

# Friends of Huntley Meadows Park



## September 2014

Website: [www.Friendsofhuntleymeadows.org](http://www.Friendsofhuntleymeadows.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark)

### Park Manager's Message

Fall is a perfect time to consider cycles and embrace the changes they often bring. As Huntley Meadows moves from the hot, slow, insect-filled summer into the cooler temps, longer nights, and windy days of autumn, you can look forward to a whole new buffet of natural sights and sounds. As ever, the Park's central wetland is a stage, with sets that alter almost daily. It's hard to imagine a better place to say good-bye to one season and usher in the next. What waits for you this fall on the boardwalk? Following is just a snapshot of the autumnal cast of characters flying, spinning, leaping, and calling through the wetland.

#### Fall Wetland Wildlife

September-October is high season for Orb-weaving Spiders

(family Araneidae) large, often colorful spiders that create iconic circular webs. Look for hundreds (sometimes thousands) of



Argiope Orb-Weaver Spider



Southern Leopard Frog Calling -  
by Ann Cameron Siegal

their webs on fall mornings along the boardwalk and throughout the wetland. Young spiderlings often engage in clustering behavior for warmth and protection, then use their silk as parachutes for aerial dispersal, sometimes floating for hundreds of miles on wind currents. Miniscule eight-legged explorers have landed on

hot air balloons and deep sea ocean liners. Tiny, bright red dragonflies called Autumn Meadowhawks will be patrolling the wetland boardwalk this fall, looking for tasty morsels such as floating spiderlings. Southern Leopard Frogs come out again in fall and sing, often louder and in greater numbers than in spring. Singing is exhausting work - many Meadowhawks and Orb-weavers will be consumed by the hungry amphibian chorus. Long-horned Meadow Grasshoppers will also be out in force, creating their own autumnal afternoon chorus, and also contributing to froggy

### **Wild Side Wagon Rides Are Back!**

(Families, children 4 yrs. and up). Take a 90-minute tractor ride with a Park naturalist to parts of the wetland that are difficult to reach on foot. Look for and learn about songbirds, wildflowers, butterflies and waterfowl, then stop for a snack at the observation platform. Meet at South King's Highway Park entrance. \$6

Friday 9/12, 6pm  
Saturday 9/27, 2pm  
Saturday 9/27, 4pm  
Saturday 10/11, 2pm  
Saturday 10/11, 4pm  
Saturday 10/25, 2pm  
Saturday 10/25, 4pm  
Saturday 11/8, 2pm

Registration code: 3404864901  
Registration code: 3404864902  
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diets. Rusty Blackbirds, possibly the Park's most imperiled avian visitors (populations have decreased throughout their range by 90%), will start appearing in fall and join the frogs for insect dining. Crows and Grackles start flocking in huge numbers by October, spreading seeds, hours of bird conversations, and a feeling of abundance to the habitats they visit. Our first winter ducks, usually Green-winged Teals, fly down from Canada and the upper Midwest to swim through summer-grown grasses and feed on their fatty seeds. Lastly, look for migrating raptors from our observation tower: Broad-winged Hawks (September), Sharp-shinned Hawks (October) and Merlins (November).

#### Water Level Management and Seasonal Cycles

This will have been our first full year after completion of the wetland restoration construction. Our goal to mimic natural cycles of an emergent (or hemi) marsh means ever-changing water levels, not the more static levels of a pond or lake. This translates to highest water in the winter, lowest (with occasional mud flats) in summer, and in-between stages in spring and fall. Look for low water levels and plant growth this September, with rising water in October/November to greet our winter ducks. Flooding and droughts are both important in the life of a healthy marsh, and regular visits to Huntley Meadows over the years will showcase both extremes.

'Park Managers Message' - cont'd on page 9

## 2014 FRIENDS OF HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

# 40 Years of Huntley Meadows

This year we're changing it up!

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Park's establishment, the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) is sponsoring a new photo contest with new rules. We are looking for all your best photographs from the Park over the past 40 years. We are looking for new and creative displays in addition to our traditional submissions. Time to raid the attic and dust off the photo albums - let's celebrate the beauty of our Park and usher in the next 40 years!

### Basic rules

- Photos must have been taken at Huntley Meadows Park.
- Photos may contain people, but you must have their permission to put their photos on display (recent photos), or their images must not be easily recognizable (older photos).

### Here's what's new for 2014!

The photos will remain your property and will not be for sale. FOHMP asks for a "pay-what-you-wish" submission fee to help defray the costs of producing the show. Materials purchased for the "producer's pick" remain the property of FOHMP.

We are especially interested in older photos taken during the early days of the Park. You may choose the display method, but the finished product must be able to be displayed in the Visitor Center auditorium. Here are some suggestions:

**Traditional photo submissions** (as in previous shows) - photos must be matted but not framed, in standard sizes not to exceed 16 x 40 inches. Youth submissions strongly encouraged! Limit: 4 photos

**Digital collage** - compilation of scanned or digital images from the Park displayed in a single poster. Printed poster not to exceed 16 x 40 inches. Limit: 1 poster

**Memory board** - good for older, smaller photos. Great idea for kids too! Boards are available at most craft stores in the area and online. Limit: 1 board.

**Scrapbook/photo album** - also good for older photos and newspaper articles. Books are available at craft and photography stores and online. Limit: 1 book.

**Producer's pick** - does the above sound like too much work? Hand in a stack of old photos, and the producer of the photo show will create a display for you. Limit: 1 project.

**Your pick** - get creative and work with the show producer on an alternative photography display that celebrates the spirit of the Park. Limit: 1 project.

Prizes will be awarded based on the submissions received.

