



DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
CONSERVANCY

Fall 2020

Highlands JOURNAL

Thank You

Like many other organizations, the Delaware Highlands Conservancy has been challenged this year to find new ways to raise funds for our work, to offer quality educational programming (virtually!), and to stay connected to the local community.

We are deeply grateful to the volunteers, members, and friends who have continued to support the Conservancy this year—whether joining us on a virtual walk, contributing to the spring fundraising appeal, purchasing a redbud in the sapling sale, bidding on an item in the online auction, or volunteering on a committee.

Our work is made possible by the support of the community, and that has never been more clear than in 2020, when we have all faced unprecedented challenges and have seen what can be achieved when we find creative ways to work together.

Much about the future is uncertain, but at the Conservancy, we remain committed to protecting the working farms and forests, clean waters, and wildlife of the Upper Delaware River region, and to offering fun and educational programs for all ages.

We look forward to the day we can welcome you to our new Van Scott Nature Reserve (*read more about this inside!*) but in the meantime, we're working remotely and practicing social distancing to do our part to keep the community safe. Thank you for your continued support and for your investment in a healthy, sustainable future for us all.



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Scholarships Awarded to Local Students

In June, the Conservancy awarded its annual Delaware Highlands Conservancy/Yeaman Scholarship for \$1,000 to Mia VanWie, a 2020 graduate from Delaware Valley High School, and the Vanessa Van Gorder Memorial Scholarship for \$1,000 to Kara Campbell, a 2020 graduate of Wallenpaupack Area High School.

Recipient Mia VanWie (*top photo*) will attend Kenyon College in Gambier, OH, where she intends to major in environmental studies and political science. In high school, Mia served as Student Council President and Student Council Secretary; played varsity soccer, basketball, and lacrosse; was a member of the National Honor Society; worked on the school newspaper; and volunteered with Special Olympics. She is passionate about protecting the environment and participated in a research seminar her senior year where she worked to create a biodegradable straw made from seaweed.

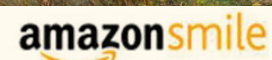


Recipient Kara Campbell (*bottom photo*) will attend the University of Vermont in Burlington, VT to major in environmental studies, with the goal of becoming an environmental educator. In high school, she was the class Vice President, captain of the swim team where she was a District Champion, a member of the track and field team, and a National Honor Society member. She volunteers with Special Olympics and with her local church. Kara loves nature and looks forward to helping others with her degree.



Learn more about the scholarships at www.delawarehighlands.org/learn/scholarships.

Donations toward the scholarship fund and other environmental education and conservation initiatives can be made at DelawareHighlands.org or by mail to PO Box 218, Hawley, PA 18428.



If you can't shop local, shop to give back...

Through AmazonSmile, 0.5% of the purchase price of your items is donated back to the Delaware Highlands Conservancy by the AmazonSmile Foundation. It's free to sign up and costs you nothing. Visit smile.amazon.com and select Delaware Highlands Conservancy to get started.

Winter Eagle Watching in the Upper Delaware

In the winter months, our region becomes a temporary home to hundreds of bald eagles. Arriving in December from Canada and upstate New York, the eagles come in search of open water to fish, and large stands of trees in which to perch and roost. The clean waters and protected lands of the Upper Delaware River provide the perfect winter habitat for these magnificent birds, and eagle-viewing has become a popular winter activity.

Although guided Conservancy Eagle Watch bus tours are cancelled for January and February 2021 due to COVID-19, visit www.DelawareHighlands.org/eagles for information on viewing eagles safely on your own and to download a map with GPS coordinates to take your own driving tour and look for eagles.

Follow the Delaware Highlands Conservancy on Facebook [@DelawareHighlandsConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/DelawareHighlandsConservancy) and Instagram and Twitter [@DHConservancy](https://twitter.com/DHConservancy) for our virtual Eagle Watch content, with photos, videos, updates, and stories from our volunteers on the eagles in our region through the winter season.

Please be aware that if you take your own driving tour, eagle viewing blinds and restrooms may not be open. If the blind is open, please wear a mask, practice social distancing, and limit the number of people inside at one time. Please

be compliant with CDC and state guidelines, and follow safety recommendations made by Conservancy volunteers.

