

"Improving Our Quality of Life"



Newsletter, #50
Summer 2018

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Annual Picnic & 2018 Evergreen Award

Dr. Katie Farnsworth received our 2018 Evergreen Award at the Evergreen Conservancy's Annual Picnic on June 27th. Dr. Steven Hovan, Chair of IUP's Geoscience Department and her nominator, was Katie's guest at this event.

In nominating her, Dr. Hovan noted her concern with local stream quality by installing monitoring systems, her involvement in storm water runoff prevention, and environmental education by going beyond her day job by being involved with high school teachers and students.

Katie is a Professor of Geosciences at IUP, but she gets out into the community and interacts with young people and concerned adults often.



Kritter Kamp-Evergreen Conservancy's Fall Program October 19, 7 p.m., Blue Spruce Lodge

Who are you going to call? If you are on a Sunday afternoon hike and encounter a sick or injured bird or squirrel, what should you do? CALL KRITTER KAMP! Kritter Kamp is a licensed Wildlife Rehabilitation facility located in Marion Center operated by Ayn Van Dyke. Wildlife Rehabilitation Facilities care for orphaned, injured, sick and displaced wildlife with a goal of returning them to the wild. The number to call is 724-254-9748.

Ms. Van Dyke will tell about her 35 years tending to wildlife on Friday October 19 at 7 p.m. at Blue Spruce Lodge. Ms. Van Dyke treats 500 animals per year. This program is free and open to the public. Light snacks will be available after the program.



pakritterkamp.weebly.com

Board Members

Cindy Rogers - President • Malcolm Hermann - Vice president • Becky Snyder -Treasurer
Tara Binion - Secretary • Dan Boone • Bob Lankard • John Dudash • Mike Tyree
Paul Yacovone • David Janetski • Shannon Jackson

OUR MISSION:

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

Plants To Be On The Lookout For Milkweed - *Asclepias syriaca*

Common Milkweed was named after Asklepios the Greek God of healing, because of its many medicinal uses through the ages. The common name comes from the milky sap in the plant. A root concoction or extract is said to strengthen the heart, soothe the nerves, treat rheumatism and venereal diseases, and kill worms. People have used a tea made from the roots and smoked dried leaves to treat asthma, used the roots as a contraceptive, and the milky sap to remove warts.

Milkweed and related species are crucial for the survival of the monarch butterfly. Insects love milkweed, especially monarch butterfly larvae, which eat its leaves. Milkweed also helps Monarch butterflies survive because it makes them very bitter to the taste. Once a predator tastes the one, won't eat another one! Gold finches use the silky seeds to line their nests.



Monarch Butterfly

There is also a milkweed bug. Two types of Milkweed Bugs, large and small, like to hang out on the Milkweed plants and feed on the seeds of the Milkweed plants. They do not seem to bother anything else but they are toxic to anyone or thing that would try and eat them.



Milkweed Bugs



Common Milkweed

You will find common milkweed in old fields, roadsides, disturbed habitats, in all our parks and throughout most of the eastern US. The purple-pink, greenish, or whitish flower heads set in loose clusters, often drooping and unnoticed, rate close inspection because each small individual flower is so beautiful! It is easy to spot this 3 – 6-foot plant when older because of its umbel of pretty flowers and distinctive greenish warty looking seed pods.

The fluffy seeds were used during World War II to fill life preservers and life jackets. The government also attempted to produce rubber from the sap when other sources were hard to get but was unsuccessful because of the difficulty in gathering the plants for massive use.



It can be an edible plant but is not recommended for the beginning forager because of several poisonous look-alikes. Its stem is hairy under magnification unlike the similar but poisonous dogbane. Once the plant is a little older dogbane branches and has distinctive seed pods, both of which distinguish it from milkweed. Butterflyweed is also a poisonous look alike when young but has clear sap. Some references indicate that other west coast and southern milkweed species having milky sap are also poisonous and should be avoided for edible use.

Milkweed has a sticky white milk or latex that protects the plant from insects, lends a very bitter taste to the plant, and is slightly toxic if not properly prepared. If identified correctly, the new shoots can be eaten like asparagus in early spring by boiling in a least 2 changes of water. The flower buds can be eaten in early summer by steaming or boiling. The immature seed pods may be picked in the summer for steaming or boiling. But don't pick if they feel springy. That is a sign they are too mature to be eaten. Treated seed pods can also be used like okra in soup. I tasted the sweet unopened flowers for the first time at a program Jan Humphreys presented on wild flowers at Blue Spruce Park and was quite impressed with the taste.

There is a toxic component to milkweed that you should be aware of also. Galitoxin is found in all vegetative parts of the plant plus a group of toxicants known as cardenolides may be responsible for digitalis-like signs that cause or contribute to death. Dosages of whorled milkweed as low as 0.1 % - 0.5% of an animal's body weight may cause toxicities and, possibly, death. Cattle, sheep and horses are most susceptible. Toxicity is not lost when the plant is dried, therefore, contaminated hay is potentially toxic.



I have milkweed growing in my yard that have spread over the last 3 years. I was so excited to see a monarch this year for the first time. Look for common milkweed this year and appreciate it's many uses.