For more information and to discuss ideas, email us at [friendsofhmp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhmp@gmail.com)

**The deadline for submissions is November 15, 2014.**

## The Huntley Meadows Monday Morning Birdwalk - Harry Glasgow

"Summer time, and the livin' is easy . . ." This is certainly so for Huntley Meadows Monday morning birders. Migration is over; the young are being hatched; and what birders like to call, 'post nesting dispersal' begins; and it's hot! It tends to be a lazy part of the year, and interests drift to insects, botany, and summer vacations. But the birds are still here, and a great deal can be seen. This year's crop of Wood Duck and Hooded Merganser young have prospered, and the survival rate among the young appears higher than normal. The young of several species have learned to fly, but are still demanding food from their parents. So, we see young Barn and Tree Swallows perched on the boardwalk railing, wings fluttering, and frenzied calls for food screeching through the wetland.

We are keeping our eyes and ears open for two species which we hope will find the new wetlands to their liking. American Bitterns and King Rails were regular breeders at Huntley some years ago. Neither has nested at Huntley until recently. Calls of both species have been heard this year in the wetland during May, and brief glimpses of a Bittern have

King Rail - by Ed Edar



been noted. Are they just passing through, or will we be seeing their young this year too? Additionally, we have been watching a Pied Billed Grebe which flew into the

Park in late winter and was still around at this writing in mid-June. If it is nesting, that will be a record for this park. And finally, we have been watching nests of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Eastern Kingbirds. Keep your fingers crossed.

In his seminal masterpiece, "Ornithology," author Frank Gill says that flight is the central avian adaptation. Gill points out that, "Birds can hover in one place, dive at breathtaking speeds, fly upside down and backward, and soar for days on end." Our best aircraft are inferior by a large margin. Birds have developed an extraordinary range of specialized modes of flight. Vultures, Hawks, and other soaring birds are able to

remain aloft by exploiting rising columns of warm air called "thermals," created during the daily warming of the surface of the earth. This practice allows a Vulture to travel a distance of up to 75 kilometers by taking advantage of only six thermals that rise to heights of 1500 kilometers. A Hummingbird can move forward or backward from stationary hovering just by changing the direction of its wing beat because various wing angles produce different combinations of lift and thrust. Many birds alternate regular periods of flapping flight with short periods of nonflapping or soaring flight. Hawks commonly use this technique, while Finches and Woodpeckers rise and fall as they alternate flapping and nonflapping sequences in their flight.

Bird evolution has contributed to the success of bird flight in many ways. The development of specialized feathers, wing surfaces, and skeletal adaptations all assist the function of flight. Bird bones, for instance, are light, air-filled structures unlike the dense, solid bones found in many terrestrial creatures, such as humans. Flight is easier when the load is lighter.

We could go on about bird flight for pages (Gill has nearly 30 pages devoted to flight in his book), but you get the point. I leave you with one last fact that might make you gasp: during their migratory journeys, some birds fly astonishing distances. The Red Knot is one example, having one of the longest migrations of any bird. Every autumn it flies more than 9,000 miles from the Arctic to the southern tip of South America . . . and then back in the spring - 18,000 miles in one year. Most of us don't drive that much in a year. Keep in mind, much of this travel is over open water - few places to land and rest. Also keep in mind, a typical Red Knot weighs between 45 and 90 ounces. Birds are pretty amazing animals!

*The Monday Morning Bird Walk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except when there are electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 8am (8am from November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the Lockheed Blvd. entrance.*

### Volunteer

Opportunities available for all interests and all abilities.  
Speak with Volunteer Coordinator Kathleen Lowe for details!  
703-768-2525 Kathleen.Lowe@fairfaxcounty.gov



## **Meet the Park Summer Interns**

Interns play an important role in running summer camps, conducting essential research, and completing important projects over the summer. Mid-summer this year's interns were asked to write about their experience and introduce themselves to our readers.

### **NATURALIST INTERN**

Hello! I'm Kate Mott, and I'm the Naturalist Intern at the Park this summer. I just finished my sophomore year at the College of William and Mary where I'm pursuing a double major in biology and environmental science with an unofficial minor in watching Netflix. When I'm not going to classes or spending an unhealthy amount of time in the library, I love to be outside hiking, sailing, or even just sitting with a book.

Working at Huntley Meadows and gaining experience in the field of environmental education has been fantastic! Each week a new camp rolls around, and along with that, a series of new, excited 6-year-olds to tame. Teaching these "little littles" about the basics of biology and environmental conservation has been a gratifying and heartwarming experience. A few weeks ago, I had the chance to teach the "Reptile Rangers" camp about turtles. Just minutes after the lesson, we went on our daily wetland walk, and I was able to apply the lesson directly to the turtles of the Park. I'm so grateful to Huntley Meadows for providing a unique teaching habitat with so many visible processes happening every day!

This summer I'm getting an excellent idea of what kind of work I might like to pursue after graduation, such as working in environmental education, especially wetland conservation education, but I'm also learning so much about what the Park has to offer to its visitors. I've really enjoyed being part of events like the frog call survey, Bug Lovers Paradise, Moth Night, and helping out with some of the research management projects. I'd like to thank everyone with the Friend's group for this opportunity, as well as being such awesome, nice, and welcoming people every time we've met!



### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INTERN**

Hello my name is Matt Bright. For the last four months I've had the distinct pleasure of working with the Resource Management Team at Huntley Meadows as a Natural Resources Management Intern. As Conservation Coordinator with the Earth Sangha, I help manage our Wild Plant Nursery and lead our own ecological restoration efforts. I joined the Huntley team to help primarily with restoration plantings following the completion of construction at the wetlands. As someone who grew up in Fairfax County, and spent many hours as a kid poking around in the wetlands here, this was a great opportunity to get better acquainted with one of the most ecologically significant sites in the region.

With the help of volunteers and Huntley Meadows staff, we organized two successful large-scale plantings, in addition to the hundreds (but it felt like thousands!) of plants Eric, Ashley, and I installed. I hope that future visitors to the Park appreciate the wetland teeming with local ecotype lizard-tail, arrow arum, and woolgrass. We had to work to cut back recalcitrant coir matting, insert the plugs in dense, smelly mud, and then protect them from marauding bands of Canada Geese.

