

Seedling

SUMMER 2020

Beating Covid-19 Stress with Nature

65 years of providing conservation services to Schuylkill County

Tick and Lyme disease info

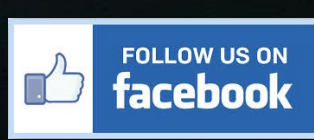
**PA Game Commission
State Game Lands
Anniversary Photo
Contest**

**Conservation
Innovation grants
are available**



PEOPLE • CONSERVATION • RESOURCES

There is nothing better than spending an afternoon at Sweet Arrow Lake County Park. The conservation district manages the park and works with groups like the Sweet Arrow Lake Conservation Association to provide you with programming, facilities, and many opportunities to have family fun. Be sure to check out the Sunset Gazebo on top of the dam to enjoy a summertime sunset!





INTERIM DISTRICT MANAGER

PORCUPINE PAT

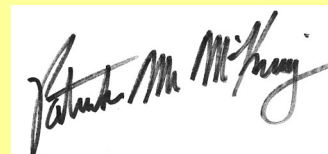
Our staff is thrilled with the new addition to our manager's family who welcomed Sadie Jolene to the Saint Clair family household. Jenna is enjoying a well-deserved leave to spend time with her little bundle of joy! I've shifted gears and have stepped in to hold the fort until Jenna's return later this summer.

Years from now we will look back on these pandemic times and recall the masks, the social distancing, all the cancellations, and extremely busy parks and trails. Who would have thought that a virus could change society as we know it! There will be yet another "new normal" as we modify our behavior and keep our fingers crossed for a future that will be safe and secure.

The rug got pulled out from so many things this season namely the Envirothon and the cancellations of the Bear Creek Festival and Schuylkill County Fair. Although there are new opportunities to pursue virtual undertakings such as a recent presentation I made for the Home Discovery Series offered by our colleagues at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and holding district board meetings via Zoom.

I can't thank the staff enough for their dedication to their respective roles. By the end of June, all staff will be totally back in the saddle here in the office. Of course, there will still be precautions in place for both staff and the public we serve.

What the future holds is anyone's guess but I know that bit by bit you can count on the conservation district to help make Schuylkill County's environment a better place to live, work and play! **See you at our 65th Anniversary event on September 27!**

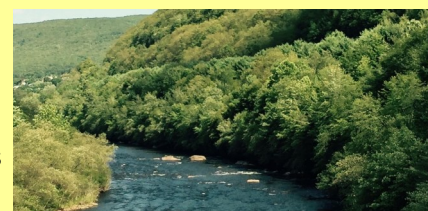


June is Rivers Month in Pennsylvania, and we've got a lot of water to celebrate in the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania has 86,000 miles of waterways -- among the highest in the country! In part, the Rivers Month designa-

tion is to remind us about the importance of conserving and restoring

our waterways because of all the benefits they provide including drinking water and groundwater replenishment, habitat, plus helping to moderate floods and droughts. Of course, they're also a great resource for recreational opportunities to have fun and cool off, and it's important to remember to recreate safely.



Schuylkill River in Schuylkill County



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65th
ANNIVERSARY



Schuylkill
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

**BIRTHDAY
BASH**

**1955
to
2020**

FEATURING

- Food trucks: Here Piggy Piggy, The Chill Out, and more!
- Free crafts and activities in Pavilion
- Conservation District displays
- Reception and birthday cake at 12 noon in Clubhouse
- Nature Walks led by "Porcupine Pat"
- Scavenger hunt
- Free boat rentals
- Live music

**HELP US
CELEBRATE!**

**SUNDAY,
September 27, 2020
11:00AM to 2:00PM**

**Sweet Arrow Lake
County Park &
Clubhouse**

FREE ADMISSION

The Schuylkill Conservation District protects and restores the county's natural resources through education, cooperation, guidance, and technical assistance that promotes wise stewardship, responsible development, and sustainability.



Schuylkill
Conservation District
www.schuylkillcd.com
570-391-3326
porcupinepat@yahoo.com

Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Road Maintenance Program- Better Roads, Cleaner Streams

PA's Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) Program provides local road-owning entities with grant funding for road and environmental improvements on unpaved and low-volume paved roads.

*****2020 UPDATE: The project application deadline has been changed from July 1, 2020, to September 1, 2020.*****

As of April 21, 2020, the application deadline has been moved to September 1, 2020, to accommodate for delays caused by coronavirus restrictions. Over \$300,000 is available annually in Schuylkill County to create a better public road system with a reduced environmental impact and reduced long-term maintenance costs!

