and toes, is hairless and runs the risk of getting frostbite in the cold winter weather.

If those facts aren't enough to make you rethink your preconceived ideas that possums are ugly and unworthy animals, wait to you find out that they help rid the world of mice and rats. Because they are omnivorous, they can eat almost anything (they love pet food, so don't leave any outside for them!) It uses its keen sense of smell to locate lots of different plants and animals like fruits, insects, and other small animals. Sometimes, it eats garbage and dead animals. When a possum is killed on the road



in the middle of the night, it's probably because it had been eating road kill.

Possums rarely get rabies. It is much less common for a possum to develop this disease than dogs, cats, raccoons, foxes or even beavers! If you happen to see a possum in the daytime, acting strangely, the behavior it is showing is probably one of its defense behaviors. It can show its 50 teeth and hiss. It probably does not have rabies even though everything you have learned about mammals that are not acting 'normally' will tell you differently. It probably just wants to scare you away. Just leave it alone. After you go away, and the possum will head where it needs to be.

If it feels very threatened, it will go through its "playing dead" routine. It can be frightening to watch. The possum might roll over, become stiff, and drool. Its breathing can become so slow that some predators think the possum is dead!

Possums, however much you may like them, are wild animals and should not be caught and kept as pets. In the late spring and early summer, you may find a young one wandering by itself. Don't capture it! While there is a good chance it will end up as another animal's meal, it just might make on its own, with Mother Nature guiding it. If you find one that is hurt, contact the Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The staff there will know more about helping it and hopefully be able to release it back into the wild.

Opossums! You are awesome! I think I need to create an Ode to you!

To Feed or Not to Feed the Deer?

By Allison Owczarczak

That is not the question, but how to do it the right way is more like it.

Growing up in a suburb of Buffalo, NY I enjoyed seeing deer in the backyard. It was a treat that my other classmates didn't have with their little fenced in yards. But we had the benefit of living in a former agriculture area of town. So with a bigger backyard, we were able to attract deer as well as other wildlife.

Our family focused more on providing a habitat that the deer can enjoy rather than associating people as food providers. We planted fruit trees such as apple and cherry (did you know woodchucks will climb a cherry tree? We found that out too). Our neighbors had pear trees and we all had crabapple trees in the area.

We also planted oaks for the acorns. All of the oaks were logged long ago and none remained even in the town parks. Deer, blue jays and certainly squirrels love nuts as well as the local bear population here in PA. We also planted shelter trees such as pine and spruce for the deer to bed down under during the night and help block wind and help prevent the snow from drifting into our yard.

If you do not have the luxury of a big back yard that I did growing up, you might be able to choose at least one tree to plant for wildlife. Then there are also perennials and annuals that deer love to eat (which gardeners are always trying to get the deer NOT to eat). So you can plant vegetation that deer actually love. Think of it as planting a salad bar for the deer. It can take potentially 10 years for a tree to mature before it starts producing nuts or fruit, so this would be a great time of year to plan on planting short term plants.

Here is a great list of plants to get you started for attracting deer:

<http://www.imustgarden.com/plants-deer-eat>

Here's why you shouldn't feed deer:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/document/707296/feeding_deer_pdf



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Ask Andrea!

Dear Andrea,

Can you recommend some nature or outdoor books?

— Avid Reader

Why hello, Avid Reader. You are obviously a totally real person and not just a fictitious excuse to write this article. Spring can be a refreshing time of year – the days are longer, weather warms up, and the natural world is waking up. What better way to celebrate than to read about the natural world at our fingertips?

There are few simple luxuries as wonderful as reading in the midst of nature. Here are a few of my personal favorite reads and recommendations for reading spots.

For the tree hugger

The Wild Trees by Richard Preston reveals the world of climbing redwoods and exploring Redwood tree canopies through the efforts of pioneers of this field. Imagine climbing an old giant tree and finding an entire ecosystem that has never touched the ground – that's what this book is about. Although this is a nonfiction book, its content and characters are as riveting as a fictional novel and you may find it difficult to put this one down.