Luckily, for me anyway, planting wasn't the only thing I got to do. Since I work almost exclusively with plants, I was eager to

take advantage of the chance to learn more about the wildlife at Huntley Meadows. Under Dave Lawlor's tutelage, I learned how to identify wetland fauna, build beaver cages, survey vernal pools, and, of course, deal with geese. Mucking through freezing rain to peer at water markers through fogged glasses proved to be a nice diversion from all the digging and planting.

All joking aside, I'd like to think that, even in such a short period of time, I've been an asset to Huntley Meadows and truly helped to restore the wetlands. For my part, it has been extremely gratifying to see the changes out in the wetlands from the successful plantings and to work with such a great group. My heartfelt thanks go out to Alan Ford and everyone else at the Virginia Native Plant Society who



made this internship possible through their generous funding. Even as my internship comes to an end this fall, I hope to continue to work closely with Dave and the Huntley staff, through the Earth Sangha in whatever way I can.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INTERN



My name is Tom Cuthbertson, and I am this summer's Cultural Resource Management Intern for Historic Huntley. I came to this internship with a B.A. in History from Ohio State University, and I have completed the class work for my M.A. in Anthropology with a focus in Historical Archaeology at the College of William and Mary. I hope to complete and defend my thesis by the end of this coming winter. In addition to my schooling, I have about two years of experience in Cultural Resource Management Archaeology. This summer, I am writing a historical narrative, and updating many of the sections of the docent manual for Historic Huntley. I am also leading some of the Saturday tours at Historic Huntley and assisting Geoff Cohrs with his camp programs. I am grateful to the Friends of Historic Huntley for this opportunity to experience the more public side of Cultural Resource Management and am enjoying working with the staff at Huntley Meadows Park.

## Can You Help?

We would like to ask any of our readers who receive a homeowners e-mail or newsletter to please consider sending the editor's contact information to the FOHMP Board so that we can share Park news and activities with your community.

Send contact information to:  
[friendsofhmp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhmp@gmail.com)

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INTERN

Hi! My name is Ashley Elliott. A couple of months ago I worked as a bank teller. As a recent graduate from the University of Mary Washington with a B.S. in Earth and Environmental Sciences, I felt I was wasting my potential. I was therefore ecstatic when Dave Lawlor (Resource Manager) called me in mid-May with the statement: "We'd like to offer you the position." And when Dave asked what I wished to accomplish with the internship, I told him simply, "I want experience." Dave and the staff at Huntley Meadows have since doled out considerable amounts of just that.

The internship's primary objective was a water quality assessment of the wetland and its corresponding inflow and outflow. I sampled and identified benthic macroinvertebrates, or aquatic bugs. These critters are bio-indicators of certain water quality parameters, including oxygen levels, and provide an overview of the health of the wetland. Before the internship, I had a working knowledge of benthic macroinvertebrates and water quality. My knowledge base has since increased dramatically.

I have harvested more than an increased understanding of water quality parameters. I can now correctly identify certain trees, shrubs and plants because of knowledge imparted by



Karla Jamir (Park Volunteer) and Dave's nature walks. Gary Fleming (Vegetation Ecologist for VA Department of Conservation and Recreation) and his coworker Karen Patterson (Vegetation Ecologist for VA Department of Conservation and Recreation) taught me to distinguish between various oak and rush species, and how to properly set up a vegetation plot survey. Thanks to Karen Sheffield's (Operations Manager) vernal pool surveys, I can tell the difference between marbled

and spotted salamanders, as well as spring peepers, southern leopard, and green tree frogs. I understand the need to keep tabs on goose and deer populations and certain measures to control both. Melina Tye (Park Volunteer) helped me identify birds based solely on their calls and songs. I can even drive a Kubota and, with supervision from Brian Moore (Resource/ Maintenance Crew Chief), a John Deere tractor. Other new skills I added to

my repertoire include: beaver fencing, fence repairs, cultivating plants in the wetland, controlling invasive species, turtle identification, and creating maps via ArcMap.

To say I've had the experience of a lifetime would be an understatement. It's been an indescribable joy to work with the staff at Huntley Meadows. It's with much fondness and appreciation that I say a very warm thank you to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

# News & Announcements

## Donate through Amazon

If you shop on Amazon, you can identify Friends of Huntley Meadows Park as your favorite charity, and for every purchase you make, we will receive a small donation. Simply register FOHMP as your preferred charity at <https://smile.amazon.com>.

You'll be asked to identify the organization you'd like to support. Enter "Friends of Huntley Meadows Park" in the appropriate box. Our information will pop up for you to verify. You'll then need to continue logging into Amazon using your usual user name and password. It will show who you're supporting at the top of the page.

This costs YOU nothing and costs FOHMP nothing. Amazon makes the donation.

The donation amount is 0.5% of every purchase. We'll receive proceeds on a quarterly basis.

## Upcoming Art Shows

### **September-October**

Touch of Nature - James Strohmeyer

Huntley Meadows would like to welcome once again the Touch of Nature art show representing the artwork of James Strohmeyer. Originally from Arizona, James used to make trips to the D.C. metro area to visit friends, museums and the outdoors. A friend brought James to the "must see spot" known as Huntley Meadows; that's when he fell in love with all the Park had to offer. It also became one of the deciding factors in his relocation to the D.C. area. After moving to Virginia, James began establishing a life of art as a resident artist in the Lorton Workhouse and participating in the local art scene. Come see his show in the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center during September and October. Meet James at the **opening reception September 13, 2014 from 1-3pm**. Enjoy music, hors d'oeuvres, and sweets by Dulce Vida-Cupcakes. Bring your comfy shoes and cameras to enjoy the Park afterwards!

