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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!

- | | | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Mighty Oak | \$500 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Trailblazer | \$25 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Eagle | \$75 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> 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, PO Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441 or PO Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827 or on-line at www.carantouangreenway.org/joinonline.

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RIVER TALK

Fall/Winter 2012

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Carantouan Partnerships
by Marty Borko

I arrived in the Valley on January 2000. At that time the Carantouan Greenway had secured the two holdings leading to the Carantouan Spring from Tioga County, as those properties were up for the tax sale. The Greenway had also purchased the Wildwood Reserve from the Jayne's, with financing provided by the **New York State Environmental Protection Fund** and matching funds contributed by the **Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation**.

The Town of Barton supervisor at the time was **Bill Hotchkiss**, and it was while working with the Cornell circuit rider and the supervisor that grant applications were put in to the State and the Truman Foundation for funding multiple projects for such things as signs, pavilions in Lockwood and Barton, and creating a parking lot at Wildwood that could accommodate busses. The

Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation came through. The Greenway recently used the Barton pavilion for our Critter Crawl. When the Greenway put up a steel gate to prevent Wildwood users from driving too far into the site, Ralph Porter donated the concrete.

The Greenway wanted to diversify the Wildwood site, and sought funding for the creation of a VERNAL pool. The **Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District** helped secure the **Upper Susquehanna Coalition** to facilitate vernal pool creation, along with an informative sign speaking to the benefits of these threatened wetlands.

The Wildwood dam washed out in 2006, and in 2008, facilitated by the **Tioga County Soil and Water District**, a major grant from the **US Fish and Wildlife Service** came to the rescue, along with some financing by the **Upper Susquehanna Coalition**. The old dam was cleared of vegetation, the collected mud that had obscured the spillway was dredged, a new plastic drain pipe was installed, an emergency overflow was created, and the new dam was seeded.

Most recently the **Tioga County Soil and Water District** has deepened our VERNAL pool and installed a new drain pipe from the landfill cattail area to the main pool of cattails under the old farm road. We also had **Ralph Porter** brush-hog the field adjacent to the parking lot to prevent successional movement.

To help communicate what the Greenway is and what we do, we received another grant from the **Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation** that allowed us to purchase a lap top computer and projector, which we have used on numerous occasions for presentations. **The Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation** recognized its former board member by donating \$5000 dollars in honor of **Destiny Kinal**, which we used to start our Endowment Fund.

Lastly I want to thank **Barry Skeist** who maintains the Forbidden Path and **John Palmer** who continues to facilitate the maintenance of the Wildwood Reserve along with the **many unnamed** who have shown up for path maintenance sessions. Without all the volunteers and membership support, we could not function in keeping the sites open for the public benefit. We thank all of our partners.

CARANTOUAN GREENWAY

PO Box 441
Sayre, PA 18840-0441

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Birding Wildwood with the Zipper ~ by Marty Borko

For the past 2 years I have been taking Zipper, a now 5- year -old Jack Russell, out to hike at Wildwood on the Molly Caplan trail and the newer officially unnamed trail known as the Pine Woods. The beauty of the hike for the birder or naturalist is the variety of habitats that one encounters along the way. We start with a loop through hardwoods, come out into a partial clearing, and then descend into the cattails. All along these sections of trail there are vantage points for binocular observations of waterfowl on the pond. Then we proceed along the edge of the Greenway's alfalfa field, maintained by Ralph Porter, which is bordered by a hedgerow of Staghorn Sumac, wild berries including elderberry, some small boxwoods, and other shrubs often interlaced with grape vine and Virginia Creeper. We then drop down over the rock-covered emergency spillway, cross the dam, and enter the loop that traverses the Pine Woods that is shared by some hardwoods, including black cherry. We then retrace our steps back over the dam, along the hedgerow, through the cattails and back to the parking lot.

Thanks to the development of our website and our webmaster we have been able to upload our daily bird observations to the Cornell e-bird site, which in turn rolls over the data to the Carantouan Greenway web site. Technology is amazing! Since having identified the Wildwood Reserve as an e-bird site we have had 133 species reported being seen there. In the last 30 days 56 species have been reported (today October 15).

The most common waterfowl this month have been Canada Geese and Wood Ducks. One should note that over the last 2 years 18 species of waterfowl have been identified, including Pintails, Shovelers and Mergansers. Occasionally one may run into a pheasant, but more probable would be a wild turkey, or if not the bird itself, evidence of their scratching for food in the Pine Woods. Great Blue Herons are fairly common for a good part of the year, joined in late spring by the Green Heron. One morning this year I was surprised by viewing over 27 Great (White) Herons perched atop the trees on the island.

Hawks have been fairly uncommon, the most common being the Red-tailed and the Bald Eagle. Eleven species have been ID'd, and we look forward to the spring and fall migration stopover of the Osprey. Shorebirds are rare with the exception of the Killdeer. All local woodpeckers can be seen at one time or another, including the Pileated, and one can usually count on the sound and flight of the Kingfisher.