By Cindy Rogers

Environmental Education News

We have had a slower summer for Environmental Education with just one Girl Scout program in July at Blue Spruce Park. The topic was the Water Cycle, complete with water cycle bracelets and the water cycle rap! Cindy Rogers, Shannon Jackson, and Maegan Stump had a blast at the program!

If you are interested in helping out with Environmental Education programming, email us and we will let you know how to get involved!



Dates to Remember:

September 5th	Evergreen Conservancy at IUP's Community Involvement Fair
September 6th	Board Meeting 7p.m. at 1005 Oak St., second floor
September 8th	Evergreen Conservancy at Northern Appalachian Folk Festival, 10a.m – 7p.m.
September 28th	Sustainable Economic Development Task Force Summit
October 7th	Evergreen Conservancy hosts Hunter Education Safety Course at Pine Ridge Lodge
October 20th	Evergreen Conservancy Work Session with IUP's 'Into the Streets'
October 20th	Tree Planting in Tanoma
October 27th	Evergreen Conservancy at IUP's Indiana Community Seed Swap

NAFF

Northern Appalachian Folk Festival

Evergreen Conservancy will be at the upcoming Northern Appalachian Folk Festival (NAFF) in Indiana, PA on Saturday, September 8th! We will have a table set up from 10 AM until 7 PM, so please come out and visit us! If you are interested in helping us run Evergreen Conservancy's table, please email us and we will let you know what time slots are still available. The festival should be a lot of fun with live performances and lots of great vendors!

Hunter Education Safety Course

Evergreen Conservancy will be hosting a Hunter Education Safety Course this fall! All hunters or trappers, no matter the age, must complete this course before they are allowed to purchase a Pennsylvania Hunting or Trapping license. The course covers; "responsible hunting behavior, basic firearm handling and safe handling, wildlife conservation and management, outdoor safety and survival, basic and advanced hunting techniques, trapping and furtaking basics, basic shooting and safe hunting skills, and expanding your hunting opportunities." (Referenced from the Pennsylvania Game Commission's website)

The Hunter Education Safety Course hosted by Evergreen Conservancy will take place on Sunday, October 7th at the Pine Ridge Lodge in Blairsville. The course will run from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Both a lunch and snack will be provided. Participants must be at least 11 years old by the date of the course to sign up. To register for the course please go to this link: www.register-ed.com/events/view/125399

Pine Ridge Lodge, 1055 Chestnut Ridge Road, Blairsville, PA 15717

Trail Clean Up Scheduled for October 13th

Evergreen Conservancy's clean-up of the Hoodlebug Trail and adjoining 119S areas has been scheduled for Saturday October 13 at 9 am meeting at the Homer Center Baseball field.

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.

EcoTour Updates

This summer, Evergreen Conservancy worked with IUP Communication Media students through IUP's Center for Media Production and Research. Together, we produced three EcoTour videos that are now available to the public. There is a short 30-second advertisement video, a longer 1-minute advertisement video, and a 3.5-minute informational video. These videos can be found on Evergreen Conservancy's YouTube Channel or on our website under the Indiana County ECOTour tab (www.evergreenconservancy.org/indiana-county-eco-tour/indiana-county-ecotour-videos). We are very excited to share these videos and appreciative of the students' hard work.

The students also partnered with us and the Indiana County Tourist Bureau to produce high-quality photos of recreational activities in the county!

Stay tuned for more EcoTour updates!



Reminder to Renew Memberships

Please don't forget to support Evergreen Conservancy with your membership renewal or new membership - due now. You can also support us painlessly by shopping with Amazon Smile or using Goodsearch as your search engine on the internet. As a reward for being a member you will get discounts at some local merchants which are listed on the back of your membership card. Thanks to all!

Give a gift of a membership for the Holiday Season! It is not too late to renew or Join for the 2017-2018 year! Support Evergreen Conservancy with a year-end gift!

Join Evergreen Conservancy Today!



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

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____

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



I am interested in volunteering:
 ___ as a board member ___ on a committee (finance, PR fundraising) ___ with water monitoring field work
 ___ on Legal issues ___ with grant writing ___ environmental education ___ social media ___ Homer City gardens plots
 ___ with fundraising activities (making crafts or manning a table at sales) ___ other _____

Membership Benefits

We are pleased to announce the following partners who have supported Evergreen Conservancy by giving discounts to card-carrying members of Evergreen Conservancy. Visit them, get your discount, and thank them for supporting Evergreen Conservancy!

Spaghetti Benders	15% discount	spaghettibenders.com
Michael B's Shoe Store	\$10 off any purchase	www.michaelbshoes.com
Plant-it Earth	15% discount	on FaceBook The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens
Doughnut Connection/ Portia's Bistro	15% discount	www.portiasdonutconnection.com
Little Mahoning Creek Pottery	10% discount	www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com
		littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com
Homemade Restaurant	10% off total bill	www.thehomemaderestaurantpa.com
Artist Hand Gallery	12 oz. drip coffee \$1	theartistshandgallery.com

JOIN OR RENEW your membership TODAY if you have not already done so for 2018-2019.



