

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!

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---------------|
| <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 | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stargazer | \$50 per year | | |

Name _____

Address _____

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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

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CARANTOUAN GREENWAY

PO Box 441
Sayre, PA 18840-0441

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RIVER TALK

Summer 2011

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President's Report

Thanks to the generous support of members and friends, and the hard work of a few dedicated Board members and volunteers, Carantouan is building on the success we had in 2010. The Board continues to focus its limited manpower on current issues in order to make a difference locally. However, faced with the challenges of gas drilling, land development, and climate change, the Board needs more active support to continue its work to ensure that places like Wildwood, the Forbidden Path, and other vital natural resources will be available for future generations to enjoy. Please consider volunteering or joining the Board to help us to continue our work at this critical time. If you cannot contribute your time, please consider a special monetary donation to promote our programs and goals.

Carantouan led or sponsored a wide variety of exciting environmental outreach programs in 2010 - more than at any time I can remember. I'd like to give a special thanks to Marty Borko, who led many outings and gave several interesting talks, such as '40 Years Since the First Earth Day', and 'All About Bones', to organizations on behalf of Carantouan. To address current issues, Carantouan sponsored a well-attended "Climate Change" symposium in Owego, submitted comments about proposed NYS gas regulations, and wrote letters to the editor concerning local gas drilling. Unfortunately, there were also some disappointments: for the second year there were no entries in our high school challenge to create a DVD on the, 'Fragmentation Effects of Gas Drilling in the Marcellus Shale', and Talk to The Animals night was cancelled due to poor weather and Waverly H.S. drama club schedule conflicts.

In 2011 Carantouan Greenway sponsored winter hikes in Tioga County, NY State Forests, cut a new hiking trail in the woods behind the pond, held a tree planting workshop, held heronry viewing sessions near Owego, showed the award-winning documentary "Gasland" to 150 appreciative viewers at the Sayre Theatre, and were awarded a Bradford County Educational Grant to erect tree trails at Round Top and Mt. Pisgah State Parks.

Our Heron Photo Exhibit was a huge success at locations in Sayre and Owego, and is on display now at B&C Photo in Elmira through August 14.

I hope you have taken the time to check out Carantouan's outstanding website at www.carantouangreenway.org. Thanks to the expertise and hard work of Webmaster Jerry Gordon you can check upcoming events, the Carantouan Greenway store, information on our trails, Marty's e-bird report, renew your membership, and much more.

Maintenance of Wildwood Nature Reserve and the Forbidden Path for community enjoyment is an ever-challenging, major project. Keeping the spillway at the dam clear of debris is a daily chore from spring into mid-summer. A major storm early this summer took down the huge black willow tree at the entrance to the Wildwood trails and several trees fell across the trails and had to be removed. We gratefully thank the small core of faithful volunteers who help us maintain the trails each season. We also placed a bench along the lower Mollie Glaser Caplan Trail, facing the lake. A memorial plaque in memory of the late Dr. Robert L. Allen has been added to the bench. I received several compliments from people who really enjoyed the Forbidden Path, and I want to thank Barry Skeist for maintaining it so well.

Let us know what types of programs you'd like to see or help to promote.

Sincerely, John Palmer

Carantouan e-mail List

Carantouan would like to develop an e-mail listing of our members. Many of our outings are scheduled on short notice so that we are reasonably confident of good weather or to take advantage of volunteer availability, which prevents timely announcement in the newspaper. An e-mail list would allow us to give you the most advanced notice. The list would also facilitate event announcements, volunteer opportunities, distribution of our annual report, and possible future delivery of our newsletter. We promise that your e-mail address will be used for Carantouan business only and will never be shared or sold. To register just login at www.carantouangreenway.org/members and fill out the form.

WILDWOOD HAS A NEW TRAIL! by Marilyn Palmer

It was a cold but sunny day in late March when 10 intrepid people met at Wildwood and set to work to hew out a new trail through the woods on the far side of the pond. Emails had flown back and forth: were we still going to have the work bee? What about all the snow on the ground? A late season snowstorm had dumped almost a foot of snow earlier in the week and had quickly been followed by a cold snap that brought temperatures down to single digits at night and barely out of the twenties during the day. How could we possibly create a trail in those conditions? Marty's response was: "Snow is better than ticks!" And so, carrying loppers, pick axes, shovels, and saws, Jon and Susan Moehlmann, Bruce Rogers, Julia Horrocks, Levi Pedrick, Jerry Gordon, Katie Repogle, Marty Borko, and John and Marilyn Palmer trudged through the snow on the Otter Slide Trail, up through the field, across the dam to the edge of the woods, and got to work. Amazingly, the digging was easy, and in many cases large honeysuckle shrubs were yanked out by the roots with no digging involved. Ten people spread out along the line of footprints Marty had created the day before, chopping, digging, lopping, tossing aside, and smoothing out a wide swath in a loop that took in the full dimension of the wooded lot. In an astonishing one hour and forty five minutes the trail was roughed out and defined by fallen logs. It was created wide enough so that it can be walked without the possibility of coming into contact with any foliage that might deposit ticks onto an unwary hiker. All who came dug in with a will, and when they left, all took with them a feeling of accomplishment and pride in a job well done. Thank you all who came! It is because of people like you that our Valley still has safe, undisturbed, and undefiled places in which to interact with and enjoy nature.