Any state or local public entity that owns and maintains public roads is eligible to apply for funding, such as townships, boroughs, cities, counties, PA Game Commission, PennDOT, PA Fish & Boat Commission. Project grant applications are accepted by Schuylkill Conservation District on a rolling basis.

Visit <http://www.schuylkillcd.com/departments/dirt,-gravel-and-low-volume-road-maintenance-program>

In order to be eligible to apply for Program funds, the person in charge of work plan development and project implementation from the road-owning entity must have attended ESM training within the past five (5) calendar years. This training is required in order to receive grant funding for the Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Road Maintenance Program.

Please visit the Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads website for updates on training dates: <https://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/education-and-training/esm-course/esm-training-dates>



USDA— Natural Resources Conservation Service extends deadline for Conservation Innovation Grants to June 29

On April 29, the USDA [Natural Resources Conservation Service-PA](#) announced the deadline to apply for \$15 million in Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) has been extended to June 29. The deadline had been June 15. This year's priorities are water reuse, water quality, air quality, energy and wildlife habitat.

"Through Conservation Innovation Grants, we're able to co-invest with partners on the next generation of agricultural conservation solutions," said Denise Coleman, State Conservationist in Pennsylvania. "Conservation Innovation Grants have helped spur new tools and technologies to conserve natural resources, build resilience in producers' operations and improve their bottom lines. This year will be the first time we are offering water reuse as a priority, and we're excited to see how these projects play a role in USDA's broader strategy for water reuse on agricultural land."



Visit the NRCS-PA webpage for more information on services and assistance available to farmers and landowners. Click here for this page: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/pa/home/> The funding notice is also posted on the NRCS website: [nrcs.usda.gov](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov). You will find details about CIG requirements and the information required from applicants.

Completed applications must be submitted through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and e-mailed to the NRCS National Office at nrcscig@wdc.usda.gov.



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PREVENT LYME DISEASE: STAY SAFE OUTDOORS



USE INSECT
REPELLENT W/DEET



WEAR LONG SLEEVES
& LONG PANTS



CHECK BODY &
REMOVE TICKS



SHOWER AFTER
EXPOSURE



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PA Parks & Forests Foundation Launches *Protect Our Parks And Forests Website*

In 2017, with the support of the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the foundation undertook a comprehensive study of the maintenance needs in our state parks and forests. The resulting report, [The Legacy of Pennsylvania's State Parks and Forests: The Future Is In Our Hands](#), is an in-depth look at these ongoing and urgent needs.

The new website is the next step in educating enthusiasts and decision makers of the importance of our parks and forests and the need to address the over \$1 billion in maintenance, safety, and infrastructure needs in Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

Visitors to the website will learn about the challenges facing state parks and forests, why investing in our parks and forests make sense for our economy and human health, and resources to take action.

State parks and forests attract millions of visitors each year and are part of the \$29 billion outdoor recreation industry in the state. Years of underfunding has led to bridges, dams, sewage treatment, recreational facilities and natural environments in poor shape. Deferring maintenance costs taxpayers more money in the long run. And now, more than ever, the public is turning to the outdoors for physical, mental and emotional health.

Having a specific online presence to inform and advocate for natural spaces will bridge the gap between idea and action, making it easier than ever for Pennsylvanians to advocate for the places they hold dear.

"Pennsylvania's parks and forests are protected under our Environmental Rights Amendment to our state constitution," said Marci Mowery, President of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation. "They are essential to the nature of who we are, our cultural identity, and to protecting human and environmental health.



They also provide a myriad of services that, if we had to replicate today, would cost millions of dollars. Investing in our parks and forests makes sense."

For more info, visit the [Protect Our Parks and Forests](#) website.



DCNR requests comments on draft trail strategic plan

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has released a draft [Land and Water Trail Network Strategic Plan 2020-2024 Recommendations](#) for comments. The recommendations are an update to the [2014-2019 Pennsylvania Land and Water Trail Network Strategic Plan](#) on the development of a statewide network of greenways and trails. **Comments are accepted until Thursday, June 25.**

The 2020-24 recommendations are organized into seven different categories:

1. Close Priority Trail Gaps in Pennsylvania's statewide land and water trail network with the overall goal of having a trail within 10 minutes of every citizen
2. Coordinate state and federal funding programs to leverage maximum investment in priority trail projects
3. Cultivate diverse partnerships to build capacity to address local and regional trail needs.
4. Provide more opportunities and connections for everyone to regularly use a trail.
5. Connect communities and community assets and establish accessible trail networks.
6. Maintain and improve existing land and water trails and related infrastructure.
7. Promote Pennsylvania's trails and their economic, environmental, and health benefits.

