



30 DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
YEARS CONSERVANCY
Protecting nature together, forever.

Highlands JOURNAL

Fall 2024

VAN SCOTT NATURE RESERVE
PHOTO BY NICOLE DECAROLIS





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Building Careers in Conservation Scholarship Awarded to Local Student

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy has awarded the annual Vanessa Joy Van Gorder Memorial Scholarship for \$2,000 to Jillian Hoey, a 2024 graduate of Honesdale High School.

The Vanessa Joy Van Gorder Memorial Scholarship was established in 2015 in honor of Vanessa, who passed away on December 25, 2014. A recent graduate from West Chester University with a degree in education, Vanessa was passionate about the outdoors and loved exploring the region with her friends and family. The Conservancy established this scholarship in Vanessa's memory and to honor her dream of becoming an educator.

Recipient Jillian Hoey will attend the University of Scranton to focus on environmental studies. According to Jillian, "I intend to pursue a career in land stewardship and environmental concerns because of my profound passion for sustainable practices and saving our environment. I want to contribute meaningfully to addressing the pressing ecological challenges we face, and my aspiration reflects a personal dedication to fostering a more sustainable and resilient future for our planet and its diverse ecosystems." In high school, Jillian was a member of the National Honor Society, the varsity field hockey and cheerleading teams, and class treasurer for two years.



Jillian Hoey, Honesdale High School, 2024 scholarship recipient.

To continue to inspire youth and encourage study and careers in natural science and education, contributions to the scholarship fund and other environmental education and conservation initiatives can be made online at DelawareHighlands.org or by mail to 571 Perkins Pond Rd, Beach Lake, PA 18405.

Grant Funding Supports Restoration of Historic Cemetery Fence

The Conservancy received a \$3,155.50 grant from the Honesdale National Bank Foundation to support the restoration and rebuild of a perimeter fence for a small historic family cemetery on the Van Scott Nature Reserve.

The historic cemetery dates to the mid-to-late 19th century and is the resting place of several members of the McIntire family, who first settled the property in 1835. The fence around the perimeter was in disrepair and in need of replacement, and has now been rebuilt and restored.

The funding also supported the installation of an interpretive sign detailing the history of the McIntire family and of the Reserve property. The Conservancy thanks the Wayne County Historical Society for providing genealogical and historical research.

The cemetery and interpretive sign are found along the upper Explorer Trail on the Reserve if visitors would like to read more about the McIntire family and the history of the Reserve, a former dairy farm.



From left, Elizabeth Nagy, Honesdale National Bank Foundation; Lucas Green & Samantha Mango, Conservancy staff.