Refugium by Marty Borko

This Fall and Winter season I have been walking at Wildwood, reporting birds seen to e-bird and making field observations. It was after the first light snow that the refugium became an obvious natural resource. The refugium is in reality the hedge row along the pond and the heavy grasses and goldenrod along the trail.

The ground's snowy cover was interrupted by Microtus tunnels. Microtus is commonly known as the meadow mouse. It is chestnut brown with interspersed darker hairs, a short tail that facilitates its fossorial nature, a chunky body and short ears.

The prolific meadow mouse nests in grassy tussocks and is able to produce as many as 17 litters a year with a litter size of 3 to 10. They are reproductive machines with young weaned at 12 days of age and females able to breed at the age of 3 weeks – incredible!

Some winter mouse tunnels leave the hedge row and permeate several yards into our adjacent alfalfa field. When the alfalfa grows the mouse will invade further into the field's center and carry on its reproduction. The field however has been cut over two or three times so the mouse needs a refugium to maintain its population; hence the hedge row and other dense herbaceous vegetation.

The major Wildwood recipient of Microtus protein is the red-tailed hawk, our most common predator. Of lesser importance is the screech owl and crows, along with mammalian predators such as skunk, fox and raccoon. This tiny mammal, a real fatty of a mouse, and a wonderful vegetarian is critical to many of our food webs.

e-bird Website Page

For the past several months Marty Borko has documented daily bird sightings at Wildwood Nature Reserve and submitted them to webmaster Jerry Gordon to be logged into Carantouan's e-bird website page. Although logging the data takes some computer skill, it is not difficult, but requires a steady commitment. If you would be willing to help Carantouan Greenway with the e-bird and possibly other website pages, please contact John Palmer at 570-888-0841.

Zippy Hikes by Marty Borko

Zippy is my male Jack Russell that likes nothing better than to run to exhaustion. So I take him out most mornings to check out the Wildwood trails and to unplug the grating on the pond outlet. This has been going on since the Fall of 2010. The walk usually lasts for one half to one hour depending on conditions and bird activity. I will just use today July 7th as a typical day. The usual warblers that we encounter are the YELLOW and the COMMON YELLOWTHROAT. We missed the REDSTART this am. The YELLOW sings "sweet, sweet, oh so sweet" and the YELLOWTHROAT sings "witchity, witchity, witchity". Both songs are quite distinctive. Before I get to the deceased willow tree I hear the melody of the WOOD THRUSH and coming from the pond the continuous trill of the SWAMP SPARROW. CATBIRDS are meowing and going through their variety of sound making. By now I usually see a ROBIN or hear its song. During the past week I have spotted several fledglings. There were no chickadees, nuthatches or tufted titmice, although they usually show up near the deceased willow tree. Walking down the trail toward the road across the landfill drainage I hear and see many RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS, a CROW or two and several SONG SPARROWS. I enter our alfalfa field that Ralph Porter has put in and hike at its edge picking up more yellow and yellowthroats along with red-wings and song sparrows. This morning I picked up two flycatchers; the WILLOW and the KINGBIRD. It was only my second or third sighting of the Kingbird but I had seen and heard the willow flycatcher several times in earlier weeks. I then stand on the field edge overlooking the dam and scan the dead tree that has been used as a nesting site for BLUEBIRDS and TREE SWALLOWS. Their hole nests were about 10 feet apart. No bluebirds today but there were tree swallows hunting over the pond. I scan the trees behind the dam and pick up a perched KINGFISHER. Zippy sits nearby while I clear the grating and then we depart for our return. As we cross the alfalfa field a WOODDUCK flies ahead of us and when we go over by the landfill a KILLDEER flies overhead as well. The little loop near the land fill trail adds nothing and we return to the parking lot. A typical morning, never knowing what is going to surprise us.

Bradford County Environmental Education Mini-grant

This spring Carantouan was one of only fourteen projects to be selected to receive funding from the Bradford County Environmental Education Grant Program. The Greenway received a \$500 mini-grant to establish tree trails at Round Top and Mt. Pisgah State Parks. The grants are funded by fees charged by the Northern Tier Solid Waste Authority (NTSWA) for the disposal of drill cutting waste at its Burlington landfill.

Carantouan looks for opportunities which will encourage people to better appreciate and protect our vital natural resources. Tree trails provide a fun and interesting way for park visitors to learn about trees, their uses and value, and ultimately build value for conserving and protecting them. Tree trails are designated by attaching large numbered tags to common trees along hiking trails. The tags correspond to tree descriptions in a brochure which can be printed from Carantouan's website, www.carantouangreenway.org.