

Palisades

NATURE NOTES

Notes from the Naturalist

"Spring has sprung, the grass has riz, I wonder where the flowers is?"

This is a pun my father shared with me when I was young. It was his way of telling me that the weather was warming up and it was time to get outside. As I write this, spring is actually winding down and the warm days of summer are moving in. The trees have leaved-out, grasses are sprouting, and there are plants blooming throughout the Sanctuary. Flies are airborne and many crawling insects are out and about. Snakes are skulking in many of the nooks and crannies of Greenbrook, and turtles have pulled themselves from the pond to bask in the warm sun. Bird migration is concluding and many are already on territory singing happily and building nests. Some young have even hatched and are being frantically fed by their attentive parents. Yes, summer is just around the corner.

To me spring is an awakening. A time when life gets busy again. A time of great activity and change. Life has a lot to show you during spring, so get outside look around and enjoy it!

One of the first indicators of spring is the emergence of amphibians to breed and lay their eggs in the bog and multiple vernal pools that are found in Greenbrook. On March 3rd, a night walk was scheduled to observe this phenomenon. Many Spotted Salamanders were sighted swimming in the bog and vernal pools near the gravel road. On later amphibian walks, egg masses from both Spotted Salamanders and Wood Frogs were also found in these same vernal pools. The arrival of migrant birds from the south, on March 27, began with an Eastern Phoebe singing in Fair Field. On the same day, Sandy, Ken and I observed an Osprey circling over Greenbrook Pond. The first Pine Warbler of the spring was observed over Fair Field, singing quite cheerfully on March 30th. That same day, one of the earliest flowers, Dutchman's Breaches, was found in bloom on "C" trail. On March 31st our persistently calling Pileated Woodpecker was found excavating a hole in a large oak tree by the pond. Two Mourning Cloak butterflies, usually the first butterflies of spring, were gliding through Lambier Gulch, and, also that day, Wood Frogs were heard calling from a vernal pool along "A" trail.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Nighttime Amphibian Walk



Spotted Salamander



End of Eclipse Totality Photo by Evan J. Zupfer

Notes from the Naturalist CONTINUING

After closer inspection, a Wood Frog egg mass was found floating in the middle of the pool. It has been a good year for amphibians.

April began with cooler than normal weather, which kept wildlife observations at a lull. However, what was lacking in number was made-up in uniqueness. The abundant Spicebushes began blooming on April 4th. The next day, five Black Vultures were seen soaring above “C” trail and at 10:23 in the morning North Jersey was rocked by a 4.8 magnitude earthquake. Female Wild Turkeys were present at the feeders and Spring Beauties were found blooming all through the sanctuary on April 6. Sightings continued on April 7, with trout lilies in bloom and Northern Rough-winged Swallows over the pond.

On April 8, North America was treated to a Total Solar Eclipse of the sun. It was part of an event that, for many, was a once in a lifetime experience. Unfortunately, the path of totality ran up from Texas, into the Midwest and across the top of New England, completely missing our area. However, for those of you who could not travel to the path of totality, above is a picture of what a total eclipse looks like when you are in the shadow.

On April 11th we had a large flock of seventeen Chipping Sparrows at the feeders. The following day, that number increased to forty-four and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet was spotted on the gravel road. April 12th saw the first wave of Pine, Palm and Yellow-rumped warblers down by the pond. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher followed on April 13 and a Canada Goose pair began to nest down by the pond. The white flowers of Shadbush made their first appearance on April 15th along the cliffs, and an Eastern Towhee was spotted by Ken down by the pond. The next warbler to pass through on its way north was a very vocal Black-and-White where