Best place to read this book: Near the biggest, tallest and/or oldest tree you can find. At PEEC, I recommend sitting on the bench by the pine plantation near the trailhead of the Tumbling Waters Trail and Fossil Trail.

For the visual learner

Seeing Trees: Discover the Extraordinary Secrets of Everyday Trees, written by Nancy Hugo and photographs by Robert Llewellyn. Yes, another book about trees. This book is both visually stunning and well-written. This is a good book to read a few pages at a time, or to just flip through and admire the photography of Robert Llewellyn. The pictures complement the content so well that you barely realize you're learning!

Best place to read this book: On one of the benches on our Trail For Everyone. Read a few pages and travel to the next bench, taking time to explore along the trail.



For the philosopher

Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* combines natural history, observations, and philosophy to create a seminal work that has withstood the test of time and is still featured in many English literature classes today. If you're looking to read a book at your cabin in the woods while sitting in an armchair by a fireplace, *Walden* is the book for you. Even if you're reading it in a New York City apartment with street noise permanently audible, this book is still for you.

Best place to read this book: on a fallen log by Pickerel Pond, located along the Two Ponds Trail. Bonus points for wearing a plaid flannel shirt while reading.

For the environmental activist

Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* is frequently read by young idealistic nature lovers. The book is set in the deserts of Arches National Monument (now a national park) during Abbey's time as a seasonal ranger. Abbey's work is a collection of short vignettes that focus on day-to-day experiences as well as his struggle with (and sometimes against) the industry of nature tourism. I especially recommend this book to readers with a rebellious spirit.

Best place to read this book: On a log near a rock outcrop along the Fossil Trail, where unfortunately many nature tourists have taken fossils for themselves.

For the outdoor traveler

A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson is a great travelling companion for hikers or backpacking trips. Bryson is my all-time favorite travel writer because his writing style combines history and detail with a quick wit. This book describes the misadventures of Bryson and his friend Katz as they traverse the Appalachian Trail. You will probably laugh out loud frequently while reading this book. Bryson's *A Walk in the Woods* has recently been adapted into a movie starring Robert Redford and will be featured at the Sundance Film Festival; at the time of writing this article the movie has not yet been released.

Best place to read this book: Any backpacking trip. Alternatively, hike the Ridgeline Trail several times in a row with a motley crew of misfits, then sit down and read this book.

For young adults who love camping

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George was my gateway book into the world of nature. As a child, this young adult novel hits all the bases for good reading – a likeable main character with animal companions who learns to survive in the natural world without adults giving constant direction. The main character, Sam Gribbley, leaves New York City to survive in the Catskills. He ends up living in a hollowed out tree, hangs out with a weasel, learns falconry, and makes every kid who reads this book want to live in the woods. As an adult, re-reading this book is the literary equivalent of comfort food.

Best place to read this book: On a rock by Spackman's Creek, located about midway along the Scenic Gorge and Ridgeline Trails. Befriend a weasel or falcon if possible.

For young environmentalists

Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* is my go-to book for both kids and adults. The story looks at the progression of actions and results as the main character capitalizes on an emerging market while destroying an ecosystem in the process. This book is a good read for someone who wants to take a step back and think about how their actions might affect those around them.

Best place to read this book: Anywhere, any time! Read it out loud to large groups of children for best effect.

Do you have a question about nature, the environment, or sustainability? Please send questions to Andrea at aace@peec.org. (Questions may be edited and names will be omitted).

“Over the River and Through the Woods!”

By Sheri Bone

For the second year in a row, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and PEEC teamed up, with a grant from the National Park Foundation, to present a special program for area fourth grade students. The overall grant program was titled “Ticket to Ride” and focused on not only providing students with an opportunity to get outdoors in National Parks, but also provided funding to get the students there.