During your visit, remember to practice 'eagle etiquette' to ensure you do not disturb the birds. Avoid loud noises such as yelling, car door slamming, horn honking, and unnecessary movement. Use binoculars instead of trying to get closer, and don't do anything to try to make the eagle fly. If the viewing blind is closed, remain inside your vehicle to avoid disturbing the birds, and park only in designated public parking areas.

Practicing eagle etiquette ensures that the eagles are able to conserve the precious energy they need to survive the cold winter months.

To identify eagles, look for their massive wing span of 6-7 feet. They are a deep brown and their heads and tails are either pure white or mottled with white if they are still juvenile. When they soar, their wings are held nearly flat, compared to the V-formation of a turkey vulture or the angled wing of an osprey.

The Upper Delaware River region is one of the largest wintering habitats for eagles in the northeast United States. Being respectful, aware, and cautious when watching wildlife means we can continue to experience the joy and satisfaction we get from seeing eagles soar above our rivers and forests.

Thank you for doing your part to keep eagles and people healthy and safe!

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The Van Scott Nature Reserve

In spring 2020, the Van Scott family generously donated a 144-acre property in Berlin Township, Beach Lake, Pennsylvania to the Delaware Highlands Conservancy to develop as an environmental learning center, Conservancy headquarters, and for use as a nature reserve.

The family provided the following message: “The Van Scott family wishes to join others dedicated to the mission of preserving open spaces for benefit to life on our homeland Planet Earth. We hope to help in discovery of better ways to teach better care of the world so that humankind survives and enjoys life, and that the Delaware Highlands Conservancy will engage an ever enlarging number of brilliant minds so concerned with tomorrow. We appreciate so much the dedication and efforts of the visionaries now involved with the work of the Conservancy. We are pleased and gratified to provide support for the Conservancy in its current and extended mission.”

“The staff and Board of Directors are honored and humbled to receive this incredibly generous gift from the Van Scott family—the largest gift in the Conservancy’s 26-year history,” stated Conservancy Executive Director Diane Rosencrance. “We are inspired by this dedication to environmental education, conservation, and sustainability, and look forward to fully realizing their vision for this special property and welcoming the community to the Conservancy’s new home.”

This special property, the Conservancy’s first nature reserve and headquarters, will be known as the Van Scott Nature Reserve. A former dairy farm, the property incorporates diverse habitats with abundant opportunities for conservation, environmental education, and outdoor

recreation on self-guided trails, including large open meadows, forested areas, two ponds, a tributary to Beach Lake Creek, and wetlands.

A well-maintained residence will become a vibrant headquarters for Conservancy staff. Other farm structures will be adapted over time for new and enhanced programs for school children as well as informal educational programming.

As the stewards of this historic dairy farm, the Conservancy will honor the land and the families who farmed it for generations while welcoming the public to visit the property, learn about our shared local history, and explore this beautiful Reserve.

A major feature of the Reserve will be over 3.5 miles of self-guided hiking trails through woodlands and meadows, and throughout the year the Conservancy will welcome visitors to educational programs, nature walks, and workshops.

“Since the Conservancy was first approached with this offer, the Board of Directors and staff have undertaken an intensive planning process and consulted with members of the community to determine how this significant gift will best serve as an environmental education center to benefit the entire region,” stated Board President Karen Lutz. As part of this planning process, the Conservancy Board of Directors is focused on a \$5 million capital campaign to fully realize the value of this gift and to sustainably support the expanded operations of the organization with an endowment fund.

The Conservancy staff and Board of Directors are working hard to complete the necessary updates to the buildings and property at the Van Scott Nature Reserve, and we look forward to welcoming you when the work is complete and the property is open to the public, currently planned for spring 2021.



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Congratulations to the Photo Contest Winners!

Nature Heals: Restore, Renew, Reconnect

Through summer 2020, the Conservancy held its third annual juried photo contest, “Nature Heals: Restore, Renew, Reconnect.” The contest invited local photographers to capture striking nature photos from the Upper Delaware River region in five categories: landscape, wildlife, macro, water, and new this year, a youth category for photographers under age 18.

The Conservancy is pleased to announce the winners of the juried contest. In the **landscape category**, winner – Jeffrey Sidle; runners-up – Pat Ashley and Laurie Lobbregt.