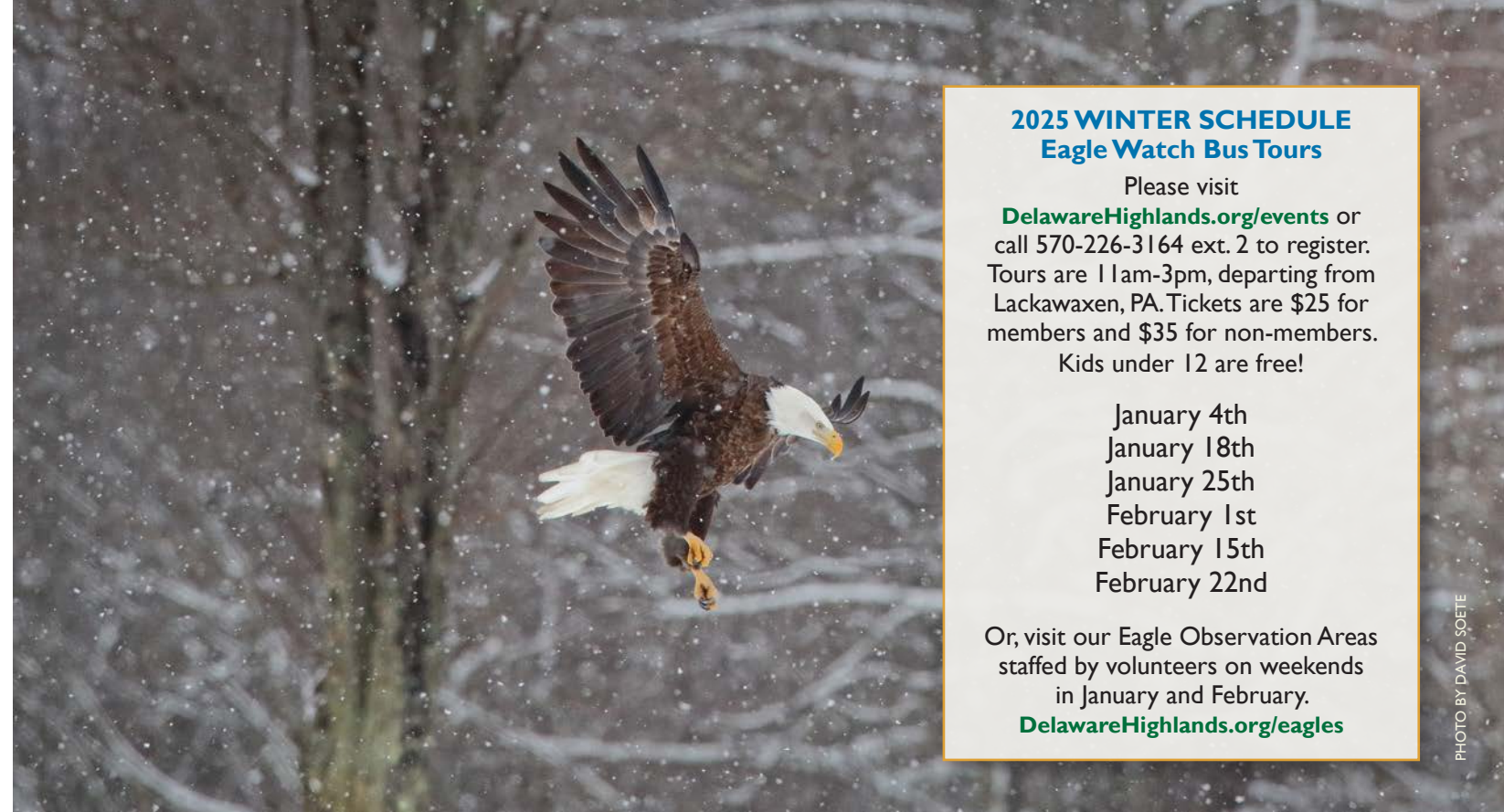


PHOTO BY DAVID SOETE

2025 WINTER SCHEDULE Eagle Watch Bus Tours

Please visit DelawareHighlands.org/events or call 570-226-3164 ext. 2 to register. Tours are 11am-3pm, departing from Lackawaxen, PA. Tickets are \$25 for members and \$35 for non-members. Kids under 12 are free!

- January 4th
- January 18th
- January 25th
- February 1st
- February 15th
- February 22nd

Or, visit our Eagle Observation Areas staffed by volunteers on weekends in January and February.
DelawareHighlands.org/eagles

Winter Eagle Watching in the Upper Delaware Join Us for a Guided Excursion or Self-Driving Tour!

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 forests of the Upper Delaware River provide the perfect winter habitat for these magnificent birds, and eagle-viewing is a popular winter activity.

Eagle Watch

Join us for a guided Eagle Watch bus tour, scheduled in January and February 2025. Trips will depart from our Winter Field Office in Lackawaxen, PA at the Zane Grey Museum. For more information or to register, please visit DelawareHighlands.org/events or call 570-226-3168 ext. 2.

If you prefer to take your own driving tour, visit DelawareHighlands.org/eagles for information on viewing eagles safely on your own and to download a map with GPS coordinates for the Eagle Observation Areas located throughout the Upper Delaware River region. On weekends in January and February, the viewing areas are staffed by Conservancy volunteers ready to help you have a great eagle-watching experience!