Each National Park grant recipient had to come up with a name for their own unique program. Since our park is located along the Delaware River which is surrounded by woods, we decided that our program should be called “Over the River and Through the Woods!” During the three parts of the program (a pre-program visit, the actual field trip, and a post-program visit), students from five different school districts learned the name of this park (no, we are not in Yellowstone!), some things to do in the park, education about the different plants and animals that can be found here, and, of course, with a title like ours, a song.

Over five hundred students and their teachers came to PEEC this past fall. There were two main activities: An EcoZone Tour and a Scavenger Hunt Hike. The reason for choosing these two activities was not only for fun, but also for the educational value they offer. The EcoZone is an Exploration and Discovery Room located in PEEC’s Main Building where the old swimming pool used to be. In this large room is a man-made beaver lodge, a cave, an eagle’s nest, a bear skeleton (that can be taken apart and re-assembled – our version of “build a bear!”), fossil pit, skins and skulls and more. Once the students were able to explore the treasures in the EcoZone, they set out on a hike.

Placed into small groups of three or four, students were outfitted with a clipboard and scavenger hunt list. On the list were items related to what they saw in the EcoZone: nests, evidence of a bear, ‘bat related things’, a beaver lodge, fossils, fish, birds, and turtles to name a few. The Two Ponds Trail offered many opportunities for the students to find all of the items on their list and more. They saw bear scratches, learned about places that bats could use for sleeping during the warm summer days,



saw holes in dead trees made by woodpeckers, and more about nature than many of them had ever seen! Some of the students had never been on a hike in the woods before. After the PEEC experience, though, they were eager to get information to share with their parents about coming back to the National Park!

During the third part of the program, Park staff and PEEC staff returned to the schools to do a review presentation. Programs for families, Pocono Pony information, and details about the McDade Trail were shared. Teachers and students alike learned more about the National Park – the Delaware Water Gap National

Recreation Area – in their own backyard! Thank you to the National Park Foundation for giving us the opportunity to make the park more available to local students!

“Over the river and through the woods, discovering the park!

There’s so much to do for me and you from morning until dark.

Over the river and through the woods, we’ll go to the EcoZone!

We’ll take a nice hike in the outdoors we like, ‘til the buses take us home!”



The American Woodcock—A Sure Sign of Spring!

By Lea Della Vecchia

It's that time of year again! The snow is thawing, the leaf buds are preparing to burst, flowers will soon start blooming, and the fields are filled with a "peent" noise.

Wait, what? What in the world is a "peent" noise?! Well, that would be the sound of the mating ritual of the American Woodcock, of course!

Another harbinger of spring here in the Poconos is the mating ritual of the *Scolopax minor*, the American Woodcock. Woodcocks will begin their mating ritual in mid to late March. Groups of woodcocks gather in a field and each male makes a buzzy "peent" sound. They peent every few seconds for about a minute. Then, the males begin flying into the air in wide, erratic circles. While this is happening, air flowing over their wings makes a twittering sound. They then take a steep dive back toward the ground while making a chirping sound at the same time. They will then repeat this display until they have attracted a female. They will begin their mating display at dusk, but if there is a lot of light—such as a full moon—they will continue long into the evening. This mating display is often referred to as the "sky dance".

Old lore suggests that after all other birds were created, the Creator used the leftover parts to make the Woodcock. The American Woodcock is a robin-sized, plump shorebird with short legs and virtually no neck. They have long, straight bills on their large heads. Their eyes are set high up on their heads, which allows them the advantage of being able to see almost 360 degrees around. They camouflage well with leaf litter, and spend a lot of time hiding in the understory of young forests or thickets. Male and female Woodcocks look almost identical; however females are generally larger than males.

The American Woodcock eats mainly earthworms and other invertebrates. They will stick their long bills in the ground to search for their food—this action is probably how they got the name "Bog Sucker". Occasionally, they will rock back and forth on their feet with their bill in the ground. It is suspected that this action causes their invertebrate prey to move underground. The Woodcock has specialized nerves on the tip of its bill; these are suspected to help them feel their prey moving in the soil.