### **November**

Pottery Inspired by Nature - Laura Taylor

Do you like handcrafted pottery? Do you love nature? Then, you must visit my display at the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center in the month of November. My name is Laura Taylor, and I craft pottery that melds nature and clay. I have been creating pottery for about 15 years now, and I enjoy creating both wheel thrown and hand-built pieces. Most of my work is in earth tones (browns and greens) and includes motifs of plants or animals. I enjoy the challenge of creating different styles and forms. Besides standard functional bowl, plate, and mug designs, I also like to create tiles, lazy susans, beads and pendants, as well as altered designs. Working with clay has provided a perfect medium for me to meld my love of nature with art. Feel free to come visit and ask questions at my **artist's reception on November 1 from 1-3pm** or visit my website at: [potteryinspiredbynature.com](http://potteryinspiredbynature.com) to learn more about my work.

## Lifetime Members

The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park would like to thank the following new Lifetime members:

Donna Sturm  
Glenda C. Booth  
Bonita Brodie  
Annie & Eric Milstead  
P. Ann Kaupp

*If you would like to give a "lifetime" of support to Huntley Meadows Park by becoming a life member, please send a donation of \$150 to:*

Treasurer, FOHMP, 3701 Lockheed Blvd.  
Alexandria, VA 22306

## WANTED: USED BOOKS

FOHMP is looking for donations for our used book display at the Visitor Center gift shop. We are especially interested in books with the following themes:

- Guides (animals or plants; other parks or natural resource areas)
- Environmental protection and preservation
- Gardening (especially with a focus on native plants)
- Local history (DE, MD, VA area)
- Native American history
- Kid friendly (nature/natural history theme)



Bring books to the front desk at the Visitor Center. Having trouble bringing your books to the Park? Email us at: [friendsofhmp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhmp@gmail.com) and arrange for a Friend to pick them up for you.

All proceeds from book sales go to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park to support Park activities.



## **A Message from the President of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park**

Dear Friends:

Where did those lazy days of summer go? I hope your summer experiences were as great as some of those that came my way. I found that these weren't lazy days of summer but instead days filled with engaging activities. That is why they flew by so quickly! Usually in our area we are lucky to enjoy a few more days of summer-like weather well into September, October and sometimes even into November. I hope you have plans to spend these days outdoors soaking in the sunshine and the seasonal changes that show themselves beautifully this time of year. It is time to enjoy extended summer before the cooler and shorter days of autumn arrive.



Why not spend one or two of these days (or even just a few hours) at Huntley Meadows Park? Every day at Huntley brings change, whether it is a new bloom on a really neat native plant that shows off only once a year, a quick glimpse of an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (this is our state butterfly), or a beaver munching on some greens (who knew that greens could sound so tasty?!). Maybe you'll get lucky and see a fox cross the path, or some baby birds chirping away as they practice flying all around the Park (it is a treasured moment to watch a baby bird try to land on the branch of a tree or bush). Huntley Meadows Park is a busy place that welcomes people of all ages. Please come by for a visit at your soonest convenience.

Soon we'll be busy filling our schedules with activities galore for autumn. Don't forget about the cool program offerings at Huntley Meadows Park. We have activities for a whole range of experience levels. These are learning opportunities for all of us. Every time I attend one of these workshops, I learn something new. Sometimes it is a different way to look at trees, plants, birds, dragonflies, bats, owls, and the ecosystem and how it all works together to create what we have at Huntley Meadows. Our natural world is an amazing place. When things are out of balance, it is neat to watch how Mother Nature corrects herself. Sometimes, we think we know best how to manage our natural world. We can tweak things here or there, but Mother Nature always brings us back in balance. We are always learning. Even when we think we know what to do, sometimes we're surprised and things work out differently than we expect.

That is how it is this year (and next, and the next) with the budget here in Fairfax County. Sometimes it seems like actions related to the FCPA budget are unexpected. The new normal, that's what they call it. Do more with less. Maybe I'm missing something but aren't well-managed and well cared for parks and natural areas important to attracting new business and new residents to Fairfax County? Without this, our natural resources will look neglected and unattractive. In order to manage our natural spaces we need skilled Resource Management staff to lead us. Wow, we are lucky at Huntley Meadows Park! We have highly skilled staff here. Next time you visit the Park, stop by the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center to have a chat with the Naturalist on duty. Or join Kevin Munroe, our Park Manager on one of his "Walk and Talks." Or attend a workshop. Just one workshop led by the staff or skilled volunteers at Huntley Meadows, and I promise you, you'll be back for more. Check out what's going on at the Park on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark>. We love visitors to Huntley Meadows Park! Stop by any time you need a quiet moment, a dose of Nature. It's where you'll find me and many of your Friends every day. See you on the trails!

Cathy Ledec  
President

## **A Word from Historic Huntley**

Hopefully, since mention of Historic Huntley (HH) in the last Friends newsletter, you've had a chance to walk the woodchip/asphalt trail leading from HMP's Lockheed Blvd. entrance up Harrison Lane to HH, the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century, hillside summer villa of Thomson F. Mason. The view from the heights of the villa's porch encompasses the Hybla Valley spread below it. Thanks to the natural preservation efforts of the HMP Friends and other Park supporters, that view today is a stunning one of HMP Virginia woodland – especially during those months when the Park's trees have their leafy bouquets on full display.

Today's view of Mother Nature in all her primal glory leads many HH visitors to assume that virginal Nature has always been the HH view. This, however, is not so.

An early 19<sup>th</sup>-century guest standing on the villa porch of Thomson F. Mason would have seen mostly acres and acres of grain planted by the Mason family as well as some marsh or woodland presumably used for hunting. Without today's vast forest cover blocking the sight lines, the Potomac River and the trade ships that plied its waters would have been in clear view.

If, contented by this picturesque view, our visitor had remained on the villa porch into the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the vista would have changed to one of Union soldiers assembling, marching, and training in defense of the capital city of Washington. At that time, what is today HMP served as the soldiers' military parade ground – albeit a soggy one.

