



## Newsletter, #61 Spring 2021

[www.evergreenconservancy.org](http://www.evergreenconservancy.org)

PO Box 0783, Indiana, PA 15701 [evergreenconservancy@gmail.com](mailto:evergreenconservancy@gmail.com)

### Look For Member/ Friends' Annual Meeting in August

The Evergreen Conservancy Board has tentatively scheduled the annual meeting for August with the date, location, and format yet to be determined. This is where members and friends are updated on the activities of Evergreen Conservancy. The Board thinks Covid-19 restrictions will be less limiting than during traditional June. Look for an announcement of this event.

Last year the annual meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. In two previous years the event was "washed out" by flooding.

It is unknown at this time if we will hold the meeting at Tanoma due to social distancing. The traditional pot luck picnic is also uncertain.

The presentation of the Evergreen Award is always a key event at the annual meeting. This has been given annually since 2012 to individuals or groups who make a significant impact on the county's natural habitat. This year the board is giving the award to Friends of White's Woods. Previous recipients include: Lee Roy Vatter, the late John Novak, Karin Eller and Plant it Earth, Dr. Robert Eppley was given a lifetime achievement award, John Somonick,

Alex Lezark, Art Grguric, Dr. Katie Farnsworth, Anne Daymut, and Tammie Robinson.

Another agenda item is the election of board members for four year terms by dues-paying members. This year Tara Binion, Malcolm Hermann, and Dan Boone are current board members who are seeking new four year terms. Current board member Tim Slippy has chosen not to seek a new term. Adrienne Smocek will be asked to be confirmed as a board member.

You will be given the opportunity to join or renew your membership in the conservancy as a dues paying member for 2021-2022. There are several levels of membership with those under 17 who can join for \$1; students can join for \$15, and the basic membership costs \$25.

Evergreen Conservancy operates through the efforts of volunteers who will be recognized during the annual meeting.

Finally Evergreen Conservancy has been busy, even during the pandemic and attendees will hear of the activities of 2020-2021.

### Our New Signs Are Getting Installed!

Thanks to a grant from the Indiana County Endowment, Evergreen Conservancy was able to design signs to help build awareness about riparian buffer zones and the importance of native plants. Thanks to all the folks who helped with the content and Malcolm for the design and formatting! Thanks to the Indiana County Parks folks for help in the installations. We have one sign already installed and will be installing the others soon. This one is at the Ghost Town Trail at the picnic shelter located on the trail, going from Dilltown towards Vintondale. It's where the large map is for the Blacklick Creek Watershed Association is, about one mile east of Dilltown on the trail. There will be one on the Hoodlebug trail, one at Yellow Creek State Park and one at the Ben Franklin school near the planted riparian buffer zone. If you pass one – please stop and read it and learn how riparian buffer zones help water quality and why native plants are so important to our food web.



### Board Members

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

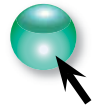
### OUR MISSION:

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

## Walmart Registry a Reminder

Want to donate to the Evergreen Conservancy but not sure how? We have partnered with Walmart's Registry for Good and have registered for items that our organization needs. You can log on to Walmart.com, and under the drop-down menu, click on Walmart Services. You can then click on Registry for Good. It will direct you to a page that shows the registries in the Indiana PA area. Once you add the items to your cart, you can pay and have them shipped to Evergreen Conservancy! It is that easy! Thank you to the folks who have donated to Evergreen Conservancy in this way. It is much appreciated!

**Click Here to Help Us  
With Our Wish List.**



Go to [www.walmart.com/registry/registryforgood/welcome](http://www.walmart.com/registry/registryforgood/welcome) and look for Evergreen Conservancy; or just click here:

---

## Environmental Education News

5/6/-5/16/2021

Family Fun Fest went virtual this year. Evergreen Conservancy created a video about watersheds and an activity kids (and adults) can do at home following our instructions. We hope you checked it out during Family Fun Fest. Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 1:00 AM EDT -to- Sunday, May 16, 2021 at 11:00 PM. If you missed it during the Family Fun Fest it is posted on our web site under the education tab. Check it out!

5/29/21

Monica led a trail nature walk along the Blairsville River trail on Saturday.

6/5/21

Evergreen was at the Nature Palooza at Blue Spruce Park on June 5th. This is a "fun" day that offers parents and their children the opportunity to get outside to play and learn.