“A” trail meets “C”, on April 17th. Spring beauties were in bloom throughout the Sanctuary on April 20th, along with some brilliant Wild Pinks out on the cliffs. An American Painted Lady found its way to Fair Field on April 24th, and the first Scarlet Tanager of the spring was also seen on “A” trail. A Cooper’s Hawk strafed the feeders on April 26th, scattering a large group of Mourning Doves that were feeding on the ground. All the doves escaped and the Cooper’s Hawk moved on to the north. A racoon was sneaking around the office on April 27th. He even knocked (scratched) on the door to see if I was home. When I opened the door, he quickly apologized for the intrusion and shuffled away. April 28th was a big day for migrating birds; a Solitary Sandpiper was on the pond along with a Warbling Vireo and a Baltimore Oriole. On the same day, a Northern Parula was found near the powder magazines. Jack-in-the-pulpits, another flower that has spontaneously sprouted in Fair Field, was seen blooming on April 29th.

May started with an avalanche of notable sightings. Nine species of migratory birds arrived in the Sanctuary on May 1st. An Ovenbird and a Veery were observed off of “W” trail. A Great-crested Flycatcher was heard on the gravel road to the pond. A Gray Catbird and a Red-eyed Vireo were seen in the bog and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Rough-winged Swallows and a female Eastern Towhee were found around the pond. Out on the cliffs, a Worm-eating Warbler was heard along with a Blue-winged Warbler. A Blue-headed Vireo was found in the parking lot. Two Northern Water Snakes were found sunning themselves in the Bog and the first blooms of Flowering Dogwood were found in the parking lot. The next day, CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Notes from the Naturalist CONTINUING

May 2nd, saw the arrival of a Wood Thrush out on “C” trail and three Orchard Orioles singing their hearts out on their way up north. A Garter snake was sighted crawling through the fallen leaves by a participant of Paul Sadowski’s Mushroom Walk. This is a late sighting, probably due to the cooler spring weather. May 3rd saw May Apple and Pink Ladies Slipper in bloom. The flower blooming continued with wild Geraniums on May 4th. On May 8th, Canada Mayflower was found in Fair Field. That same day, more migrating birds arrived; a Black-throated Green Warbler was heard by Sandy and a Swainson’s Thrush was sighted near the outhouse. Also on May 8th, two butterfly species were sighted; an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail down by the bog and a Spicebush Swallowtail in the parking area. Global Big Day for bird migration was May 11th. An Eastern Wood-Pewee was heard and Barn Swallows returned to the pond. Blackburnian and Blackpoll Warblers were observed out on the cliffs. The next significant sightings were a Bay-Breasted Warbler and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird on May 17th. Cedar Waxwings were heard in the parking lot on May 18th, while Rattlesnake hawkweed was blooming on “D” trail.

Greenbrook Falls is another spectacular spring event. Fueled by the abundant rainfall in March, the water flowing through the brook and over the falls made a wonderful hiking destination for many Greenbrook members.

— EVAN J. ZUPFER *Naturalist / Director*

There’s a lot of lore hidden amid the trails and landscape of Greenbrook. On April 20th, Eric Nelson and Francesca Costa of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission gave us a history lesson, Hopefully Eric and Francesca will give us more history walks in the future.

On May 2nd, Paul Sadowski of the New York Mycological Society brought a group of students from the New York Botanical Garden to learn about mushrooms. Why come all the way from New York City to study mushrooms? While most habitats get picked clean of fungi by mushroom hunters, Greenbrook has a No Pick or Collect policy with all wildlife, leaving us with an abundance of undisturbed species. Greenbrook Sanctuary is such a good place to study mushrooms that Paul will be coming back to lead another walk in August. Interested? Check the almanac for details.



