



Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage
The Old Railway Station
46 Pennsylvania Avenue
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Building Habitat in your Backyard

sponsored by
Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage



Thursday, September 18

6:00 pm

CWH's Barnstable Hill Farm
in Chester, MD

Please call to register
410-822-5100

CWH seminars are free and
open to the public.

Learn techniques to attract wildlife to your yard using:

- native trees and shrubs
- wildflower meadows
- butterfly gardens
- nesting boxes
- and
- bird feeders

Habitat CHESAPEAKE WILDLIFE HERITAGE works

The newsletter about building habitat for wildlife
Summer 2003



Bluebird Home Furnishings at Winterthur

Susanna Engvall

As many of you may know, Winterthur Museum, Library and Garden, located in the Brandywine Valley of Delaware, houses a collection of home furnishing objects made or used in America between 1640 and 1860. Upon entering the Winterthur mansion, you become immersed in another place and time.

The 979-acre country estate encompasses rolling hills, streams, meadows, and forests. There is also a 60-acre garden complete with seasonal blooms and a children's imagination garden including a Tulip Tree House and an enormous bird nest replica to fit humans. Winterthur founder Henry Francis duPont designed the naturalistic gardens with plants from around the world, arranging them in spectacular color combinations with the succession of blooms lasting from late January to November.

What you may *not* know, is that one of the latest editions to Winterthur's collection of American home furnishings includes Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage's home furnishings for Bluebirds, Kestrels, Purple Martins, bats and owls.

After an initial visit to Winterthur in the fall of 2002 to analyze the suitable habitat available for nesting structures, CWH was selected to install over 90 new nesting structures on the property. As one part of Winterthur's new environmental development plan, adding artificial nesting habitat throughout the site will complement the existing potential habitat for Eastern Bluebirds, Purple Martins, Kestrels, owls and bats.

Though a manicured 150-acre golf course is included in the total property acreage, grass meadows make up almost 50% totaling close to 470 acres. This unusually large meadow resource provides not only beautiful vistas from the gardens but significant opportunities for some ecological benefits. Winterthur's recent "Environmental Management Study" suggests a few changes to their current management regime including no longer haying the meadows during nesting season. CWH strongly concurs as managed this way, the meadows can provide a potential opportunity to support declining grassland dependent species such as the Eastern Meadowlark, Bobwhite Quail and various native sparrows. Planting clumpy native warm season grasses mixed with wildflowers (instead of thickly matted non-native cool season grasses such as fescue and orchardgrass) and not mowing at all during the nesting season (April-September) as Winterthur currently does, will greatly benefit ground nesting birds, butterflies and mammals. They will be allowed an opportunity to nest, forage and seek shelter from predators within the extensive meadows once freed from the threat of mowing. This is an exciting development at one of the country's finest museums to partially restore the wildlife heritage of the site.

(continued on page 2)



Habitat Works is published by Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to creating, restoring and protecting wildlife habitat and establishing a more sustainable agriculture, through direct action, education and research, in partnership with public and private landowners. We welcome your comments and contributions.

(continued from page 1)

To compliment the meadows, CWH has placed 80 nest boxes for Eastern Bluebirds throughout. Purple Martin houses were placed in an open field near a fresh water pond as were five small owl boxes. Three Kestrel boxes were placed on field edges as even in their manicured state the meadows do supply a food source of mice and voles.

As with all of our nesting habitat projects, CWH carefully selects the appropriate habitat for the structures. Staff was careful to place the boxes away from areas being heavily sprayed with pesticides such as the golf course. CWH also decided not to install Wood Duck boxes in the ponds located on the property due to the lack of what is called "brood habitat" in the surrounding area. CWH biologists decided that the lack of emergent wetland plants (Buttonbush, Cattail, Pickerelweed, etc) in the ponds creates a kind of 'death trap' for Wood Duck ducklings, giving them no where to hide in the event of a predator stopping in. When placing nesting structures, making sure there is adequate brood habitat is equally as important as finding appropriate nesting habitat.