Wildlife category, winner – Kathleen Colligan; runners-up – Cristina Marchello and Kathe Williams. **Water category**, winners (tie for first place) – John Musick and Stacy Cohen; runner-up - Peter Kolesar. **Macro category**, winner – Melissa Olivo Heller; runners up – Jonathan Fox and Ann LeFevre. **Youth category** winners are Jesse Berman, age 12; Lorelei Maerz, age 6; and Reilly Mooney, age 16. The **People’s Choice** winners are Jeffrey Sidle and Kathleen Colligan, and the **Conservancy Staff Pick** is Milicent Wightman.

The ARTery Gallery in Milford, PA will host the Conservancy from November 12th until December 7th in an exhibition featuring the winning photographs alongside artwork created by ARTery member artists. The ARTery is located at 210 Broad Street, Milford, (570) 296-1234.



WINNER, LANDSCAPE - JEFFREY SIDLE



WINNER, WILDLIFE - KATHLEEN COLLIGAN



WINNER, MACRO - MELISSA OLIVO HELLER



WINNER, WATER - STACY COHEN

Conservancy Launches First Virtual Women and Their Woods Educational Retreat

Since 2011, the Conservancy has hosted 4-day biennial educational retreats for women landowners to gather, learn, and connect. Reacting to the challenges of hosting in-person gatherings during the current pandemic, we worked closely with our partners at the Penn State Center for Private Forests to revamp this year’s retreat to be fully virtual. Thanks to the support of our funders and presenters, 22 participants have received a “Forestry ToolKit” in the mail, are beginning to asynchronously watch prerecorded presentations, and will attend live Zoom sessions as a group through the month of November.

The Women and Their Woods initiative strives to provide the tools and knowledge necessary to manage forestland as well as cultivate a peer-learning network supported by forestry professionals. At our first Zoom session on September 10, participants introduced themselves to the group and shared their homework assignment which was to create a “cognitive map” of their property (examples shown here) to demonstrate their connection to their land.

This year’s Educational Retreat sponsors include the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, the US Forest Service at Grey Towers National Historic Site, the William Penn Foundation, the Pennsylvania Forestry Association, the Northern Tier Hardwood Association, and the Wayne County Community Foundation.



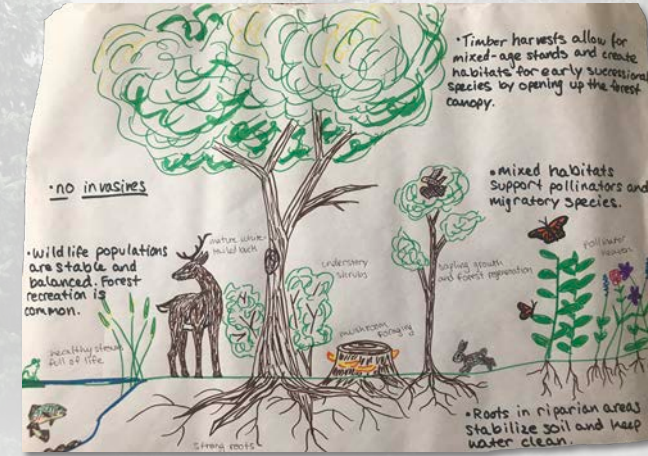
Getting Creative With COGNITIVE FOREST MAPS



HAND-WOVEN BASKET BY ANN VAN HISE



FOREST WALKING DIORAMA BY MELISSA GUION



IDEAL FOREST MAP BY JESSICAL ALBA



In Memoriam Remembering a Volunteer and Friend

In April, we said goodbye to a dedicated volunteer and friend of the Conservancy, Ann Cartwright.

Ann originally volunteered with the Eagle Institute and came to the Conservancy when the two organizations merged in 2012. She was always willing to help out with a smile, whether welcoming visitors to our booth at festivals and events, helping people look for and learn about eagles during our winter Eagle Watch program, or stuffing envelopes in the office for large mailings.

We’ll always remember and appreciate her enthusiasm for the Conservancy’s work, and we thank those who have chosen to honor Ann’s memory with a gift to the Conservancy.



The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is protecting more than 18,000 acres of working farms and forests, clean waters, and wildlife habitat in the Upper Delaware River region.

To learn more about...

the Delaware Highlands Conservancy or to make a donation in support of our work, visit DelawareHighlands.org.

Find us on  @DelawareHighlandsConservancy  @DHConservancy  @DHConservancy



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SERVING NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA

DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

"Nature is not a place to visit. It is home." – Gary Snyder

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