Follow the Conservancy on Facebook [@DelawareHighlandsConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/DelawareHighlandsConservancy) and Instagram [@DHConservancy](https://www.instagram.com/DHConservancy) for photos, videos, and updates from our volunteers through the winter season.

If you would like to join us as an Eagle Watch volunteer, find details about our annual **Eagle Watch Volunteer Training** in December at DelawareHighlands.org/events.

Eagle Etiquette

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.

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

Get to Know the Van Scott Nature Reserve

We asked Conservancy staff members to share their favorite places on the 144-acre Van Scott Nature Reserve: our headquarters in Beach Lake, PA. Get to know the Reserve through our eyes and use the map to walk along with us! With three miles of walking trails through the woods, wildflower meadows, and wetlands, the Reserve is open daily from sunrise to sunset. Visit www.DelawareHighlands.org/vsnr to download the trail map.

We want to hear from you, too! Share your favorite place on the Reserve by sending an email to bethany@delawarehighlands.org with a photo and brief description, and we might share your photo on an upcoming social media post or in a newsletter.



This intersection of the Butterfly and Explorer Trails provides a wide panoramic view of the meadows below. Especially in the early morning, it's a great place to watch wildlife moving across the fields or just enjoy the beautiful scenery. - Bethany Zarnowski, Communications and Development Director



My favorite spot is the meadow that runs alongside the Reserve's small pond! It's one of the most secluded areas on the Reserve. It provides a perfect vantage point to experience the diverse habitats here, as it runs alongside our woods and one of the ponds. A great spot to just stop for a while and take in your surroundings using all your senses. - Rachel Morrow, Education & Volunteer Coordinator



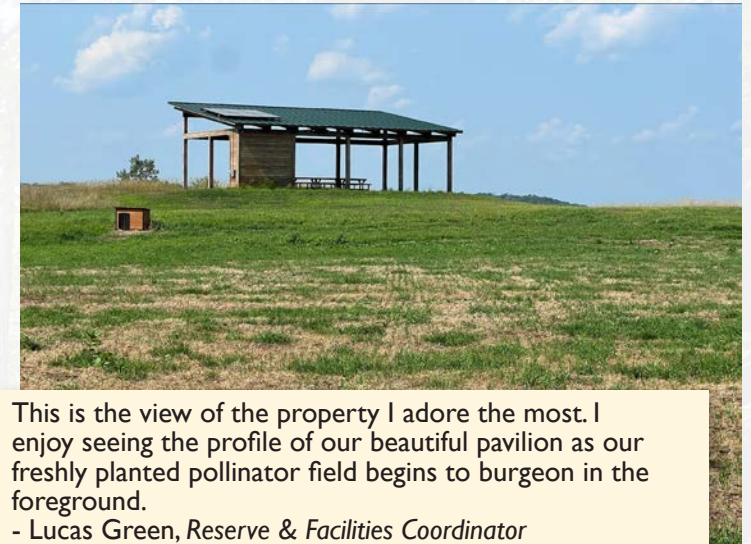
My favorite spot on the Reserve is on the walk up to the Eugene & Mary Van Scott Pavilion, along the Explorer & Butterfly Trail. Especially during the height of summer, when the milkweed is in bloom and the sky is a bright blue, it feels like a magical spot where you can see the mountains in each direction. Once you get up to the Pavilion, on a clear day you can catch a glimpse of High Point New Jersey, the Catskills in NY, and the beautiful Poconos in PA. - Samantha Mango, Donor Relations Coordinator



One of my favorite places at the Reserve is the red shale quarry. It may not be as scenic as some other spots, but the quarry provides essential habitat for plant and animal species that depend on open, rocky environments for at least part of their life cycle. It is a year-round home to the Eastern Milksnake and a nesting site for Killdeer that migrate to Pennsylvania during the breeding season. The quarry also has Grey Reinder Lichen, which only grows in open, well-drained environments. - Kaylan Hubbard, Land Protection Coordinator