A new volunteer opportunity for Winterthur has come out of this project and they have already found enthusiastic volunteers ready to start monitoring bluebird boxes. The monitoring of the bluebird trail at Winterthur is essential to its success. Proper monitoring of the boxes will ensure that unwanted species such as English Sparrows are not using the boxes. These non-native birds often kill adult and juvenile bluebirds and destroy their eggs as well. If not discouraged from nesting in the new boxes, English Sparrows will be detrimental to the bluebird populations at Winterthur and elsewhere.

This project not only benefits wildlife, it also allows CWH to geographically branch out in our nesting structure endeavors. CWH's work to help the wildlife resource will gain further visibility with Winterthur visitors and residents in the nearby communities. We have already received calls about other possible large scale nesting structure projects for the Brandywine Valley area.

For more information about Winterthur Museum, Library and Garden visit, www.winterthur.org.

Bringing Habitat to your Backyard

Andi Pupke



Thanks to grants from Chesapeake Bay Trust and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), CWH now has a new way to educate landowners about providing habitat for wildlife in backyards. Community volunteers and CWH staff recently installed a Habitat Demonstration Garden at CWH's Barnstable Hill Farm in Chester.

Designed to look like a typical homeowner's yard, the demonstration garden is landscaped with native plant communities. Over fifty species of native plants including Elderberry, Spicebush, Wax Myrtle, Maple-leaf Viburnum and several species of dogwood will now serve as a source of food and shelter for wildlife visiting Barnstable. Over the next few months, educational signs will be added and brochures created for visiting landowners. Public seminars will begin in the garden starting this fall. The garden will be used as an outdoor classroom for people who want to add native plants to their yards to attract native wildlife, adding yet another dimension to the habitat improvements demonstrated at Barnstable Hill Farm.

Development continues to be one of the greatest threats to our native wildlife and water quality in the Bay. The sprawling lawns of new developments provide little or no habitat for wildlife and actually promote the run-off of chemicals and excess nutrients that foul the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Since the majority of land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is privately owned, it is critical that landowners of both large and small lots are involved in improving the health of the

Bay and its wildlife.

Traditional landscaping often calls for non-native plants that do not survive well without high levels of continued fertilizer, watering and insecticide treatments. Furthermore, these plants often do not provide the food and cover needed by native wildlife. Due to shallow root systems, the non-native fescue lawns that carpet the landscape of typical home sites do not capture nutrients in runoff and subsurface flow as well as native plants.

By educating landowners about using native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, we will increase food supplies for our native wildlife, decrease pollutants entering the Bay and its tributaries, and get more area residents actively involved in restoring and protecting wildlife habitat.

Barnstable Hill Farm is CWH's own 540 acre farm with over five miles of waterfront located on Kent Island. The farm serves as our habitat demonstration site. CWH has restored over 40 acres of wetlands, planted 30 acres of trees and created 55 acres of warm season grass buffer on the farm. We also implement sustainable farming techniques at Barnstable Hill. These improvements provide farm owners and landowners the ability to see the wildlife benefits firsthand. With the completion of the Backyard Habitat Demonstration Garden, CWH can demonstrate to landowners of any size property what they can do to benefit wildlife on the land.

Volunteers are still needed to help maintain the demonstration garden. If you are interested in volunteering at the garden please contact Andi at 410-822-5100 or email her at apupke@cheswildlife.org.

Wildlife Profile: Painted Lady Butterfly

Andi Pupke

American Painted Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*) is a brightly colored medium-sized butterfly with a wingspan of 1.75 to 2.25 inches. It is similar to its close relatives the Painted Lady and the West Coast Lady. Despite its attractiveness, the American Painted Lady is often overlooked and underappreciated because it is so common.