---

## EcoTour Updates

**The eco geocache tour is still going strong.**

**You can still get your passports at any one of the following locations:**

Indiana Tourist Bureau, Indiana Free Library, Blue Spruce Park office, Yellow Creek State Park office, Blairsville Community Development Office, Solar Array cache site in Smicksburg, or the Indiana Conservation District office near the Indiana County Technology Center if they are open. Contact us and we can arrange for you to get a passport or your geocoin when you are done. Go on a fun adventure! Go to <https://evergreenconservancy.org/indiana-county-eco-tour/indiana-county-geotrail/coordinates-and-links/> for all 20 of our ecology-themed geocache trail sites. Trade that completed passport in for your very own trackable geo coin in the shape of Indiana County!

---

## Bags to Benches Project Update

Evergreen is now in the 4th round of soft plastics collection, which began in December. The latest bench we received was donated to the YMCA in Indiana.

The plastic collection efforts will continue into future rounds of collection.

The purpose of all this is to keep plastic from going to the landfills. So the opportunity to recycle soft plastic is ongoing. Residents can donate grocery bags, bread bags, water case and soft drink overwraps, dry cleaning bags, ice bags, wood pellet bags, Ziploc and other reclosable bags, produce bags, bubble wrap, salt bags, and cereal bags. All bags must be clean and dry. Unfortunately, plastic bottles and all other hard plastics cannot be donated to this program. They should be donated to the Indiana County recycling program. Also, please do not include any bags that have metallic lining or sound really crinkly when you crunch them.



If you want to support the bags to benches project you can take your items to the YMCA bin outside the door or the S & T arena in the bin inside the door. If you have plastic you can email us at [evergreenconservancy@gmail.com](mailto:evergreenconservancy@gmail.com) and we may be able to pick it up.

## Evergreen Award

### Friends of White's Woods Will Receive 2021 Evergreen Award

In its May 13 meeting Evergreen Conservancy's board voted to award the Friends of White's Woods with their 2021 Evergreen Award.

The Friends of White's Woods was nominated by Laurie Lafontaine. The contact person for the White's Woods organization is Sara King. This organization was born in response to plans by the White Township Supervisors to harvest trees in White's Woods, located in White Township and Indiana Borough. Friends of White's Woods is not focused on a single issue, but the organization has evolved into a valid environmental educational organization.

In the past year, Friends of White's Woods provided exceptional leadership in the Indiana community to help promote public engagement in environmental concerns. FWW has presented educational programming, collaborated with other environmentally-focused community organizations, served as a public advocate, supported the efforts of state-wide conservation organizations, worked to engage the public community environmental decision-making, helped to sponsor important community-wide conversations regarding climate change and carbon sequestration, and helped to highlight the value of our local natural area to the citizens of the Indiana area.

---



---

## Successful Litter Clean-Up Conducted April 10, 2021

Evergreen Conservancy conducted one of its most successful litter clean-ups on Saturday morning April 10. A beautiful morning helped. Also having 16 volunteers allowed us to clean Blue Spruce Road from Route 110 to the park office, the road surrounding the lake, and even some of the trails. Ten bags of garbage were put in the dumpster so park workers will not have to deal with it. We were happy to have several volunteers from the New Way of Life organization located on Warren Road.

Thanks to John Dudash, JoAnne and John Ferraro, Bridget Gardner, Janis Long, Cindy Rogers, Adriene, Brian, Layla and Leo Smochek, Tamothy Stage, Margaret Stempien and the folks from New Way of Life.

---



---

## Dates to Remember:

June 8th, 2021	6:30 and 7:30	PR and Finance committee meetings. Our small group plans to meet IN PERSON, at the aging services building!
July 8, 2021	6:00 PM	Evergreen Conservancy Board Meeting – Virtual – If interested please contact us.
Second Wednesdays of every month		Pennsylvania Senior Environmental Corps – (PASEC) Meetings. The Senior Environment Corps (SEC) program engages volunteers mostly aged 55 and over. SEC volunteers are engaged in numerous activities from water quality monitoring, stream habitat assessment, storm-drain stenciling, environmental education, community gardening, wildlife surveying, marking abandoned oil and gas wells, and cleaning up parks and trails. Please come to the meetings if you are interested in being involved in an active worthwhile activity and meeting new people. Indiana PASEC has people from all our watersheds and other local agencies that are interested in preserving and protecting our environment. Come join us! It meets at 9 am. Locations will be announced close to each meeting with COVID precautions.

Our annual membership meeting will be postponed until later in the year – hopefully in August we will be able to meet in person.