Standing on the villa porch in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, one's view would have been of cows – lots and lots of cows, as Hybla Valley was then a major center of dairy operations. By the late 1920s, this view was significantly replaced by the sight of an airport for dirigibles, a venture that never took off, so to speak.

The federal government subsequently acquired the Hybla Valley lands, and the villa view became, well, “governmental.” During the 1940s, the Bureau of Public Roads used the property for testing asphalt road surfaces.

During the 1950's Cold War era, the view from Huntley was once again of military “occupation” for capital city defense. The Virginia National Guard was stationed in Hybla Valley to provide anti-aircraft protection; the Navy conducted classified radio communications research, developing antennae arrays that spotted Sputnik.

In 1975, the Navy declared the land surplus, and President Ford signed it over to the citizens of Fairfax County for use as a park, leading to the forested view of Mother Nature that engenders a sense of rapturous wonder in today's HH visitors.

HH and HMP share a history of occasional common owners (the Mason family and the Fairfax County Park Authority). The clear sight lines from HH of the lands comprising HMP mean that regardless of their ownership and on-site activity differences at various points in time, the HMP and HH properties have always been and always will be linked. In that respect, the history of HMP and HH is a shared one. Hopefully in future, the Friends groups of both sites will find ways to collaborate in bringing that shared history to the public fore -- especially as HMP prepares to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015!

If you'd like to double-up and be a member of the Friends of HH as well as the FOHMP, membership brochures with FOHH application forms are available at the Norma Hoffman Visitors Center. Annual membership rates are \$15 (individual), \$20 (family), and \$10 (student/senior). Or, for just \$150, you can purchase a Lifetime membership.



## Treasurer's Report

### *End of Year Financial Statement for the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park*

Our Fiscal Year ended June 30, and it was an excellent year for the Friends! We had three big income drivers that far surpassed expectations. First, a new t-shirt design in an array of colors spurred sales of over \$6,700. Second, parking donations exceeded \$10,000 for the first time. After a slow and snowy winter, parking donations bounced back as our community flocked to enjoy the spring. Finally, Margaret Wohler was awarded three grants to support her art in nature workshops. You'll find her most days in the outdoor classroom with classes young and old creating beautiful things and looking at nature from a different angle.

FOHMP did not need to support seasonal salaries for HMP staff this year, but we did support several large-ticket items (such as two sheds and a field computer) to help the staff conduct their kids camps, programs, and field monitoring.

We have an exciting year approaching with the Park's 40th anniversary. FOHMP will help create and fund programs throughout the year. And of course, as preservationists of the environment, the Friends group must always be vigilant and prepared to advocate on behalf of the Park, its budget, and its resources. The next letter-writing campaign is always right around the corner.

The FY2015 budget will be presented in the next newsletter. Thank you for your support of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park.

#### 'Park Managers Message' - cont'd

#### 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events

Huntley Meadows Park turns 40 in 2015! This is an important benchmark and an opportunity to look back and ahead, as we celebrate Huntley's past and prepare for its future. Just as the wetland's water levels and wildlife have cycles, so has this park. Keep an eye on the County and Friends websites and publications for exciting anniversary events, starting this fall and continuing through 2015.

Visit the Park this fall and look for autumn wildlife, shifting water levels, anniversary events, and create your own late-season memories – celebrate Huntley as a place of cycles.

- Kevin Munroe



Autumn Meadow Hawk in Wheel Matting position

### Budget and Actuals for FY2014

Carryover from FY2013, checking account: \$11,752.40  
 Carryover from FY2013, savings account: \$10,342.24  
 Checking account ending balance: \$16,607.49

| Income:  | Budgeted           | Actual             |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Memberships  | \$4,500.00         | \$4,385.00         |
| Donations  | 5,000.00           | 5,427.25           |
| Sales  | 3,000.00           | 6,756.81           |
| Parking Donations  | 8,000.00           | 10,114.01          |
| Grants   | 2,000.00           | 3,500.00           |
| Misc. Fundraising<br>(Photo show, Wetlands Awareness Day, Whole Foods) | 4,500.00           | 3,888.04           |
| <b>Total Income</b>  | <b>\$35,000</b>    | <b>\$35,071.11</b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>  |                    |                    |
| <i>Park Program Support</i>  |                    |                    |
| Seasonal Salaries  | \$8,000.00         | \$ -               |
| Naturalist Intern (& Res Mgmt Intern as of May 2014)                   | 2,800.00           | 2,000.00           |
| Financial Aid  | 1,500.00           | 269.00             |
| Resource Mgmt/Environmental Education                                  | 5,000.00           | 4,753.88           |
| Building Operations/Grounds  | 4,000.00           | 8,268.74           |
| Special Projects (WAD, Birdathon)                                      | 3,500.00           | 4,155.00           |
| <i>Subtotal</i>  | <i>\$24,800.00</i> | <i>\$19,446.62</i> |
| <i>FOHMP Operating Expenses</i>  |                    |                    |
| Newsletter   | \$1,200.00         | \$1,266.40         |
| Sales (apparel, books)   | 3,500.00           | 5,010.51           |
| Fundraising (appeal, parking)  | 1,000.00           | 524.01             |
| Website  | 500.00             | 389.40             |
| Friends of Historic Huntley  | 2,000.00           | 1,025.00           |
| Misc. (meeting, VA fee, stickers)                                      | 2,000.00           | 2,363.01           |
| <i>Subtotal</i>  | <i>\$10,200.00</i> | <i>\$10,578.33</i> |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>  | <b>\$35,000.00</b> | <b>\$30,024.95</b> |
| Savings account ending balance:  |                    | \$11,853.50        |
| Funds FOHMP has committed but not disbursed:                           |                    | \$7,181.26         |

## **Considering a Gift, Leaving a Legacy**

Did you know that only 25 percent of people in this country have a will and that most of those wills are out of date? These facts were presented at a workshop on Planned Giving sponsored by the Federation of Friends Groups on March 1, 2014 and attended by several FOHMP board members. In 2013, the Fairfax County Park Foundation raised over \$1 million in donations, which support the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) "by raising private funds, obtaining grants and creating partnerships to meet our community's needs for park land, facilities and services." Many of these donations are bequests.