Two large eyespots on the underside of its wings make this butterfly stand out. The intricately detailed, pale agate-like design on the undersurface of the hindwings is most obvious when the butterfly is at rest and is markedly different from the rich orange and black coloration of the wings above. The rouge-like bright pink color on the underside of the forewing helped give the butterfly the name Painted Lady.

The larva of the American Painted Lady constructs a solitary nest on its host plant by weaving together pieces of leaves and flowers with silk that it produces. Inside its makeshift shelter, the caterpillar can rest safely and feed out of sight of hungry predators. Mature caterpillars are black with groups of threadlike, alternating,

transverse yellow and black bands with white and orange-red dots in between each band. The chrysalis is either green or greenish with darker markings. In Maryland there are normally two broods a year.

It may sound like a fragile butterfly, but the American Painted Lady is quite rugged. It tolerates cold and even overwinters in the southern parts of the United States as an adult or pupa. American Painted Ladies are found throughout the U.S. but they are more common in the East. They are a member of the largest family of true butterflies, the "brushfoots." All members of this family have small forelegs that are useless for walking but have numerous receptors for the detection of odors. Typical of most brush-footed butterflies, the American Painted Lady has a relatively nervous disposition and is difficult to approach. When disturbed, it often takes off in a rapid, erratic flight. American Painted Ladies often fly near the ground. Most easily observed in the early morning or on cool days, these ladies regularly bask for long periods in the warm sunshine.

American Painted Ladies can be found in habitat that includes open, disturbed sites such as utility rights-of-way, old fields, meadows, pastures, and fallow agricultural land. They are occasionally attracted to backyard gardens with an abundant variety of flowers. Like many other butterfly larvae the American Painted Lady caterpillar can survive on only a few host plants: Sweet Everlasting (*Gnaphalium obtusifolium*) and other cudweeds (*Gnaphalium* spp.), Pearly Everlasting (*Anaphalis* spp.) and Pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp.). Adults will nectar from a variety of flowers but they prefer composite flowers. Goldenrod, thistle and buttonbush are among their favorites.



2002 Annual Report Is In



The 2002 Annual Report is in. The publication details our successes of 2002 and includes descriptions of how our 5 core programs are working together to restore, create and protect wildlife habitat. If you would like to request a copy, please call 410-822-5100 or email us at info@cheswildlife.org

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for a few good people for some upcoming volunteer opportunities:

September 12, 9:00 a.m. - Bennett Point Road Clean Up. Help CWH keep Bennett Point Road clean for Maryland's Adopt-A-Road program.

November 14-16, (two hour shifts available) Share your CWH wildlife habitat knowledge and experiences with Waterfowl Festival visitors while tending the CWH booth.

Early October (TBA) Assistance with folding letters and stuffing envelopes is needed. Any amount of time to lend a hand would be GREATLY appreciated.



Ask Andi

By
Andi Pupke

Questions & Answers about wildlife

Q: There is a bird that sounds like a Mockingbird singing near my home, but it doesn't look like one. What is it?



Brown Thrasher



Northern Mockingbird



Gray Catbird

R: Most likely the bird that is singing is a Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). This bird is in the same family as the Northern Mockingbird and the Gray Catbird. All three of these birds share the terrific talent of mimicking the songs of other birds and even man-made noises. The male Brown Thrasher has the largest documented song repertoire in North America, documented as having over 1,100 song types.

The best way to distinguish between the three mimics is to see them as they sing, but that is not always possible. To sort them out by song, generally, catbirds

repeat phrases once, thrashers twice, and mockingbirds three or more times. Once Brown Thrashers are paired the male will stop singing loudly from the tree tops and only give a soft version of his song from concealed perches.

The pair will nest in areas of brush and shrub lands. They nest on or near the ground normally in dense thickets of vine tangles. Both the male and female will boldly defend their nest and territories. They feed on the ground collecting insects, fruits and nuts by using their strong bill to dig and sweep aside debris.

