



Newsletter of Fair Hill Environmental Foundation, Inc.

## Tails Out of School — Holly Hannum, Education Director

We are in the midst of a busy spring which is rapidly racing towards summer. School classes are winding down and summer camp is on the horizon.



*Trilling for a mate!*

The weather warmed just in time for the pickerel frogs and American toads to make their spring debut.

Chris Haight, along with Dan Schneckenburger, made short work of organizing the crowd of 150 people into small groups. Volunteer herpetologist Dan Calhoun and his son Colton brought their collection of exotic frogs to add to our catch of the day and Erlene presented an introduction to the world of amphibians. Following the talk,

groups led by our education staff, threaded their way through the hopping toads to see eggs being laid in every puddle. Much of the fun was captured by volunteer photographer, Alan Keithley. Check out his photos in this newsletter. The evening concluded with hotdogs and marshmallows around the campfire. Special



*Nicole Heinrich, helping members search for toads.*

thanks to Hud Benson and Tom Hannum for keeping the fire and cooking dinner.

Next time you visit the park check out our garden. We have been planting vegetables in the paddock behind the barn. Summer Farmers Camp will be enjoying the fruits (so to speak) of our labors in July. There are still some openings for campers ages 8 to 12 who want to discover food at Fair Hill, both wild and cultivated. There will be plenty of taste testing including our soon to be famous wine berry ice cream. There are also still a few spots available in Fair Hill Friends. Preschool teacher, Doris Andersen will lead this group of 3 and 4 year olds and their grownups in an introduction to outdoor adventure.

Each week of summer camp will have a special visitor at 11:30 on Thursday morning. Week one campers will meet local children's author, Dr. Corinne Litzenberg who will

*more, pg.4*

### The following Summer Camps have openings!

Week #2 June 23-27 Fair Hill Friends (ages 3 &4) Wilderness Adventure (ages 8-12)

Week #3 July 7-11 Fair Hill Friends (3&4) Summer Critters (ages 5-7) American Indian Adventure (8-12)

Week #4 Summer Farmers (ages 8-12)

Visit our website to download an application [www.fairhillnature.org](http://www.fairhillnature.org)

## Board of Directors

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Amy Tetlow Smith

**Teacher-Naturalists**

Chris Haight

**Office Manager**

Jerry Hendricks

**Webmaster**



## Nature Center Wish List

*List of things needed:*

\* Cordless Drills

\*Funds for 4 microscopes (\$150 ea.)

\*Scrap lumber appropriate to use for summer camp boat building

\*A volunteer with some free time and handyman skills to assist staff with household maintenance and simple construction projects.

*Please contact the Nature Center (410.398.4909) if you can help with any of the*

## Habitats Community

### *Welcome To Our New Members!*

Eileen Burkley

Celeste Cordrey

William & Stacey Cost

Kimberly Ganzman

John & Marilyn Gilmore

Diana Gonzalez

Lynn Hastings

Gary Holmes

Sharan Howell

Tracy & Tom Keating

Stephen & Wanda McKinney

Keith & Sandra McMinn

Lance & Beth Newby

Heidi & Brian Pleasanton

Cynthia & Anthony Sciotto

Kerry & Neal Shovlin

Anne Marie & Robert Smith

Jonathan & Nicole Stauffer

Guylaine & Scott Thomas



*Thanks also to the following for their recent generous donations:*

Hud Benson



Michael J. Morrow



Rebecca Taccone

## Nature Center Hours of Operation

Weekdays from mid-March until mid-June and late-August until the end of November, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Weekdays from mid-June until end of July, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. No camp the week of July 4.

### ***Mission of the Fair Hill Environmental Foundation, Inc.***

To promote responsible stewardship through an appreciation and understanding of our environment. Our goals are to:

- 1) raise awareness among children and adults about the interrelationships that occur in nature and the interdependence of the environment, our health, the economy, and culture;
- 2) increase actions among citizenry that demonstrate environmental responsibility;
- 3) strengthen public advocacy toward the protection, preservation, and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

## The Osprey have Returned

story and photos by Beverly Sutton-Lawrence

The osprey have returned to my area of Big Elk Creek. On April Fools' Day, I heard the short, repetitive whistle of the fish hawk: I looked up to see a trio soaring fairly close to the treetops, here at the Elk River Ranch. Sadly, the man-made pond that once existed here is long gone - so the birds no longer have a 'snack bar' from which to feed. But the Elk is within eyeshot, of my home - and the osprey no doubt finds easy pickings, there. Watching this trio soar, I wondered if one might be the individual I 'met' this past summer, whilst kayaking from Locust Point Marina up to the Howard/Bow Street Open Air Market.



