

Support the Huntley Meadows Park 21st Annual Bird-a-thon

Every year on an early morning in the beginning of May, Park staff and volunteers spread out across Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) to count birds. In 1997, an annual survey evolved into an event to remember and honor two exceptional men: Ken Howard and Ed Weigel. Both were volunteers who shared their love of nature with any Park visitor lucky enough to chat with them, inspiring visitors, volunteers and staff. Their work continues to this day through the Park's Resource Management Internship funded by the HMP Bird-a-thon. This internship provides a young person with the opportunity to begin a career in conservation and to get hands-on experience in this wonderful Park. Over the years, many on the Board of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) have had the privilege of interacting with the interns, and we all believe this opportunity has a positive impact on their future endeavors as the next generation of stewards of our parks and green spaces.

Here is what some of the past years' interns have said about their experiences:

"I wanted to learn more about birds and reptiles, but I never expected to learn as much as I have."

"I have learned [to identify] countless forest, meadow and wetland plant species, and I've learned about invasive plant management and herbicides."

About performing water samples and collecting and identifying macroinvertebrates, "The diversity and amount of organisms I've gathered have really surprised me. Seeing the dedication of Huntley's staff and volunteers continues to inspire me to work harder."

For more than 20 years the FOHMP Board has sponsored the Bird-a-thon - that's more than 20 Resource Management Interns! All who participate in the count thoroughly enjoy their involvement with this fundraiser. Many are repeat volunteers for the event, and some have participated every year! They have counted birds in all kinds of conditions, from cold and rainy, to downright hot. Each year brings a new experience and new numbers, like sighting the all-time high of 108 species in 2004 or searching for one house sparrow to boost our numbers to 90 species. But no matter what happens, the feeling is that it's always such a treat to be in the Park.

The FOHMP Board requests donations (see donation form below) to support this annual event, which funds the yearly Resource Management Internship. Your generous donation will help us reach our 2017 goal of \$2,800.

Thank you for your continued support,
The Board, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

2017 BIRDATHON AT HUNTLEY MEADOWS PARK
Please submit form by May 5, 2017

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Donation Amount: _____

Please make checks payable to FOHMP and mail this form with your check to:
Huntley Meadows Park - Bird-a-thon
3701 Lockheed Blvd. Alexandria, VA 22306



Alternatively you can use our PayPal feature on the Membership page of our website
<http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/membership.html>.