



Winter Newsletter, 2015
#36

www.evergreenconservancy.org

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**Searching for Wehrle's Salamander,
A Journey into the Hidden World of Appalachian Salamanders
Spring Program – by Ed Patterson – March 27th**

Save the date!

Evergreen Conservancy will sponsor a presentation on Indiana County Salamanders by Ed Patterson, director of Indiana County Parks and Trails, at Blue Spruce Lodge on Friday March 27th at 7 pm.

Mr. Patterson is participating in a study of Pennsylvania Reptiles and Amphibians. It is a citizen/scientist study, meaning you will be given the opportunity to volunteer. Briefly covered will be the 17 salamander species found in Indiana County, as well as information on the PA Amphibian and Reptile Survey. Also reviewed will be Indiana County native R.W. Wehrle, a noted naturalist, who has a species of salamander named after him.

This event is open to the public and everyone is invited to attend.



A Species of Concern, the Valley & Ridge Salamander



A "Congress" of Spotted Salamanders

Photos- Ed Patterson

Storm Water Management Conference – March 13th 2015

Evergreen is excited about supporting the Stormwater Education Partnership, which is holding a conference to help municipalities and other interested people to learn more about storm water. The conference will be at the KCAC in Indiana, PA and will be about solutions for flooding and pollution. If there are better ways to keep pollution out of our streams our water ways will be better protected and cleaner for our use and enjoyment.

Please go to www.ICOPD.org to learn more about this conference.

OUR MISSION:

To advance the preservation, protection and stewardship of Natural, Cultural and Historical Resources in and around Indiana County, PA

If you believe that we need to protect our planet, visit www.GoodPawsGoodCause.org, an on-line store for good people and good pets!

10% of every Fur The Earth™ purchase benefits Evergreen Conservancy and The Conservation Fund.

Thanks to GoodPawsGoodCause for their year-end donation to Evergreen Conservancy.



January 2015 MLK Day Success

Evergreen Conservancy's OSM/VISTA, Cassandra Allen, organized and sponsored the 7th annual food drive to commemorate Martin Luther King Day, January 19th, 2015. Cassy recruited 32 community members to collect donations at two grocers, Shop 'n Save in Armstrong County and Giant Eagle in Indiana County. Volunteers ranged in age from elementary school age to senior citizens and represented the Crooked Creek Watershed Association, Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center, Armstrong Conservation District, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, three Armstrong Girl Scout Troops, and two sororities from IUP. Volunteers also included three AmeriCorps members from the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps. Together they raised \$25 and collected 103 items to benefit the Indiana County Food Bank and \$232.57 and 67 items to benefit the Armstrong Community Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who helped make this day a success and help those in need.



Fundraising

Thanks to all who came out to help with our fundraising sales in 2014, and those of you who supported us by purchasing items for sale. We had a successful season. Don't forget if you need a gift you can always get an Indiana Iron tee-shirt or other gifts from our [web site](#) or by calling any one of the board members.



Keeping Body and Soul Together...Naturally

Mon- Tue: 9:00am - 6:00pm Wed: 9:00am - 7:00 pm Thu - Fri: 9:00am - 6:00pm Sat: 9:00am - 5:00pm



Nature's Way Market, in Greensburg, PA, has provided goods for healthy lifestyles since 1977. They strive to supply the best foods and supplements to their customers, including organic produce, natural, minimally processed, and locally-sourced products. In addition to supplying nutritious foods, owner Kitty Tuscano is passionate about outdoor recreation. As such, NWM supports others who work to protect and restore natural resources.

1% For the Planet is an organization that bridges the gap between businesses interested in donating to environmental causes and non-profits that spearhead environmental efforts. In 2005 Nature's Way Market made the commitment to donate 1% of its gross sales to local environmental organizations. For the past three years, Evergreen has been a very appreciative recipient of their donations. We extend our thanks to Nature's Way Market for their continued support! Please visit the market in Greensburg and tell them how much you appreciate what they are doing and support them.

We are looking forward to seeing what businesses in Indiana County join in giving 1% of their profit back to their community. If you know of businesses in the area who might be interested, encourage them to participate in 1% For the Planet. You can learn more about 1% For the Planet at www.onepercentfortheplanet.org. Please also visit www.natureswaymarket.net.

Evergreen's Website

www.evergreenconservancy.org

For The Latest News.