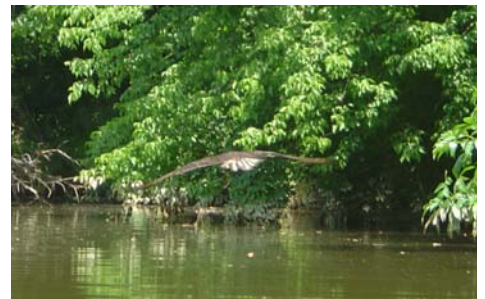
I first spotted my kayaking companion as he swept low along Elk Creek, where Little Elk and Big Elk meet. I could not get my camera in hand, fast enough, to catch him in flight - but I did see him swoop down and take rest, on a tree that had long ago lost its grip

on the bank, and presently provides the perfect perch over the - well, perch!



In spite of my bright yellow kayak, this osprey didn't seem to be at all troubled by my company. This gave me the opportunity to actually manage the kayak and the camera, at the same time. His cooperation was amazing; he waited on the tree, as I approached. I decided to see just how close he'd allow me. I put the paddle in the cockpit, and set down the kayak's rudder, which is foot operated. Thus, I was able to navigate with my feet, freeing my fingers to focus my camera. The osprey watched me, but clearly was unconcerned. I caught another photo, as I was closer, still. He waited until I was nearly beneath him, before pushing off and proceeding upstream, giving me the chance to

catch one photo of him as he skimmed over the creek. Such opportunities are what I so enjoy, when paddling on the Elk. Other birds are more difficult, to capture on camera. The kingfisher is quick - I often hear his chattering laugh, but rarely can I catch him on film. And the great blue heron, and its close relative, the great egret, whilst often spotted resting on perches similar to that which the osprey chose, rarely let me within 100 yards, before they squawk and fly off, as if offended by the very idea of a yellow kayak!



But, a new kayaking season is fast approaching, and I'll be looking for a new digital camera, too - any recommendations?

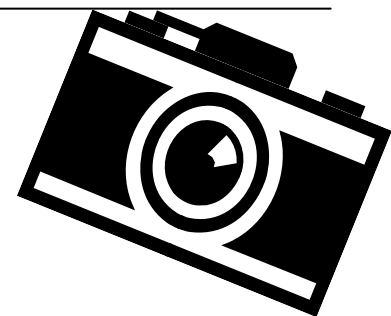
What do you see, whilst wandering and wading around your waterways?

*Beverly Sutton-Lawrence is a friend and member of the Fair Hill Nature Center*

## 2009 Fair Hill Nature Calendar: Calling All Photographers!

The Fair Hill Nature Center's Calendar Committee is in the process of planning our 2009 Fair Hill Nature Calendar and invite you to submit high resolution shots of Fair Hill that reflect its year-round beauty. Black and white as well as color digital or large format printed images are acceptable. If your photo is selected, your name will be credited on the calendar and you will receive a set number of complimentary copies (great for holiday gifts!)

Email Joe Clancy at [jclancy@st-publishing.com](mailto:jclancy@st-publishing.com) for more details. We will be selecting photographs by late summer, so look through your collection of favorite Fair Hill photos or get out your cameras and head to the FHRMA soon! We hope that the 2009 calendar will prove to be a major fund-raiser for the Nature Center—and invite you to help make it a success!





**Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center**

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**Habitats** is published for members of the Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center, a non-profit organization devoted to the study and enjoyment of nature, and the conservation of natural habitats within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

*Tails Out of School, cont..*

share some seashells and some excerpts of her books about the shore. Week two campers will meet Dan Calhoun and his exotic frog collection. Week three marks the return of Rick Waterhouse, campers will enjoy singing along with his educational and silly songs. My personal favorite is the worm song, "All Worms Dance If You Give Them a Chance." Cole Wertz, our beekeeper, will visit during the fourth week and bring along some of his equipment and a taste of honey. Campers registered in any week of camp are welcome to join us for all of these programs.

Scholarships for summer camp are available on a limited basis thanks to the generosity of The Cattail Company, Hud Benson of Compass Realty, and The County Thyme Gardeners of Rising Sun. Please call the Nature Center if you are interested or know anyone in need of a scholarship.

One of our educators will soon be wearing another hat. Look for Nicole Heinrich around the park in uniform as the new seasonal Park Naturalist. She will be keeping the Nature Center open on the weekends and running park programs out of the Center throughout the year.

**Fair Hill NRMA News**



The Park Office is pleased to announce that Nicole Heinrich has accepted a new part-time Seasonal Naturalist position at the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area. Nicole also works as an educator for the Fair Hill Nature Center. Nicole and the Park office are busy planning her schedule and developing programs for the public, which will include the popular Maryland Junior Ranger Program. To find out what activities are being offered this summer, contact the park office at 410-398-1246.

**Up-coming events at FHNMA**

Cecil County Fair  
July 18 to July 26

Please visit [www.cecilcountyfair.org](http://www.cecilcountyfair.org)  
for detailed information.