American Woodcocks are found throughout the eastern United States and southeastern Canada. They prefer young forests with dense brush layers for cover, but also need an open field or space for their mating ritual. They mate in the Northeast, but generally migrate south for the winter months. Woodcocks migrate at night and feed and rest during the day. From a distance, the Woodcock looks very similar to a Snipe, their close relative.

The American Woodcock is known by a variety of other names, such as the Timberdoodle, Bog Sucker, Labrador Twister, and Night Partridge. This spring, spend some time in an open field. If you're lucky, you might catch a glimpse of the Woodcock's sky dance!

Sources

http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/files/WMFS_woodcock.pdf

<http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/Woodcock-Facts#.VNzGepRdWSo>

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/american_woodcock/id



SMILE!

By Mariann B. Oswald

I love to tell people that I work at PEEC, explain what PEEC is and how we help our youth, our environment and ensure a brighter future for everyone. What's not to love? The campus is beautiful, even in the winter all covered with snow. My fellow employees are all wonderful, knowledgeable and caring individuals. Our visitors are excited to be here. Yup, I love to tell people I work at PEEC.

And, inevitably, there is always one question that is asked. How is PEEC funded? "By you," I say "through memberships, private donations, memorial donations, matching donations, grants and fundraising, just to name a few."

The most common way to donate is through the membership drive in June or our Annual Appeal which is sent out each December. Donations of this type are rewarded with the benefits of membership such as discounts on programs and store purchases at or above the Cerulean Warbler \$75 level. You can check out our website at www.pec.org for information and to donate this way any time of the year.

Check with your workplace to see if they participate in payroll deduction and/or matching gift programs. A donation of \$1/week through a payroll deduction plan adds up to a whopping \$52 per year! And, some of our donors take advantage of their workplace matching donor programs which doubles their donation to \$104. Of course the

amount is totally up to you. We would be happy to send our 501(c)(3) forms to your workplace if they would like to add PEEC to their list or eligible organizations.

Fundraising has always been a fun way to support PEEC. We have our annual events like the May Native Plant Sale, June Golf Outing, the fall Game Dinner, the Wild Things Ball, Earth Day, and the Harvest Festival. But, there have been some really precious additions to this list. One year, the Phillips-McGraw children had a lemonade stand and donated every penny they raised to PEEC. There have also been events by Junior Achievement and by Boy Scout Eagle Scouts that have brought in much appreciated funds. A 5K walk/run has helped raise funds for several years. We love it when our support comes from the whole community.

We also receive donations in memory or in honor of loved ones. Over the past few years we have received donations in memory of Camille Arezzo, Lori Dalton, Phil Fitzpatrick, George Glass, Carol Hill, Mildred Kaplan, Robin & Phil Karcher, Dr. Marie Kuhnen, David Lavine, Michael G. Mann, Tracey Oswald, Sy Rosalsky, Heather Rosborough, Dan Tyndale, and Barry Weinbrom. Other donations were made in honor of achievements and benchmarks made by loved ones. There are several estates that have chosen to donate to PEEC, as well, such as Suzanne Anderson and Heather Rosborough.

Recently a new type of funding has become available to PEEC and other 501(c)(3) charities. It was started just last year by Amazon Smile. In the few months that PEEC has participated, donations were received for nearly \$100. And it is so simple, especially if you already shop on Amazon. Let me explain.

When Amazon customers shop on www.smile.amazon.com the company will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible items to charity. You can choose PEEC as your charity through the new website. Amazon boasts that there is no limit on the amount they will donate and nearly every product sold by the company is eligible. Non-physical goods, such as digital items, are not yet included but may be in the future. Imagine, just make purchases as usual on Amazon using the new website to log in. Voila! A donation to PEEC that didn't cost you anything. You gotta love it! If you know of other such websites, please let us know.