On Facebook

If you use Facebook, please go to our page and tell us if you like it. We can send you event notices and update you with current events! Become our Friend. [Like](#)



And on YouTube:

[About Evergreen Conservancy – crNa11j5J2M](#)

[Tanoma AMD Wetlands – yaGLM4Ob8Ks](#)

[Renewable Energy – S3VOATx0mRY](#)



If you wish to learn more about Evergreen Conservancy please check our new and improved website www.evergreenconservancy.org.
Twitter User? – [evergreenc2014](#)

Tanoma Update

The winter is really here with cold winds and snow! There is not much going on out at Tanoma right now but we are continuing to test the water as often as weather permits and our multiprobe datalogger continues to record data about the water. Dan Boone also braved the weather with help from Paul Majoris to replace the batteries in the system so the renewable energy can now go full force to store energy so that energy can be used on-site. Stay tuned as we make plans to implement the Trompe system in Tanoma this spring and summer.

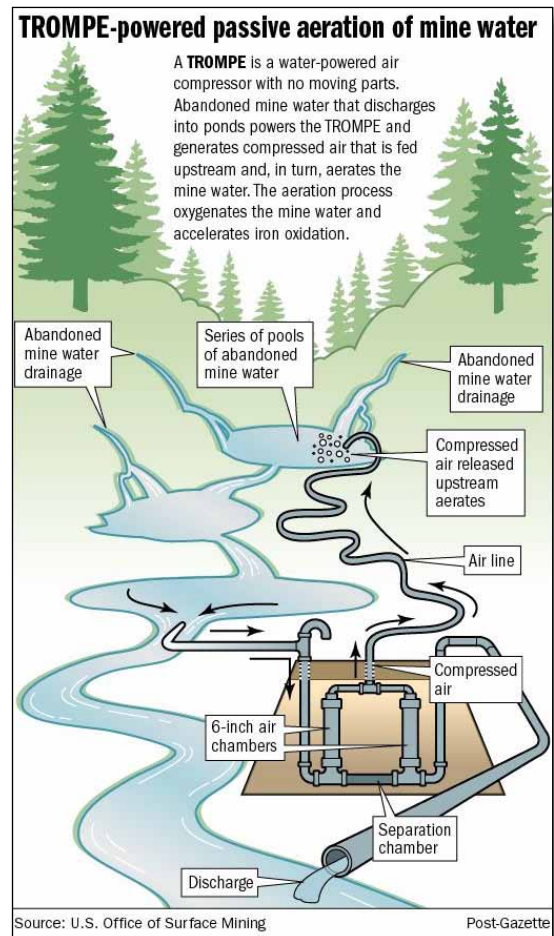
Grants in Progress

Evergreen Conservancy is proud to announce they we are the recipient of a 2014 Growing Greener Grant, funded by the AMD Set Aside Program, from the DEP!

Evergreen received the award to improve the passive treatment system Tanoma AMD Wetlands by adding a Trompe system. This is an additional passive system that does not need electricity to operate. It uses the flow of water through specially set up piping to compress and move air. This air will be pushed into the first pond where it will aerate the water more effectively, which is necessary to drop iron out of the water. The diagram shows a Trompe system, developed by the late Bruce Leavitt. Bruce and Tim Danehy designed and developed this Trompe system that was installed on the North Fork of Montour Run in Findlay, two miles south of the Pittsburgh International Airport. The project at Tanoma will get started this spring. It will be an exciting addition to the system and should improve the efficiency tremendously and further decrease the amount of iron entering Crooked Creek!

Multimodal Path Discussion Would You Like to See Improvements in Indiana for Foot & Bike Travel?

Everyone is invited to an Open Discussion of the Bike/Pedestrian Connections in Our Community Thursday, April 16, at the Artist Hand Gallery, 732 Philadelphia St., from 6-8pm. We will talk about what it means to have bike and pedestrians paths in our downtown, the importance of recreation connections, and providing links to regional transportation corridors. There will be samplings by the local distillery, Disobedient Spirits, and live music.



WHAT WE CONSERVE:

Wildlife Habitat • Stream Access • Scenic Vistas • Land in need of Restoration • Working Landscapes • Historic • Cultural Sites

Trail Cleanup Slated For Early March

In 2015 the Hoodlebug trail cleanup will be coordinated with the entire trail cleanup conducted by the staff of Indiana County Parks and Trails. Evergreen Conservancy will be given several days' notice and an Email will be sent to members and friends. On the day of the cleanup we will start at 9 am.