My favorite place is the meadow located just southeast of the southernmost intersection between the Explorer and Woodland trails. It is home to a variety of wildflowers, an abundance of pollinator species, and a lone tree standing at its center. These features, combined with a relative lack of wind, lend this meadow a unique and magical feel that I greatly appreciate and love to share with others. - Trey Talley, Senior Land Protection Coordinator



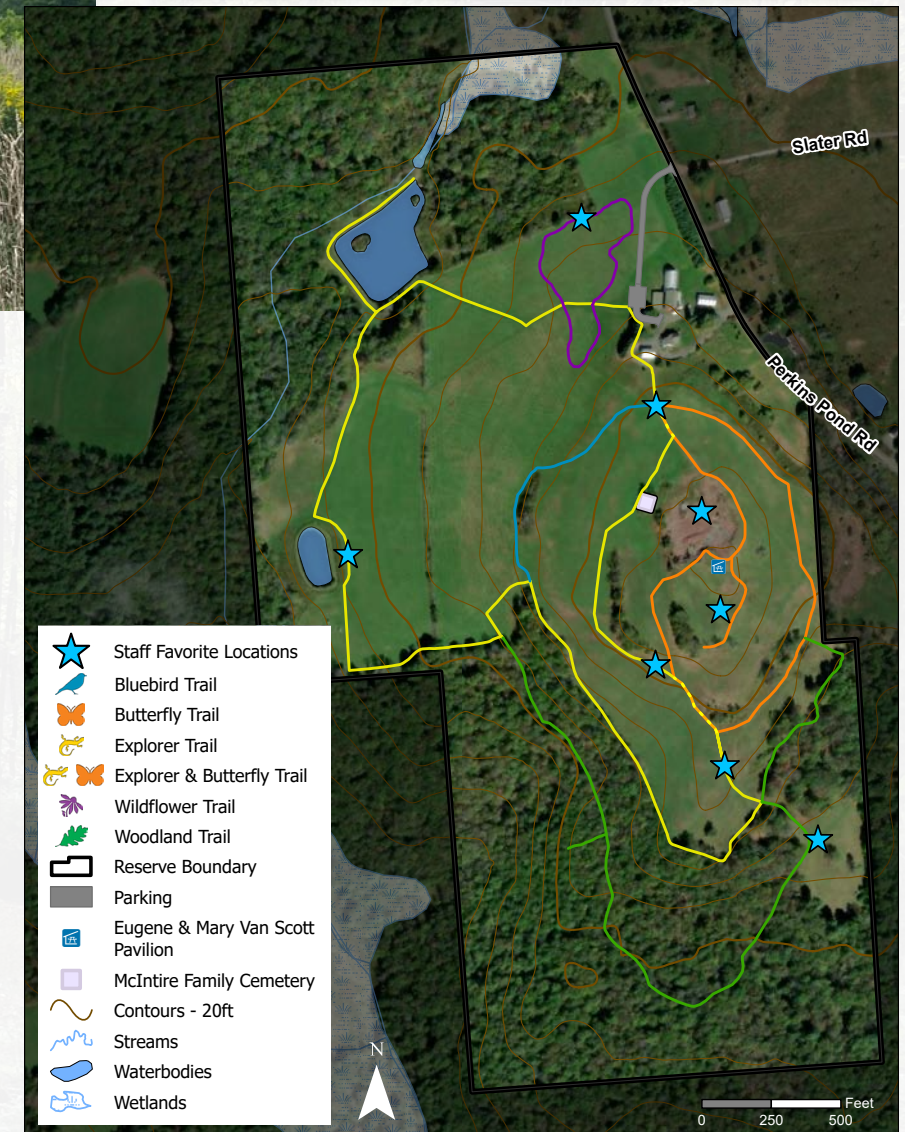
This is the view of the property I adore the most. I enjoy seeing the profile of our beautiful pavilion as our freshly planted pollinator field begins to burgeon in the foreground. - Lucas Green, Reserve & Facilities Coordinator



Taking moments to enjoy the view, feel the breeze, listen to wildlife, and experience the peace of nature fills me. The Wildflower Trail is often the place where I take these moments. - Diane Rosencrance, Executive Director



My favorite spot is along the Explorer Trail. It's a great place to watch the seasons change, and I enjoy watching the meadow bloom in the spring. - Steve Gosch, Stewardship Coordinator



Congratulations to the Photo Contest Winners!