Photos by Dan Sudia

Invasion of the Habitat Snatchers

Roads have long been considered the enemy of the environment, creating (literal) avenues for deforestation and development. Now, it seems, they are also to blame for another major environmental woe: invasive species. According to a pair of recent studies conducted at the University of California at Davis, new roads are one of the quickest ways to introduce nonnative species to an area, at a tremendous cost to local flora and fauna. The studies found that invasive species are more likely to be found near roads, and that they spread further with every improvement to roadways, such as grading or paving. Not only does vehicle traffic provide a way for nonnative species to hitchhike into a new area; the roads themselves concentrate runoff, creating a welcoming environment for unwanted species. Nonnative species

are considered one of the greatest threats to forests and rangelands in the U.S., invading 1.7 million acres every year.

This excerpt was taken from the Grist Magazine, an online environmental publication serving up gloom and doom with a side of humor. You can find it at <http://www.gristmagazine.com>.



Cars for Habitat Tell your friends!

Do you have a vehicle that you no longer want or need? Would you like to dispose of that vehicle, gain a tax deduction, and benefit Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage at the same time? Donate it! It's easy, and your unwanted car can help us create, restore and protect wildlife habitat. For more information, please visit the "Donate a Car" link on CWH's website, www.cheswildlife.org or call Susanna at 410-822-5100. When you're ready to proceed, just fill out our online donation

form, or email Susanna, and a representative of a firm acting on behalf of the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage will contact you.

Boyscouts at Riverbend

In May of 2003, Boy Scout Troop 165 from Denton volunteered to install 450 tree tubes at Riverbend Farm in Dorchester County. The troop worked for more than four hours to help protect seedling trees from deer damage as well as against drought. The trees they helped protect will eventually provide

habitat for wildlife such as the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel and provide a buffer for the Little Blackwater River. Luckily the cool weather and stiff breeze helped keep biting insects away as the troop completed their work. All of us at CWH would like to thank these scouts for their help.



Left to right: Patrick Seaman, Josh Hignutt, Kyle Urasz, Walt Palmer, Don Reed, Thomas Seaman, Jack Wilson (wheel barrel)



Visit our website at: www.cheswildlife.org



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Please note these are species native to Maryland's Eastern Shore and they may not be native in your region. Check with your local native plant society or extension office to find out native plants for your area.

DECIDUOUS TREES:

Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)
Wet loving tree that produces dark blue fruit in the fall. Birds normally strip tree of fruit early. Early fall leaf color normally bright red.

Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*)
The berries produced in July and August are a favorite food of more than 40 bird species. These wide spreading, medium-sized trees grow 30-60 feet tall, depending on species. (Note: **White Mulberry (M. Alba)** is an invasive non-native and should be avoided.

Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
Grows to 40 feet tall, flowers in the spring to attract pollinators and produces red fruits from August - November which are a favorite of wintering Bluebirds.

American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)
Grows to 100 feet tall, tolerates shade and produces nuts which are consumed by Blue Jays and many other birds and small mammals. Provides cavities for nesting.

Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)
Understory tree which produces dark fruit which is eaten early in the fall by many birds. Bright yellow fall foliage.

Go Wild for Wildlife

Landscaping with Native Plants

Serviceberry or Shadbush (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
Medium-sized trees, 25 to 60 feet tall, that grow masses of white or pinkish flowers in spring. Fruit appears in summer. Favorite food of flying squirrels.

Oaks assorted (*Quercus spp.*)
Large but slow growing. Produces acorns, which are consumed by a variety of wildlife. Oaks are popular nesting trees for many birds.

Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
Large shade tree, develops seedhead that is consumed by a variety of birds.

Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
Large tree, fruits develop from the tulip shaped flowers. Provides seeds, nectar (especially for Hummingbirds) and cavities for nesting.