This is a change from previous years because we want to work with the park staff not duplicate their work. It is likely that the cleanup will be done on a weekday rather than Saturday.

To get to the meeting place (the Homer City Ball Field) take old 119 South through Homer City (Main Street), go past the high school. Take first right and follow about ¼ mile to a stop sign. Turn right and cross the Hoodlebug Trail and follow the trail to the parking lot.

Those wishing to help should go to the parking lot with gloves. Garbage bags will be supplied. In past years we have been able to finish in two hours or less.



Evergreen Conservancy thanks WPCAMR for our ARIPPA AML/AMD Reclamation Award, granted under the guidance and administration of EPCAMR and WPCAMR. This grant has allowed us to replace the batteries in our renewable energy system so they can allow better use of the system.

*Cindy accepts our check:
from (left) Denny Beck -President of WPCAMR
and (right) Andy McAllister, Regional Coordinator of WPCAMR*

Upcoming Dates

March 13th . . . Storm Water Management Conference at the KCAC

March 21st. . . . Family Fun Fest at the Indiana Mall – Evergreen will have a table at the event.

The theme this year is 'All Across the USA' and the state assigned to Evergreen is Hawaii. Come visit to learn a little about Hawaii and some related water issues.

March 27th . . . Spring presentation on Salamanders – Blue Spruce Lodge

April 16th Community awareness of the proposed Multimodal Path – Artist Hand Gallery

August 15th . . . Knotweed Festival



Join Evergreen Conservancy Today!

Support the all-volunteer Evergreen Conservancy and its mission through your membership.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Membership Levels:

_____ \$15: Student _____ \$25 _____ \$45 _____ \$70 _____ \$100

_____ \$1 Youth (17 and under) _____ \$ Other _____ \$75: Business/Org

Additional Donation: \$ _____

Complete this form and send check to:

Evergreen Conservancy, PO Box 0783, Indiana, PA 15701



Composting

I heard a radio program the other day about composting in Seattle, Washington. The commentator was obviously not informed about why people should compost and did not understand how or why anyone would want to do so. Landfills are the largest source of human-generated methane emissions, which are incredibly detrimental to the environment. Not only does composting reduce landfill waste and emissions, but it can also provide you with great soil for your garden.

Here is a link to learn more about Seattle's Mandatory Composting:

www.seattle.gov/util/EnvironmentConservation/MyLawnGarden/CompostSoil/Composting/FoodWaste/index.htm

www.worldchanging.com/local/seattle/archives/008204.html

www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/23/seattle-composting-fines_n_5869036.html

Cindy Rogers

Here is another way you can compost!

Vermiculture

Composting for City-slickers and Fishermen

Vermiculture is a composting method using worms to break down kitchen waste. Worm farms and kits are readily available via the web but tend to be overengineered and expensive. Easy, do-it-yourself versions can be made using ordinary tools and plastic tubs from your local dollar or big box store. Instructions can be found at a number of websites: some of the simplest and most informative include the following:

www.working-worms.com

whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/compost/easywormbin.htm

Recommended worms, red wigglers, are not the garden variety (they do best at between 40° and 80° F.), therefore I compost in my basement so they don't freeze in the winter. The worms can be purchased online by the pound. A pound is enough to start you off and they will reproduce over time given good conditions.

It took about six months to feel confident that I had a working system (after underfeeding and almost offing the population, then overfeeding and having to deal with a watery rotting mass of ugh). Now, the system handles most of my kitchen waste and I have learned when to put less in for the worms and more out in my garden composter.

The literature says one pound of worms will compost about 1/2 lb. kitchen waste a day which I find to be a bit overestimated. I probably add about 2lbs. a week. The riches gained from this unusual but interesting hobby include worm castings, which I scatter over my raised beds; worm liquor, which I dilute 1 part liquor to 3 parts water for watering and feeding my potted and houseplants; and more worms than I could ever use during my occasional fishing trips.

Worms love:

coffee grounds, vegetable scraps, egg shells, shredded newspaper, cardboard egg cartons, etc.

Worms hate:

dairy, meat, grease, and citrus.

The only potential problem I've had is: gnats or fruit flies which are controlled by covering the bins with damp newspapers and hanging a fly-paper strip in the vicinity of the bins



Betty Lou Hovland

Water Monitoring:

This winter we decided to pull most of our data loggers out of the streams. With the frigid temperatures we don't have to worry about ice flows and jams doing any damage. We have two winters of good water quality data with most of them so felt we could do without the data over this winter. We wanted to do some maintenance on them over the winter before we put them back out in the spring. Not being out over the winter should also help extend the battery life. We will be back at it in the spring.