Confluence: Land, Water, Wildlife

Through summer 2024 the Conservancy held its seventh annual juried photo contest, **Confluence: Land, Water, Wildlife**. The contest invites local photographers to capture striking nature photos from the Upper Delaware River region in five categories: landscape, wildlife, macro, water, and the Van Scott Nature Reserve, plus 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 - April Richling, runners-up - Jeff Sidle and Eric Baylin. **Wildlife category**, winner - Kathleen Colligan, runners-up - Barbara Carpenito and Kathleen Colligan. **Water category**, winner - Beth Baylin, runners-up - Roger Gottlieb and April Richling. **Macro category**, winner - Meagan Hill, runners-up - Milicent Wightman and Kathe Williams.

Van Scott Nature Reserve category, winner - Claire Shickora, runner-up - Alexandra Santo. **Youth category**, winner - Owen Doyle, age 13; runners-up - Micah Baillie Feinblatt, Payton Darcy, and Lily Eltz. The **People's Choice** and the **Conservancy Staff Pick** is Eileen Chorba.

The ARTery Gallery in Milford, PA will host the Conservancy from November 7th until December 9th in an exhibition featuring the winning photographs alongside artwork created by ARTery member artists, **opening with a reception on Saturday, November 9th from 2-4pm** at 210 Broad Street, Milford.

A selection of the winners is below; **all of the winning photos may be viewed on the Conservancy's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/delawarehighlandsconservancy.**



LANDSCAPE - APRIL RICHLING



WILDLIFE - KATHLEEN COLLIGAN



WATER - BETH BAYLIN



MACRO - MEAGAN HILL



VAN SCOTT NATURE RESERVE - CLAIRE SHICKORA

Does Your Employer Offer A Matching Gift Program?

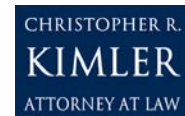
Make your donation dollars go further this season! Many employers offer matching gift programs that will double, triple, or even quadruple match your donations to nonprofit organizations like the Conservancy. **Thank you!**



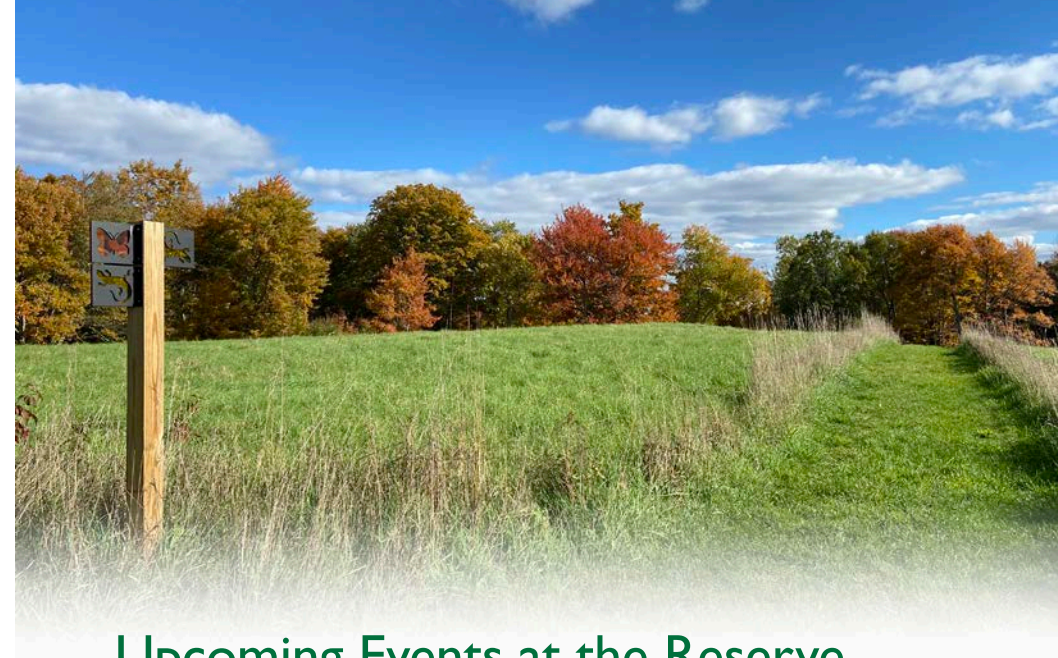
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Learn more at delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/corporate-sponsorships/.