A bequest tells your survivors what was important to you while you were here and passes on the message that you hope that it's important to them too. Bequests to our parks are usually from individuals who cared not only about the physical space and beauty of the park, but were also committed to the mission of the FCPA. They were typically long-time volunteers in the parks and were loyal donors of many small monetary gifts over the years. Most bequests to the parks are fairly modest and are from people who were not wealthy, but comfortable.

When considering a bequest to a park, there are a few things to keep in mind:

Before you consider *any* bequest to any individual or organization, you should *always* seek legal advice from a knowledgeable, experienced attorney who is well-versed in your state's laws and regulations governing wills.

The securest way to give a planned gift to a park in Fairfax County is to arrange the donation with the Fairfax County Park Foundation. The Fairfax County Park Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization (501(c)(3)) and is led by a volunteer Board of Directors and staffed by an Executive Director with a lean and efficient staff. The Foundation is a stable, established organization created specifically to help FCPA meet the needs that aren't supported through fees and funding alone. The Foundation is organized to safely and efficiently handle donations of any size and kind, while most friends groups are not equipped to accept a large monetary bequest or an unusual gift (such as a property).

While it is a great idea to donate to a specific park that has meant something special to you, it is difficult for the park to fulfill a very specific request. For example, if you give a park \$2,000 to support summer nature camps, this money can be used for facilities, supplies, staff salaries, scholarships, and any other activity associated with the camps. If you give \$2,000 to build a specific facility or exhibit, this project may not be in the FCPA's plans for the park, and there is no way to accommodate the requested facility. Your bequest then cannot be used.

Whether you are drafting your will for the first time or revising an outdated one, please consider a bequest to Huntley Meadows Park. Your legacy will live on in your generous donation, no matter the amount. Visit <http://www.fairfaxparkfoundation.org/default.htm> for more information on planned giving.

*No part of this article should be interpreted as legal advice. Always seek the knowledge of a reputable, licensed attorney when making end-of-life decisions.*

## **Wetland Monitoring Partnership with George Mason University**

A team of George Mason University (GMU) students, led by Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Policy Changwoo Ahn and GMU student Kara Jones, has spent the last year monitoring the macro-invertebrate populations of the Park's central wetland. Macro-invertebrates are wildlife species without backbones that can be seen by the naked eye, i.e., macro, and in this instance refer to aquatic organisms, such as crayfish, insects, snails, leeches, annelids, etc.

Huntley Meadows Park staff and volunteers have also been monitoring the Park's aquatic macro-invertebrates for decades at both stream and wetland sites. The additional monitoring activity by GMU is focused specifically on determining how best to use macro-invertebrates in wetland/marsh habitats versus stream habitats and examining the effect of restoration activities on macro-invertebrate populations.



'Wetland Monitoring Partnership with GMU' - cont'd on page 11

## Fall Hawk Watching – Top Local Spots

Fall is a great time to see hundreds of raptors migrate south along coastlines, rivers, mountain ridges, and other natural highways. You might see a dozen species in a day if you're lucky, and often side by side, creating a chance to learn their field-marks. If the winds are right, you can get a glimpse of species that only pass briefly through Northern Virginia, such as Goshawks, Merlins, Peregrines, Golden Eagles and Broad-winged Hawks. As mentioned in the **Park Manager's Message**, the observation tower in Huntley's wetland can be a great spot (park yourself for an hour or two on an October morning or late afternoon), but there are other spots just a few hours away with even better raptor-viewing:

1) Waggoner's Gap, PA (2 hr drive) - [www.waggap.com](http://www.waggap.com)

Perhaps the least flashy (certainly the smallest), Waggoner's Gap may be the best site for consistently great looks at many species, and it's close enough to be a day-trip. A small parking lot, single port-a-john, one sign and a short trail leading to a pile of boulders is all we're talking about, but that pile of boulders overlooks a PA mountain ridge and valley – sit here for several hours (dress VERY warmly!), and watch as Hawks, Falcons, and Eagles fly almost at eye-level. No facilities or trails, but it's perfect for birders looking for great looks at many species just 2 hours from D.C.



Accipiter Hawk Resting

2) Hawk Mountain, PA (3 hr drive) - <http://www.hawkmountain.org/>

Probably the best known local site for Hawk watching, and a beautiful park with many trails, excellent visitor center, fascinating history and impressive vistas. Great for the whole family (not just die-hard birders), but birds are often far away so views range from excellent to frustrating.

3) Cape May, NJ (4 hr drive) -

[www.njaudubon.org/SectionCapeMayBirdObservatory/CMBOHome.aspx](http://www.njaudubon.org/SectionCapeMayBirdObservatory/CMBOHome.aspx)

The center for birdwatchers in the Mid-Atlantic, some of the highest numbers of Hawks seen each year, and a great chance to see rare birds. Lots of facilities, different parks to visit, and the best place to connect with fellow bird geeks.

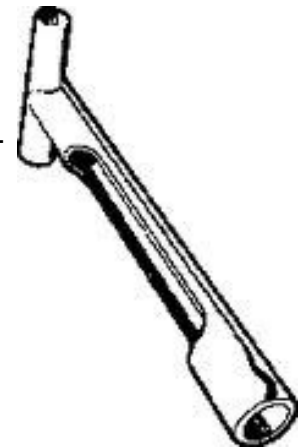
4) Kiptopeke State Park, VA (4 hr drive) - [www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/kiptopeke](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/kiptopeke)

May be the furthest drive of these four, but also one of the most interesting parks to visit, as it's on the southern tip of the DE/MD/VA peninsula (just across the water from Virginia Beach).