John, Dan and Cindy did get out over the past month to work on the telemetry system to improve the cellular service with different antennas and an additional solar panel on one to get the batteries charged. Our western PA winters are a challenge regarding getting enough sunlight to recharge our batteries!

Bee Smart!

We all know that a diet full of fruits, vegetables and nuts is important to our health. What some of us might not know, though, is that bees help make those tasty, healthy crops available to us. As it turns out, bees pollinate about 75% of our food crops. Sadly, though, over about the last decade, bees have been dying off in high numbers. This is scary, because without bees, we are in danger of losing these crops – and a large portion of our own food supply. Bees have an important place in our ecosystem, and we can do something to help the bees survive. We only need to use a few simple measures to make our yards and gardens more pollinator-friendly.

Overview

Around 2006, beekeepers started noticing a big decline in hive populations. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, bees started leaving their hives in mass migrations, never to return. Researcher studying this phenomenon called it Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD. Scientists have identified several causes for CCD, including invasive parasites, a loss of the bees' food supply, habitat destruction, widespread use of pesticides, and a virus that targets bees' immune systems. According to one study published in Science, it's also possible that environmental changes have influenced the loss of some species even while those changes improve the survival of other species. More research is needed to identify further causes and cures to the bees' decline.

The Risk to Farming and the Food Supply

According to the Ecological Society of America, over 100,000 invertebrate species serve as pollinators. This includes moths, butterflies, beetles – and bees. Pollinators help farmers produce more than 150 U.S. crops, including apples, berries, carrots, soybeans, peanuts, sunflowers and cotton. These are some of the most vital crops to our food supply and our economy. Figures vary according to sources, but one estimate states that the U.S. could lose \$15 billion in crops without bees to help pollinate. Another study reports that bees benefit U.S. agriculture in totals ranging from \$4.6 to \$6.7 billion annually. Yet another study determined that one blueberry bee in Alabama pollinates approximately \$75 worth of berries in the course of pollinating nearly 50,000 blueberry flowers each year. No matter the dollar figure, though, it's obvious that pollinators, especially bees, are vitally important to the U.S.'s agriculture and economy.

In the meanwhile, the U.S.D.A.'s internal research agency, the Agricultural Research Service, is investigating the causes of CCD and it's looking for ways to improve bee health. Other state agencies, universities and organizations are also looking for answers. According to the NRDC, the U.S.D.A. allotted approximately \$20 million between the years 2008-2013 to study the problem further. Yet that amount hasn't been enough to identify a single solution. So far it seems the best we can do is work to mitigate the losses and help support pollinators as best we can.

What You Can Do

The public can help support bees and other pollinators through a few simple steps. First, minimize use of pesticides, especially those containing neonicotinoids. If you must use pesticides for some reason, the U.S.D.A. recommends applying them discriminately and to not apply them mid-day when pollinators are likely to be out gathering pollen. Farmers should leave a stretch of natural habitat around their fields to allow bees a place to live and a food supply. Researchers also recommend providing pollinator-friendly plants like bee balm, coneflower, milkweed, clover, sunflowers and asters.

Recognizing the vital place that bees and other pollinators have in our ecosystem and our food chain is the first step to helping to rebuild their numbers. It's in everyone's interest to have a healthy pollinator population. Let's "bee smart" and help the pollinators, the farmers – and ourselves.

Tracy Lassiter

For more information about providing pollinator-friendly plants, see:

www.centerforfoodsafety.org/issues/304/pollinators-and-pesticides/pollinator-friendly-plants#



EarthCache at the Tanoma AMD Site Attention Geocachers and Earth Science Enthusiasts

Our Earthcache is now active. Go to geocaching.com and look at GC5A825. (You will have to sign up for free, if you are not already a user.) Here is a hands-on science lesson that takes the cacher to the Tanoma site where they will access the testing materials to learn specifically how the treatment system works and more specifically how well it's working at the time of your visit. Visitors test the water as it enters the second pond, and again where it exits the system. Record the pH, using test strips to see the acidity with 2 tenths, and the iron level, within 50 shades of orange. People interested in the science behind AMD treatment can really learn about it in much greater detail.