Upcoming Events at the Reserve

Join us for community programs for all ages at the Van Scott Nature Reserve! Space is limited and events require advance registration; a small registration fee is requested. Visit DelawareHighlands.org/events for all the details, to register, and to view our complete Calendar of Events.

Wonderful Whitetails

November 8 • 4pm-5pm

As the breeding season, or rut, approaches, White-tailed deer become increasingly active. Join us to learn about the reasons behind this heightened activity and explore fascinating behaviors of White-tailed deer throughout the year!

HOO Done It?

November 15 • 1pm-2:30pm

Join us for an exciting exploration into the world of owls! In this program, we will solve the mystery of *who* is responsible for the disappearance of Mrs. Hen. Was it one of the owls, or is another creature to blame? We need YOUR help to crack the case – put your investigation skills to the test! This program is intended for kids and families and will include a trail walk.

Turkey Talk

November 23 • 1pm-2pm

There's no better time to talk about the turkey than—you guessed it—Thanksgiving! Did you know the turkey was almost our national bird? Join us for Turkey Talk to learn about all things turkey, including their habits and how they live.

Where Do the Animals Go When It Snows?

December 6 • 3:30pm-5pm

Do you know where animals go when the snow starts to fall? Join us as we read *Over and Under the Snow* by Kate Messner and do some fun activities and crafts to learn about wildlife in winter.

Boundin' Furbearers

December 13 • 1pm-2pm

Ever wonder about the difference between a red fox and a grey fox? Did you know that grey fox are the only member of the canine family that can climb trees? Do opossums really play dead? What is a fisher? Join us to learn about many of the various furry animals that live in the woods around us!

Leaving a Legacy

What type of legacy will you leave behind? Our Legacy Leaders have included the Conservancy in their will or estate plans, or have helped a parent, partner, or loved one leave a legacy.

We can discuss (along with your tax and financial advisor) strategies to help you support the Conservancy's land protection mission while also maximizing your tax and financial benefits. If you would like to learn more, or if you have already considered us in your estate plans, please contact Samantha Mango, Donor Relations Coordinator at samantha@delawarehighlands.org or 570-226-3164 ext. 9 so we may thank you during your lifetime.

Legacy Leaders

- Sue Currier
- Patricia Diness
- Helen Early (deceased)
- Mary Evans
- Arnold Friedman (deceased)
- Linda Gearhart
- Susanne Hand & David Kinsey
- Susan Hartney
- Karen Lutz
- Harold MacGregor (deceased)
- Dorothy Merrill (deceased)
- Mary Sue Sweeney Price
- Kimberly (Mimi) Raleigh
- Denise Risley & Will McTarsney
- Brenda Seldin
- Richard Snyder (deceased)
- Charles Victor Traeger (deceased)
- Sigrid Wilshinsky (deceased)
- Jonathan Wind
- Barbara Yeaman



PHOTO BY LIZ DIMENNO

PHOTO BY DAVID SOETE

Your
Winter 2025
Eagle Watch
Calendar of Events
is inside!

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is protecting nearly 19,000 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

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DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

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