### 'Wetland Monitoring Partnership with GMU' - cont'd

Various techniques, including traps, viewing disks, plot surveys and sampling of soils, plants and water have been conducted. The objective of the study is to develop macro-invertebrate-based metrics that can be used to evaluate the ecological integrity and health of a wetland habitat.

Huntley Meadows Park staff appreciates all the time and expertise donated by GMU, and looks forward to combining this information with other surveys and monitoring projects taking place in and around the Park's central wetland. Monitoring is an important component of responsible resource management, as it allows you to better understand what you have, and therefore make more informed decisions. Park staff and volunteers have been working with various academic organizations, as well as other state and county agencies, for decades to combine the information gathered from our own monitoring with that from additional monitoring.



## Programs at Huntley Meadows Park

### Children's Programs

All programs require reservations. Sign-ups can be done online using Parktakes, search "Huntley" at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes).

**Nature Buddies** (3-5 year olds) 2:00-3:30pm. Parent and child will read a story, play games and take a walk to the wetland to look at real world examples of seasonal happenings. Accompanying adult does not pay. \$7

Saturday, September 6. Registration code: 3404826101

OR Saturday, October 4. Registration code: 3404826102

**Storytime in the Forest** (3-5 year olds) Thursdays. Join us for a nature story, followed by a craft, outdoor exploration, etc. \$7

September 11, 10-11am Registration code: 3404865001  
 September 11, 1:30-2:30pm Registration code: 3404865002  
 September 25, 10-11am Registration code: 3404865003  
 September 25, 1:30-2:30pm Registration code: 3404865004  
 October 16, 10-11am Registration code: 3404865005  
 October 16, 1:30-2:30pm Registration code: 3404865006  
 November 20, 10-11am Registration code: 3404865007  
 November 20, 1:30-2:30pm Registration code: 3404865008

**Nature for Tiny Tots** (24mos-42mos) 10-11am. Children & their parents learn about plants, animals, and their habitats through songs, crafts, and activities. Supply fee of \$5 is due to instructor at first class. Adult participation is required. 8 weeks. \$92

Mondays starting September 15 Registration code: 3404672001 OR

Wednesdays starting September 17 Registration code: 3404672002

**Nature Sleuths** (5-6 yrs) 4:00-5:30pm. Mondays starting September 15. Children explore various habitats through hikes, hands-on investigations, stories, and the creation of their own nature journals. Additional supply fee of \$5 payable to instructor at first class. 8 Weeks. \$105  
 Registration code: 3404648901

**Nature Detectives** (3-5 year olds) 1:30-3:00pm. During this naturalist-led class, children and parents get the opportunity to explore the natural world through hikes, stories, songs, crafts and other hands-on activities. Additional supply fee of \$5 is payable to instructor at first class. 8 weeks. \$105  
 Wednesdays starting September 17. Registration code: 3404663301 OR Thursdays starting September 18. Registration code: 3404663302

**Young Explorers** (6-12 years) Mondays 4-5:30pm. Starting September 15. 8 weeks. Through activities, crafts, journals and trail walks, students will learn about animals and how nature is preparing for the changing season. Students will also learn about the Park and improve their observation and interaction skills. Students should dress for the weather. \$101  
 Registration code: 3404702601

**Science for Homeschoolers** (6-9 years) Wednesdays 3:30-5pm.

Starting September 17. 8 weeks. Students explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have basic reading and writing skills and be

comfortable working in a group. \$101  
 Registration code: 3404703001

**Science for Homeschoolers** (9-12 years) Thursdays 3:30-5pm.

Starting September 18. 8 weeks. Students explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have basic reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. \$101  
 Registration code: 3404723201

**Homeschoolers at Huntley** (6-9 years) Thursdays 1:30-3:00pm.

Starting September 18. 8 weeks. Students see the past laid out before their eyes and discover Huntley, Northern Virginia and Chesapeake-region history. Each week students learn about a different aspect of American history by participating in hands-on activities and hikes. Students must have basic reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. \$101  
 Registration code 3404866701



### **Boy Scout Merit Badges (Ages 11-17)**

All programs require reservations. Sign-ups can be done online using Parktakes, search "Huntley" at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes).

#### **Archaeology Merit Badge**

Sunday, September 28, 10am-3pm. Registration code: 3404739701, \$35

#### **Bird Study Merit Badge**

Monday, October 13, 9am-1pm. Registration code: 3404740001, \$28

#### **Chemistry Merit Badge**

Monday, October 13, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 3404748201, \$28

#### **Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge**

Sunday, September 7 10am-2pm. Registration code: 3404749001, \$28

#### **Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge**

At Historic Huntley, Tuesday, November 4, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 5784739902, \$28

#### **Indian Lore Merit Badge**

Saturday, November 8, 11am-2pm. Registration code: 3404741601, \$27

#### **Plant Science Merit Badge**

Saturday, September 27, 10am-2pm. Registration code: 3404740402, \$28

#### **Sustainability Merit Badge**

Tuesday, November 4, 10am-3pm. Registration code: 3404775801, \$35



**SEPTEMBER****6 Saturday - How to Draw Your Dragon (fly)**

(Ages 12+) 10-11:30am. Join naturalist/artist Margaret Wohler to learn tips & techniques for drawing dragonflies & other insects in the Park. Registration code: 3404820101 - \$6

**12 Friday - Twilight Hilltop Tour**

(Adults) 6-7:30pm. Historic Huntley sits upon a hill overlooking Hybla Valley & Huntley Meadows Park. It's a dramatic setting made all the more stunning by the setting sun. Join us after-hours for a special tour. Light refreshments served afterward. Dress for the weather. Registration code: 5784833901 - \$7