DCNR also is updating this plan and has analyzed existing data and input from external stakeholders and partners through surveys and facilitated discussions; completed an assessment of the 2014 plan's progress; and reached out to all specialized trail user groups.

The 2020-2024 trail plan will be a companion document to the [2020-2024 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#).





Make a homemade all purpose cleaner to cut down on chemicals. Shine your surfaces and create an aroma that tickles your fancy with the natural oil of your choice. Mix 3 parts water with 1-part white vinegar, 1-2 tsp lemon juice and 6 or 7 drops of essential oil - orange, lemon or lavender.

It is estimated that 50 to 70 percent of all the oxygen in our atmosphere comes from algae and bacteria found in our oceans. Trees and plants only account for about 20% of the total oxygen produced.

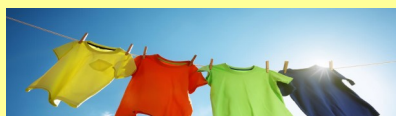


Daily Weird Facts:
If beavers didn't gnaw on things, their teeth would eventually grow into their brains.

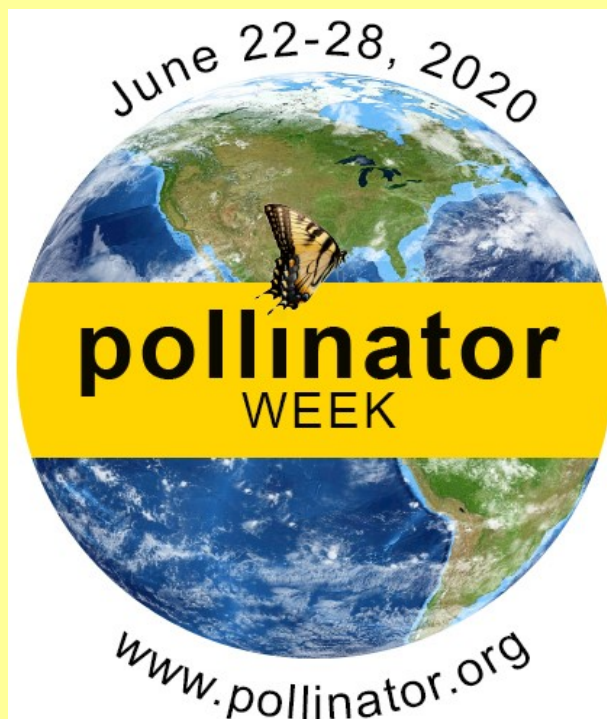
Bamboo is the fastest growing plant on Earth; it also has thousands of uses. It can be used to make rope, paper, flooring, furniture, scaffolding, houses, bridges, and much much more.

USE THE SUN TO DRY YOUR CLOTHES

Nothing beats clean laundry dried with fresh air and sunlight. Dryers have their place when it rains for long periods but on sunny days, use your clothes line.



Check out this hack and others to benefit your family budget and the environment by visiting: <https://thegreenhubonline.com/2017/07/21/17-eco-home-hacks-to-save-money-and-the-planet/>



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Game Commission now accepting entries for Spring State Game Lands Photo Contest to Celebrate 100th Anniversary

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the State Game Lands System, the [Game Commission](#) is sponsoring a season-based [State Game Lands Photo Contest](#). The deadline for entries for the Spring contest is June 30.

Each season, photos can be submitted via email to: pgc-contest@pa.gov with the subject line, "State Game Lands Photo Contest." The photos don't have to be from this year, but they do have to have been taken during spring. Pennsylvania has more than 300 diverse state game lands encompassing more than 1.5 million acres of the state.



At this time, we encourage everyone recreating outdoors to follow all social distancing and safety precautions set forth by the Department of Health. Be safe and stay healthy!

The Game Commission manages game lands for wildlife, and if you purchased a Pennsylvania hunting license, you have helped to support wildlife conservation efforts within our state.

[Click Here for all the details](#) and for more information on State Game Lands.