## Tanoma Update

### Planting Milkweed at Tanoma:

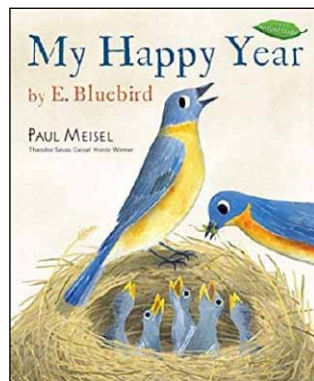
Each fall, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the United States and Canada to mountains in central Mexico where they wait out the winter until conditions favor a return flight in the spring. The monarch migration is truly one of the world's greatest natural wonders, yet it is threatened by habitat loss at overwintering grounds in Mexico and throughout breeding areas in the United States and Canada. Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding areas in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall. Similarly, without nectar from flowers these fall migratory monarch butterflies would be unable to make their long journey to overwintering grounds in Mexico. The need for host plants for larvae and energy sources for adults applies to all monarch and butterfly populations around the world. We wanted to support the monarch population.

We applied for a grant and received 350 swamp milkweed plugs to plant a monarch habitat restoration project at Tanoma through a program called Monarch Watch.

Sunday May 16th we planted several hundred milkweed plants at Tanoma. Thanks to all who came out to help plant the milkweeds. We could not have done it without you all!

We had a work day at Tanoma to do some spring maintenance and put up our story walk that the Indiana Free Library laminates every year for us. This year the book is "My Happy Year by E. Bluebird (Paul Meisel) Thanks goes out to the Library staff for the book. And thanks to the folks who came out to help Rebecca Sterley, and the guys from The New Way of Life who came out to help with the work.

Come on out to walk along Crooked Creek, read the book and enjoy the outdoors!



## Tanoma Maintenance and Dye testing

On April 19th, a dye test was performed to troubleshoot the Tanoma Treatment System by representatives of the DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. The front wave of the dye traveled through the system in 8.3 hours and the average time was 17 hours. The data will be compared with the theoretical designed retention time of this passive system. The overall goal is to determine a true iron oxidation rate for this system's water.



## Swamp Milkweed and Common Milkweed were Planted at Tanoma Recently.

Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) 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 of common milkweed 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.



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. Today the fluff is sometimes harvested for use in pillows and comforters.



*Swamp Milkweed*

Milkweed is edible only under certain circumstances. Boiling can eliminate the bitter taste and toxicity of the sap, but this must be done very carefully to avoid the toxins. Eating milkweed is not recommended. There are also 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.

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 two 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.



*Common Milkweed*

Insects love milkweed, especially monarch butterfly larvae, which eat its leaves. Monarchs cannot survive without milkweed plants. Milkweed also helps Monarch butterflies survive because it makes them very bitter to the taste. Once a predator tastes one, it won't eat another one! Gold finches use the silky seeds to line their nests.



Swamp milkweed, *Asclepias Incarnata* L. is also called Pink milkweed. The juice of this wetland milkweed is less milky than that of other species. It also has showy flower clusters that attract butterflies and hummingbirds. In the past, the roots of swamp milkweed were simmered to make a tea, taken in small quantities both as a general purge and to destroy and expel parasitic worms. Unlike common milkweed, the central stem may branch. Leaves are often shorter and much narrower than common milkweed, and taper to a sharper point. Stems and leaves release a milky-white sap when broken like Common milkweed. The plants bloom for approximately four weeks in mid to late summer. Round clusters of light pink flowers grow near the top of the plant. The flower colors may vary from near white to purplish, and are pleasant smelling. Seed pods have a smooth exterior texture unlike common milkweed and ripen in fall to reveal small seeds with white silk attachments common to all milkweeds.



### 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	<a href="http://spaghettibenders.com">spaghettibenders.com</a>
Michael B's Shoe Store	\$10 off any purchase	<a href="http://www.michaelbshoes.com">www.michaelbshoes.com</a>
Plant-it Earth	15% discount	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens">on FaceBook The-Plant-It-Earth-Greenhouse-And-Gardens</a>
Little Mahoning Creek Pottery	10% discount	<a href="http://www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com">www.nancysmeltzer.etsy.com</a>
		<a href="http://littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com">littlemahoningcreekpottery.blogspot.com</a>
Homemade Restaurant	10% off total bill	<a href="http://www.thehomemaderestaurantpa.com">www.thehomemaderestaurantpa.com</a>
Artist Hand Gallery	12 oz. drip coffee \$1	<a href="http://theartistshandgallery.com">theartistshandgallery.com</a>



**JOIN OR RENEW your membership TODAY if you have not already done so for 2020.**

### 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](https://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](https://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](http://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.

### 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



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 \_\_\_\_\_