There is one more type of donation that has been a great help to PEEC, to our patrons AND to the environment... in-kind. That includes any goods donated rather than currency. As those of you who visit our campus know, we have an extensive, very popular and ever changing collection of used books which we sell for \$1 each (children's books are usually less). It is amazing just how much we raise in a year by passing along your used books. The trees appreciate it almost as much as we do. In 2014, our Buck-a-Book sales were over \$2000! That's a LOT OF BOOKS. We have also received canoes, a car, furniture, siding, windows, flooring, sunglasses and other useful items. PEEC loves in-kind donations from companies and organizations. If you work for a manufacturer or supplier, pass our name along. Much appreciated.

I love to tell people I work at PEEC. We all work together toward a better future... with your help.



PEEC
Pocono Environmental
Education Center

Plant SALE!

MAY 9 & MAY 10, 2015 • 9AM-4PM



**CALL
PEEC**
570.828.2319

**FREE
ADMISSION**

Choose from a variety of native and deer resistant flowers, shrubs and grasses to beautify your yard. Perennials include coneflowers, bee balm, asters, foxglove, yarrow, cranesbill, lungwort, and much more. Sun loving and shade loving plants will be available. Call in advance with your requests. Reduced price plants will be sold throughout the following week – stop by and check them out!

**PEEC MEMBERS
PRE-SALE**
FRIDAY, MAY 8TH | 6-8PM
pec@pec.org • www.pec.org

POCONO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
538 Emery Road • Dingmans Ferry, Pennsylvania 18328

SPRING PROGRAMS AND GETAWAYS

2015

**PRE-REGISTRATION
REQUIRED**
Unless otherwise indicated.

TO REGISTER:

Call PEEC at 570-828-2319
with credit card information available



APRIL

Ecozone Discovery Room!
Saturday, April 04, 2015, 1:00pm-4:00pm
Cost: Free
Climb into a bald eagle's nest, crawl into a bat cave, and dig in a fossil pit! Explore this indoor discovery room and enjoy hands-on exhibits on natural history, sustainability and the local environment. No registration required.

Salamanders, Frogs, & More!
Saturday, April 11, 2015, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Cost: \$5 per person
Amphibians are stirring in the woods! Join us as we explore nearby breeding pools for salamanders, frogs, and egg masses. We'll provide nets and collection jars for gentle, up-close study. Wear boots and clothes that can get a little muddy or wet.

Wilderness Skills
Sunday, April 12, 2015, 1:00pm - 3:00pm
Cost: \$5
Learn a variety of outdoor survival skills, ranging from fire building and camping preparedness to tracking and stalking animals. Ages 10+ please.

Nuno Felting & Knitting
Thursday, April 16 - Sunday, April 19, 2015
4:00pm
\$255 (Includes lodging & meals)
\$205 Commuter
Optional: Friday-Sunday
\$205 / \$155 Commuter
Join Patti Shreiner for a relaxing weekend in the Poconos. Create a wet-felted piece of fabric suitable for a tote bag (kits available \$25-40). Supply list will be provided.
Focus project: Creating wool felt

Ecozone Discovery Room!
Sunday, April 19, 2015, 1:00pm-4:00pm
Cost: Free
Climb into a bald eagle's nest, crawl into a bat cave, and dig in a fossil pit! Explore this indoor discovery room and enjoy hands-on exhibits on natural history, sustainability and the local environment. No registration required.

Earth Day Festival
Saturday, April 25, 2015, 10:00am-4:00pm
Cost: \$5 per car
Help us celebrate the Earth! There will be hands-on learning stations, interpretive hikes, conservation exhibits, animals, crafts, food, music, and much more! Pre-registration is NOT required.

Introduction to Fly Fishing
Sunday, April 26, 2015, 9:00am-12:00pm
Cost: \$15
Learn the basics of fly fishing. Practice knot tying and casting. Join Will Daskal from the Brodhead Chapter of Trout Unlimited for a fun afternoon and learn some new skills.



Salamanders, Frogs, & More!
Sunday, April 26, 2015, 1:00pm-3:00pm
Cost: \$5 per person
Amphibians are stirring in the woods! Join us as we explore nearby breeding pools for salamanders, frogs, and egg masses. We'll provide nets and collection jars for gentle, up-close study. Wear boots and clothes that can get a little muddy or wet.