PA Fish and Boat Commission provides Water Trail Guides and Maps for locations throughout Pennsylvania

Water trails are boat routes suitable for canoes, kayaks and small motorized watercraft. Like conventional trails, water trails are recreational corridors between specific locations. Water trails are comprised of access points, boat launches, day use sites, and -- in some cases -- overnight camping areas. Each water trail is unique, a reflection of Pennsylvania's diverse geology, ecology and communities.

Water trail guides show "trail heads" (boat launch and take-out points) and provide background about the scenic, historic and geologic points of interest along the way. Throw in a little fishing, wildlife watching, and camping and you can see how water works wonders in Pennsylvania.

Click here to check out this resource: [PFBC Water Trail Guides/Maps page](#)



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LandSCAPES

Beating Covid-19 Stress with Nature

Working from home, juggling children and school work, and job loss all due to the virus contributes to anxiety and stress. Much information is available to help you and your family to manage stress and anxiety. Nature provides documented positive impacts on our well-being resulting in decreased stress and anxiety.

Something simple, like a short walk, or just mindful sitting under a tree or in your favorite garden spot can boost your well being and mood. Longer, more often regular trips in nature can decrease stress marker cortisol levels, boost the immune system and help a depressed mood. The woods various aromatic smells are believed to be a positive effect on one's mood and body. Schuylkill County has a rich history, beautiful landscapes, and many opportunities to explore the benefits of nature or one seeking stress relief and help with controlling anxiety.

You don't need to go far to find a place close to home to reap the benefits of nature. The Schuylkill County Conservancy is an organization committed to conserving our county's streams, woodlands and heritage. The SCC partners with other organizations to create areas around the county for recreational and educational use to better appreciate nature. One of our projects is to help create a "Pocket Park" in Pottsville that provides a green space in the midst of a bustling downtown.



Schuylkill County Conservancy has also worked with local and state wide organizations to build accessible trails. One such trail is the Schuylkill River trail which offers areas to hike, bike or float in the river. Most recently the new Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital has asked for help in creating a walking trail on their campus for employee and public use.

Information can be found on the web to connect to places like Hawk Mountain, Locust Lake State Park, Tuscarora State Park, JFK Walking Trail and Orwigsburg Lions Walking Trail are just a few opportunities our county offers close to home. DCNR has web pages for hiking, state parks and state forest land. You can find the Schuylkill County Trails Directory on www.schuylkill.org So get out there, reduce your stress and connect to nature. The opportunities are all around and allow you to maintain social distancing while getting out of the house.

Bats in the Belfry

Bats are the only mammals that fly. There are nine species that call Pennsylvania home with six of those species hibernating here and three migrating south for the winter.

Bat wings are thin membranes that stretch from their fore to hind legs. Long slender fingers act as wing struts. Bats have small eyes and contrary to belief can they can see quite well with unique adaptations to help them fly and catch insects in the dark. One benefit of bats is that they can consume up to 25% of their weight in a single feeding, or 2000 insects nightly.



Bats have large and well developed ears. They utter a series of high squeaks which are so high humans cannot hear them. These high pitched squeaks echo back to their ears off nearby objects such as fences, bushes, branches and insects to help the bat make split second reflexes to change flight direction to avoid obstructions or interpret prey.

Bats are protected by Game Commission laws when flying or hibernating. They are by nature gentle animals and contrary to belief they do not attack people. The incidence of rabies is low and spreading in a colony is rare. Bats do not damage or destroy property by or other physical destruction but they can leave droppings where they roost that cause an unpleasant odor

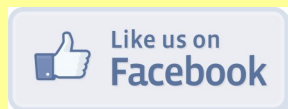
If bats are roosting in a home or causing problems in buildings it is left to the discretion of the homeowner to solve the problem. People can get into trouble when they attempt to pick up a bat because they are wild animals and just like any wild animal they will act defensively. A professional Bat Removal Specialist should be contacted. Timing and technique is important to safely relocate the bat.

The Schuylkill County Conservancy is hosting **PA Bat Rescue** at their annual Fall Gathering November 7th at Roman Delight Restaurant in Orwigsburg. **PA Bat Rescue** offer conservation, education and rehabilitation of bats. Their philosophy is that bat species throughout the world should be valued for their ecological and environmental value. Education and dispelling common beliefs and misconceptions is essential to the conservation and protection of bat species.