**13 Saturday****Sketches in Nature**

(Ages 15 and up) 10-11:30am. Drawing can be an important part of keeping a nature journal. Join a Park naturalist in our outdoor classroom to learn tips and techniques for adding sketches to your observations. Supply list will be emailed to registrants. Registration code: 3404850401 - \$6

**Sketches in Nature**

(Ages 9-13 yrs.) 2-3:30pm. See above. Registration code: 3404822501 - \$6

**Backyard Conservation**

(Ages 15+) 3:30-5pm. See 10/18. Registration code: 3404015001 - \$6

**Evening Stroll**

(Ages 6 and up) 6:30-8pm. See 10/18. Registration code: 3404827901 - \$6

**19 Friday - Local Lore**

(Ages 4-Adults) 6:30-8pm. Travel with your family back in time. Explore the Chesapeake region's rich history and the many cultures that have helped create this diverse community of local legend through activities, crafts and walks. Please call Park for seasonal topics. Registration code: 3404012001 - \$7

**20 Saturday****Park Manager Walk and Talk**

(Adults) 4-6pm. See 10/18. FREE

**Campfire with Stories and Songs**

(Ages 4 and up) 6:30-7:30pm. Enjoy a campfire with a Park naturalist for a traditional sing-a-long plus listen to American Indian stories of how some animals came to be. Enjoy s'mores. Canceled if inclement weather. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Registration code: 3404859301 - \$6

**26 Friday - Family Nature Night**

(Families) 6:30-8pm. See 10/24. Registration code: 3404012101 - \$7

**27 Saturday****Birding for Beginners**

(Ages 12 and up) 8-11am. Learn about the birds in the Park and some basic identification skills. Program begins with an indoor discussion. Children ages 12 to 16 must be accompanied by a registered adult. Registration code: 3404842501 - \$6

**Evening Walk**

(Adults) 7-9pm. Join Park Naturalist PJ Dunn on the trails after dark, listening for owls & frogs & watching for beaver activity. Registration code: 3404881801 - \$7

**OCTOBER****9 Thursday - Curator's Choice Tour**

(Adults) 7-8:30pm. Historic sites are rich with histories, mysteries, and stories. Docents and guides can only share a small fraction of these on regular tours. Join us for a rare opportunity when the Curator, Park Manager, or special guest reveals a

different side of the site. Registration code: 5784833801 - \$6

**11 Saturday - Boardwalk Astronomy**

(Ages 12+) 7-8:30pm. Join Park naturalists as they take you on a tour of constellations, comets & other current events happening in the heavens above. Registration code: 3404865101 - \$6

**17 Friday - Twilight Hilltop Tour**

(Adults) 5:30-7pm. See 9/12. Registration code: 5784833902 - \$7

**18 Saturday****Backyard Conservation**

(Ages 15+) 3:30-5pm. Join a Park naturalist to learn simple steps on how to improve your backyard's impact on the environment. Topics will vary seasonally, please call the Park for details. Registration code: 3404015002 - \$6

**Park Manager Walk and Talk**

(Adults) 4-6pm. Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on these monthly walks. Find out about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the Park is known. No registration required. FREE

**Evening Stroll**

(Ages 6+) 6-7:30pm. Take this rare opportunity to visit the wetland after dark. Learn the curious habits of fireflies, listen for owls, & watch bats hunt. You might even see resident beavers at work! Canceled if rain. Registration code: 3404827902 - \$6

**24 Friday - Family Nature Night**

(Families) 6:30-8pm. Come discover your natural neighborhood and reconnect your family with nature. Seasonal topics will explore the many habitats and diverse wildlife of the Park through activities, crafts, games and walks. Please call Park for topic. Registration code: 3404012102 - \$7

**25 Saturday-Evening Walk**

(Adults) 6-8pm. See 9/27. Registration code: 3404881802 - \$7

**NOVEMBER****1 Saturday - Huntley Harvest Festival**

(Ages 4+) 1-4pm. Join us for a day at Huntley Meadows and Historic Huntley to experience how everything from foxes to farmers prepares for winter. Come for storytelling, crafts, fun and games for the whole family. Canceled if rain; dress appropriately for the weather. \$10 at the door.

**2 Sunday - Birding for Beginners**

(Ages 12+) 8-11am. See 9/27. Registration code: 3404842502 - \$6

**15 Saturday****Boardwalk Astronomy**

(Ages 12+) 6-7:30pm. See 10/11. Registration code: 3404865102 - \$6

**Park Manager Walk and Talk**

(Adults) 4-6pm. See 10/18. FREE

**21 Friday - Family Nature Night**

(Families) 6:30-8pm. See 10/24. Registration code: 3404012103 - \$7

**22 Saturday - Owl Outing**

(Adults) 4:30-6:30pm. These nocturnal raptors are pair-bonding and looking for nesting sites at this time of year. Prowl the Park after dark to listen for and learn about our local owls, and possibly see a barred owl. Meet at the Visitor Center and dress for the weather and standing off trail. Registration code: 3404866601 - \$7

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park  
Membership and Renewal Form**

Please support Huntley Meadows Park by joining our Friends group. By becoming a member, you will help to protect and preserve the Park. Dues help fund new initiatives and programs, and your membership support will help us to be stronger advocates for the Park.

Fill out this form and mail the application to:

**Dues information:**

- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$10 Student/Senior
- \$150 Lifetime Membership
- Donation

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park  
3701 Lockheed Blvd.  
Alexandria, VA 22306**



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

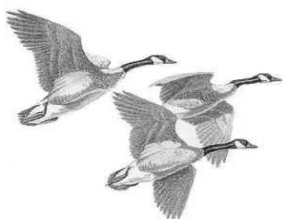
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park**

3701 Lockheed Blvd.  
Alexandria, VA 22306



Please check your mailing label for accuracy and notify us of any changes.  
Your membership expiration date is in the upper left corner.