Support Evergreen When Shopping

You can support Evergreen Conservancy this year by shopping! Shop local first, but if you do on line shopping do it at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate to Evergreen Conservancy. Shop for everyone on your gift list this holiday at smile.amazon.com/ch/01-0808065 and Amazon donates to Evergreen Conservancy.



Please support Nature's Way market in Greensburg. They support us with a generous donation!



Thanks again for the generous donation from Nature's Way of Greensburg who belongs to 1% of the Planet. Next time you are in Greensburg stop by and say thanks to them!

1% of the Planet is a global network of businesses, nonprofits and individuals working together for a healthy planet. Businesses that join 1% for the Planet commit to giving 1% of total sales each year to your choice of our approved nonprofit partners. You can get involved! Joining is easy – go to www.onepercentfortheplanet.org/tell-us-about-your-organization. 1% of the Planet brings dollars and doers together to accelerate smart environmental giving. The Planet needs you NOW.

Tanoma Update

We continue to do bi-weekly water testing at Tanoma to check the system. John D., John F., Cindy and Malcolm did some tree maintenance to clear some brush this fall plus other general maintenance to clear weeds and keep the path clear. IUP 'Into the Streets' students will be helping out on October 20th to clean up for the winter and take down the storybook trail. There will be some maintenance on the last weir in the system because water started running out below the weir.

On October 20th we will be doing tree planting along crooked creek from 9:00 to noon to fill in thin and open spaces. If you want to come out and help plant trees that day please let Cindy know at evergreenconservancy@gmail.com.



Clearing Trees That Increase Flooding

IUP Into the Streets

Fall Work Session Coming Up October 20th

We had eight IUP students come out to Tanoma in the Spring. They installed the Storybook Walk, and performed quite a bit of laborious work. We hope to get as much done during the fall session on October 20th.



Hard Working Crew in the Spring

Darling or Daring- What is Your Opinion of Ladybugs?

Ladybugs have long been considered a symbol of good luck. But these darling little creatures also have a bit of a dark side. Ladybugs, also known as Lady Beetles, are a familiar part of our gardens and back yards in the summer.

You may be wondering how the ladybug got its name, as there are male and female ladybugs. The word "Lady" actually refers to the Virgin Mary. According to legend, during the Middle Ages, European crops were being plagued by crop-eating insects. The farmers were so desperate that they began praying to the Virgin Mary for help. Soon, the farmers began seeing ladybugs in their fields eating the pesky crop eating insects. The farmers began calling the beetles "our lady's bird" or lady beetles. The seven spotted ladybug is believed to be the first one seen during the Middle Ages; the red color is said to represent the Virgin Mary's cloak and the black spots represent her seven sorrows. Pretty cool, right?

Lady Bugs aren't actually bugs, despite their name; they are part of the beetle family. Some experts prefer to call them lady beetles, or Coccinellids. There are 4300-5000 types of ladybugs in the world, where they are referred to as bugs, beetles, birds, bishops and... cows? In ancient parts of England, the ladybug was called a bishop. Locals often referred to this bishop as the bishy bishy barnabee. You will never look at a ladybug the same now – in your mind you will be sing-songing these cute beetles as bishy bishy barnabees! In several languages, the ladybug is also known as the "little cow," "God's little cow," and the ladycow.

Did you know that ladybugs have bleeding knees? As a defense mechanism, adult ladybugs omit a foul smelling hemolymph that will seep from its leg joints. They can also ooze alkaloids from their abdomens, making them repulsive to predators.

Ladybugs live about a year, and as adults, they are cute, peaceful little creatures. But, their larvae actually look like miniature alligators- they have long pointed abdomens, spiny bodies and legs that protrude from their sides – stuff that Sci-Fi movies are made of! Some other noteworthy facts are that ladybugs smell with their feet and antennae, chew side to side (rather than up and down) and can flap their wings 85 times a second!

Ladybugs eat an amazing number of insects and are very beneficial to have around your home. In one day an adult can eat anywhere from 50-75 aphids! These little cannibals will eat scale insects, whiteflies, mites, aphids and each other when food is scarce. A hungry ladybug will make a meal out of any soft bodied sibling or family member that it encounters. When times are tough, a mama ladybug may lay an increased number of infertile eggs to give her babies a better chance of surviving.

Many people consider ladybugs to be a sign of good luck. They stand for good fortune, protection and vibrant living. If you consider the ladybug to be your spirit animal, it shows that you are highly motivated, inquisitive, open minded and trustworthy. Legend says that when you see a ladybug, make your wish known to her and she will fly away and grant your wish. Legend also says that if you happen to see a ladybug and a chipmunk near each other, magic is in the air and the Universe is conspiring on your behalf in the most serendipitous of ways... but that is an article for another time!

As summer is coming to a close, the ladybugs will begin the process of looking for a place to "over-winter." They will hibernate together in order to stay warm. You will see them again when the sun starts to warm up the earth after a long winter. Once it is at least 60 degrees outside, start looking for a ladybug and a Chipmunk – you never know what the future holds!



Shannon Jackson