For more information to attend SCC Fall Gathering November 7th contact Julia Sophy at 570-292-0823.

schuylkillcountyconservancy@gmail.com

[@SchuylkillCountyConservancy](https://www.instagram.com/SchuylkillCountyConservancy)



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NEWS LEAF

Master Gardeners of Schuylkill County

schuylkillmg@psu.edu

570.622.4225 ext. 23

Garden Hacks make your gardening easier!



A 5 gallon bucket comes in handy for more than just collecting weeds. Store your garden tools inside and also use the bucket for a stool while weeding. If it starts to rain, the bucket and lid protects your tools. To make the lid easier to pull off, simply cut all the tabs except for 2. The lid will come off in a snap!

A mailbox is yet another way to store your gardening tools for easy access. The mailbox pictured here costs about \$20-25 at a hardware or home supply store. Your mailbox can be hidden away behind some tall flowers or shrubs if need be.



Sometimes when watering, you may have experienced where the hose destroyed some plants. Use croquet wickets to stabilize the hose in order to limit the range that your hose can move.

Epsom salts (hydrated magnesium sulfate) is an amazing fertilizer for plants especially vegetables and roses. The magnesium aids chlorophyll production and absorption of vital nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorous. Most plants grow better with a ratio of 2 teaspoons to 1 gallon of water. Misting the plant with diluted Epsom salts greatly increases its growth.



Penn State Extension offers a large variety of informative webinars with some provided free of charge! Check them out by visiting this link: <https://extension.psu.edu/shopby/webinars>
Topics include: gardening, cooking, working with trees, Master Gardener training and much more!

Listen to Master Gardeners on WPPA AM 1360 or 105.9 at 10 a.m. on the first Tuesday of each month year round.



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Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Adds New Virtual And In-Person Educational Programs

[Hawk Mountain Sanctuary](#) has added more virtual and is now starting in-person education programs at the Sanctuary that straddles the Berks/Schuylkill County line.

Virtual educational programs are now available online, including:

-- July 10: *Support Your Local Pollinator*

-- July 17: *Bats Of Hawk Mountain*

[Click Here for the full schedule](#) and for an on-demand archive of previous programs.



In-Person Programs

A variety of in-person education programs and trail tickets are now available at the Sanctuary.

-- June 27: *River Of Rocks Ramble*

-- **Homeschoolers** are invited to the Mountain for programs on July 15, August 19 and other dates. For more information on programs, initiatives and upcoming events, visit the [Hawk Mountain Sanctuary](#) website or call 610-756-6961. [Click Here](#) to sign up for regular updates from the Sanctuary, [Like them on Facebook](#), [Follow on Twitter](#), [visit them on Flickr](#) and visit their [YouTube Channel](#). [Click Here](#) to support Hawk Mountain.

Schuylkill Conservation District Board and Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **District Chair:**
Scott Graver
- **Vice Chair:**
Dennis Daubert
- **Directors:**
- Commissioner Gary Hess
- Stanley Fidler
- Glenn Luckenbill
- Dottie Sterner
- F. Diane Wolfgang
- Eric Leiby
- Glenn Hetherington

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

- Chris Bentz
- Robert Carl, Jr.
- Frank Zukas
- Russell Wagner



Help us celebrate our 65th Birthday on Sunday, September 27 from 11 am to 2 pm Sweet Arrow Lake County Park

STAFF PHONE EXTENSIONS FOR 570.622.3742

- Jenna St. Clair, District Manager, 3335
- Martie Hetherington, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, 3328
- "Porcupine Pat" McKinney, Education Coordinator, 3326
- Missy Seigfried, Conservation Fiscal Technician, 3324
- Stephanie Lubinsky, Conservation Program Technician, 3329
- Robert Evanchalk, Assistant Parks and Recreation Supervisor (part time)
- Rachel Fedosick, Conservation Program Technician, 3327
- Bill Reichert, Upper Swatara Flood Recovery Manager, 3331
- Wayne Lehman, County Natural Resources Specialist, 3333
- Brittany Moore, Agricultural Program Coordinator, 3325
- Ryan Michlovsky, Conservation Program Coordinator, 3330
- Lorie Reichert, Conservation Program Asst., 3316
- Drew Kline, Parks & Rec. Supervisor, 570-527-2505
- Alexa Smith, Natural Resources Conservationist, 3336
- Kyle Schutt, Insect Management Technician, Cell: 484.331.4499



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