MAY

Bridge the Gap: Wildflower Walk
Sunday, May 03, 2015, 1:00pm-4:00pm
Cost: Free
Celebrate the blossoming of spring with a walk in the woods. Join local flower expert Josie D'Alessandro as she shares identification tips and natural history of the local flowers. Bring a bottle of water and a camera for some pictures.

Continued on Page 12



SPRING PROGRAMS AND GETAWAYS

Continued from Page 11

Warbler Weekend

Friday, May 8 - Sunday, May 10, 2015

4:00pm

\$205 (Includes two nights of lodging and meals from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch)
\$155 Commuter

Spring migration has begun! Join us for a wonderful weekend with the birds. Enjoy guided hikes that teach how to identify birds by sight, sound and habitat.



Plant Sale

Saturday, May 9 & Sunday, May 10, 2015

9:00am-4:00pm

Cost: Free Admission

Choose from a variety of native and deer resistant flowers, shrubs and grasses to beautify your yard. Perennials include coneflowers, bee balm, asters, foxglove, yarrow, cranesbill, lungwort, and much more. Sun loving and shade loving plants will be available. Call in advance with your requests. Reduced price plants will be sold throughout the following week – stop by and check them out!

Pre-Sale for PEEC Members:

Friday, May 8, 2015, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Spring Photography Weekend

Friday, May 15 - Sunday, May 17, 2015

4:00pm

\$270 (Includes 2 nights lodging and meals from Friday dinner – Sunday lunch)
\$220 Commuter

Join Del Morgan, Professional Fine Art Photographer and Educator, for a fun filled weekend dedicated to understanding and developing the skills necessary for creating visually stunning images. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to learn about visual design, composition, exposure and more as we explore and photograph the natural Spring Season beauty of PEEC and surrounding Pocono Mountain areas. A tripod is recommended but not required.

Pro Series: Herpetology with Dr. Thomas LaDuke

Saturday, May 16, 2015, 1:00pm-4:00pm

\$20 (\$70 for 4 Pro Series Sessions)

Learn from the experts. Join Dr. Thomas LaDuke, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, ESU, for an in-depth look at the amphibians and reptiles of the area. Study preserved specimen, search along the trails for herps, and learn a lot!

Bird Walk

Sunday, May 17, 2015, 8:00am - 10:00am

Cost: \$5

Interested in learning more about birds? Join Darryl Speicher, from the Pocono Avian Research Center, for a hike that focuses on bird ID and their unique natural history. We provide binoculars and field guides. Ages 10+ please.

Volunteer in the Greenhouse

Sunday, May 17, 2015, 10:00am-11:30am

Cost: Free

Join us for some gardening work in PEEC's new greenhouse! Lend a hand on our springtime projects. Pre-registration required.

"Spring Fling" Family Nature Getaway Weekend

Friday, May 22 - Monday, May 25, 2015

4:00pm

Adults \$225 / Child, Commuter, and Day Rates

Bring your family and friends to experience the best of what PEEC has to offer. Interpretive hikes, animal presentations, fishing, canoeing, crafts, campfire and more! Includes three nights of lodging and meals from Friday dinner to

Monday lunch.



Bird Photography 101

Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:00am - 12:00pm

Cost: \$15

Learn how to take great pictures of birds! Join Bob Shank, wildlife photographer, for an in depth look at attracting and photographing birds. Learn how to use a blind, create perches, and choose the right camera gear. Call for details.

Bridge the Gap: Wild Edibles Walk

Sunday, May 31, 2015, 10:00am-12:00pm

Cost: Free

Nature provides food for us in the form of many plants. Join us on a hike focused on wild edibles. No collecting will be done within the Park.

Sunday for Singles Nature Hike

Sunday, May 31, 2015, 1:00pm-3:00pm

Cost: Free

Enjoy a guided hike on a PEEC trail. This program is all about exploring nature and meeting new people.