Six flycatchers have been found, the most common nesting being the Willow and the Pewee. Joining their spring songs are those of the Warbling and Yellow-throated Vireos. Either Crows or Blue Jays or both are seen or heard from, though we have seen and heard the Raven as well. Tree Swallows dominate, and use our nest boxes, but all of the species may be seen at one time or another, with the exception of the Purple Martin which I have not yet seen.

Winter faithfuls include the Black-capped Chickadee, Titmouse, and the White-breasted Nuthatch. Their songs and calls are often joined by that of the Carolina Wrens. Five thrushes have been seen, the most common being our nesting Bluebirds and Robins. The 3 mimics show up and Wildwood has a decent population of nesting Catbirds. Fourteen species of warbler have been reported, including our resident Yellow and Yellow-throat. The most common nesting sparrows include the Song and the Swamp, but today I added both the White-throated and White-crowned.

Cardinals are usually more often heard chipping than seen, and early in the morning in October there is a chorus of sound coming from the roosting Red-winged Blackbirds. All of this data is available to you on our web site. Search Carantouan Greenway and select e-bird.

BIRDING IN ALASKA ~ by Marilyn Palmer

In May, 2012, Marty Borko, John, and I travelled to Anchorage to join a small tour group for a 10-day trip up the Kenai Peninsula to observe migratory birds that were entering North America from their wintering grounds. We had two very knowledgeable guides, and what we saw and what we learned was amazing. Most of what we saw were shore birds and pelagics(birds that live on the ocean and never come on land except to nest), with some notable exceptions, such as the American Dippers we observed along a stream in Anchorage, and the very colorful Varied Thrushes we saw on our inland forays.

Alaska had endured both the coldest temperatures and heaviest snowfalls in their history, and evidence of this was everywhere. Snow still lay thickly in the woods and along the shaded sides of the highways,

and all the lakes were still frozen over. The browse line on the trees was at the 6-foot level. Alaskans are hearty souls – they have to be – but they all mentioned what a difficult winter it had been. They were thrilled to be enjoying some ‘warm’ weather, while we were all bundled in every layer we had brought with us! At home spring flowers were blooming and the trees were leafing out, but Alaska was still deeply in its winter sleep. But, the birds knew that spring was near, and they were arriving by the thousands. Our boat drifted by huge ‘islands’ of Common Murres that were floating on the water, and passed sea otter moms with their babies riding on their tummies. Our passing disturbed tens of thousands of black-legged Kittiwakes that were nesting on rocky islands, whose silvery flight made me think of the balls of sardines that swim together for protection in the ocean.

We counted 100 species during this tour – too many to list in this article, but many of which were new to John and me. We also saw many moose. It was the birthing season, and the females had just run off last year's calves, who lined the roadways, bawling and looking very forlorn. It was heart -wrenching to see them staring at us as we passed, as if to say “What is to become of me now?” Our guides, well steeped in the ways of Mother Nature in Alaska, assured us that as soon as the dormant grasses started greening, the yearlings would all adapt to their new, solitary life.

Alaska is a great place to visit, but not a place for permanent residence unless you are both hearty and resourceful. Everything we take for granted is difficult for them - such as getting everything from food to items for making repairs to appliances, homes, and vehicles, to getting rid of garbage and things that are broken beyond repair. Most homes are heated with wood. The barter system is fully employed, and make-do is a way of life. Our time there was memorable, and we'd most definitely like to go back – but perhaps a little later in the season!

In Memory – Fred Mader (1932-2012)

Fred was a long-time Carantouan Greenway member, an avid hiker, and an accomplished nature photographer. He had a special interest in photographing wildflowers and presented a great slide show for the public, to promote Carantouan.

Fred was one of the original volunteers who participated in ‘Keeping Track’, a program to train people to identify wildlife, so that Carantouan would have a better record of the wildlife which inhabits Wildwood Nature Reserve.

It was not uncommon to meet Fred hiking at Wildwood, Round Top or along the Susquehanna River. We would always stop to chat and compare notes on what we had seen or heard that day. I'll miss those encounters and Carantouan will miss a great friend.

Save The Date

Our Annual Dinner Meeting will be held April 10, 2013. We are pleased to announce that our speaker will be Marie Droege, President and CEO of Guthrie Healthcare Systems and an accomplished nature photographer.

Blue Bird Nest Boxes

Waverly resident and woodworker Ralph Geiger generously donated 15 beautifully-made Blue Bird nest boxes to the Greenway. We are planning to erect some of them along the edges of the field behind the wetlands. The previous 5 boxes, which were donated by Don Paul and erected last fall, were well used by both Blue Birds and Tree Swallows this nesting season. Thank you Ralph!

PEC & Tioga County Stream Cleanups

In April Carantouan volunteers joined others from the community to help with a Pennsylvania Environmental Council dumpsite cleanup. A large amount of trash, tires and scrap metal was collected from the wetlands along Wildwood Road. Marty Borko took the scrap metal to recycling and earned \$20 for the Greenway.

In May Carantouan Greenway volunteers teamed up with the Cornerstone Seventh-Day Adventist Church from Horseheads to clean up portions of Dry Brook and Cayuta Creeks in Waverly. We collected a significant amount of trash, especially through Waverly Glen where debris had accumulated from severe weather last fall.