EVERGREEN TREES:

Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
Offers cover, nest sites, and winter food for birds. Usually grows 50-90 feet tall. Small cones that resemble berries are favorite food of Cedar Waxwings and many other birds. Excellent screen tree.

American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)
Provides late fruit and cover for winter. Grows to about 60 feet tall in full sun but will tolerate light shade.

Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*)
Large tree that provides seeds, winter cover, and nesting habitat. Good screen tree. (Well drained soils only)

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS:

Red Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*)
This shrub's showy white flowers attract pollinators. Late fruit eaten by many birds.

Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*)
This shrub has brilliant red foliage and clusters of hairy red fruit that persist throughout winter and are eaten by many birds, such as bluebirds and cardinals.

Viburnums (*Viburnum spp.*)
A large genus of easy to grow shrubs with white flowers in spring, followed by red, yellow, blue, or blackberries. Birds eat the berries and find cover in the branches. Cranberry and Blackhaw are included in this family.

Poosum-haw (*Viburnum nudum*)
Showy white/cream flowers, fruit eaten by many birds.

Blueberries (*Vaccinium sp.*) and **Blackberries** (*Rubus spp.*) are devoured by over 100 species of birds and other small creatures. Small birds such as the Common Yellow-throat nest in thickets.

Native Rose (*Rosa spp.*)
Not only provide flowers for pollinators they also produce large fruits called hips that are rich in vitamin C. Provides escape cover and nesting thickets.

Red-Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
Produces white fruit that is consumed by a variety of birds. The flowers attract pollinators. The red stems make for wonderful winter landscape.

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
Fragrant globe flowers that attract many butterflies. Fruits are hard nut-like clusters that are eaten by many larger birds including Wood Ducks.

Common Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)
Flat top white flower clusters that attract many pollinators. Berries can be used in jellies, pies and wine but best used by the birds.

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
Leaves very spicy-aromatic when crushed. Yellow flowers appear before leaves in spring. This is the host plant for the caterpillars of the Spicebush swallowtail butterfly.

EVERGREEN SHRUBS:

Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*)
Slow growing evergreen shrub that provides berries and thick nesting habitat for many birds.

Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*)
Thick cover for nesting and fruit for many birds.

Northern Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*)
Semi-evergreen shrub grows fragrant berries, which stay on the plant year round and are a preferred food of Tree Swallows, Catbirds, bluebirds, and many other bird species.

VINES:

Wild Grapes (*Vitis spp.*)
These climbing vines provide superb fruit, eaten by more than 50 bird species. Provide excellent cover.

Native Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)
Provides berries, cover and nectar from a coral colored blossom. Do not confuse with the non-native, invasive Japanese honeysuckle with a white and pale yellow bloom.

NATIVE GRASSES:
Grasses not only look attractive as part of the landscape, but also provide seed that is consumed by many birds. The clumpy growth of these grasses provide travel lanes for ground nesting birds, such as Bobwhite Quail.

Broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*)
Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)
Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)
Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)



BENDING STEEL? Many of you may know first-hand that the winter of 2002/03 was harsh for Osprey in the area. The nesting platforms they returned to in March had fallen over. CWH received a record number of calls this past spring about Osprey platforms in need of being uprighted. This photo shows what the ice did to the poles. Our staff worked feverishly after the spring thaw to get as many Osprey platforms back in place as soon as possible.



Yes! I would like to join with Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage to help build and preserve wildlife habitat.

I am enclosing \$ _____ as my tax deductible contribution.

- \$30 Individual Habitat Guardian
- \$50 Family Habitat Guardian
- \$100 Habitat Protector
- \$250 Habitat Sponsor
- \$500 Habitat Benefactor
- \$1,000 Habitat Conservator
- \$2,500 Habitat Steward
- Other _____

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Please send me information on the Planned Giving Program.

Please make your check payable to Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, or charge to:

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Please mail to: Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, P.O. Box 1745, Easton, MD 21601
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