Green Brook Falls Photo by Evan J. Zupfer



Eric Nelson gives a Sanctuary history lesson Photo by Evan J. Zupfer



Paul Sadowski inspects a student's find Photo by Evan J. Zupfer



Blue-headed Vireo Photo by Evan J. Zupfer

Global Big Day Bird Count

MAY 11, 2024 • PALISADES PARK IBA--GREEN BROOK SANCTUARY

7:08 AM

TRAVELING

7.52 MILES

482 MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS

SANDY BONARDI

PAUL COBURN

KEN HABERMANN

EVAN J. ZUPFER

TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRD SPECIES OBSERVED: 63

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Canada Goose | 1 Eastern Phoebe | 2 Veery | 1 Tennessee Warbler |
| 1 American Black Duck | 2 Great Crested Flycatcher | 1 Swainson's Thrush | 1 Common Yellowthroat |
| 2 Mourning Dove | 2 Blue-headed Vireo | 1 Wood Thrush | 2 American Redstart |
| 2 Ring-billed Gull | 2 Warbling Vireo | 3 American Robin | 1 Cape May Warbler |
| 7 Great Black-backed Gull | 3 Red-eyed Vireo | 2 House Finch | 3 Northern Parula |
| 3 Double-crested Cormorant | 3 Blue Jay | 2 American Goldfinch | 2 Magnolia Warbler |
| 1 Black Vulture | 1 Common Raven | 2 White-throated Sparrow | 1 Blackburnian Warbler |
| 5 Turkey Vulture | 1 Black-capped Chickadee | 2 Baltimore Oriole | 2 Yellow Warbler |
| 4 Bald Eagle | 1 Tufted Titmouse | 3 Red-winged Blackbird | 2 Blackpoll Warbler |
| 1 Red-tailed Hawk | 1 Tree Swallow | 2 Brown-headed Cowbird | 3 Black-throated Blue Warbler |
| 2 Red-bellied Woodpecker | 2 Northern Rough-winged Swallow | 5 Common Grackle | 2 Yellow-rumped Warbler |
| 1 Downy Woodpecker | 1 Barn Swallow | 4 Ovenbird | 2 Black-throated Green Warbler |
| 1 Hairy Woodpecker | 2 White-breasted Nuthatch | 1 Worm-eating Warbler | 2 Scarlet Tanager |
| 1 Pileated Woodpecker | 2 Carolina Wren | 2 Northern Waterthrush | 3 Northern Cardinal |
| 2 Northern Flicker | 1 European Starling | 1 Blue-winged Warbler | 2 Rose-breasted Grosbeak |
| 1 Eastern Wood-Pewee | 4 Gray Catbird | 3 Black-and-white Warbler | |

President's Report

The Administrative Council of the Palisades Nature Association (PNA) agreed in April to implement the first major re-vamping of Greenbrook Sanctuary's trails since the Sanctuary's founding in 1946. The Council was guided by two goals: (1) trails need to serve PNA's core mission to preserve and to foster appreciation of the character of Greenbrook's natural terrain; and (2) trails should be blazed to be as easy-to-navigate for our members as possible. A schematic map of the new trail layout can be found in the lower right. Marking of the new trails will begin in late Summer.

The Palisades region had seen substantial forest fragmentation even before Greenbrook's founding, which was, in fact, stimulated by a desire to preserve some remnant of forested lands as the Palisades Interstate Parkway was being constructed. Ecological studies have confirmed the negative consequences of fragmented habitat on certain species, mainly (but not limited to) birds that require undisturbed habitat to breed successfully. These findings were not known back in the 1940s when Greenbrook's current trails were designed. As a result, the Greenbrook forest -- itself only a fragment of the larger Palisades area -- is crossed by an overabundance of trails relative to its 165-acre size.

To increase undisturbed habitat, the new trail system closes trails (western D, F extension to C, G, K, N) that are less-used and parallel more widely-used pathways. Greenbrook continues to offer five miles of trails that afford our members access to all of the Sanctuary's microhabitats and scenic viewpoints.

The new trail layout also features a simpler design by consolidating existing trails into easier-to-follow loops and eliminating confusing trail junctions where the same-letter trail goes off in diverging directions. (C, M, O, P and S Trails will not be affected by the new design.) The most prominent changes will be in the following trails:

"A" Trail will continue to be a loop but will be reconfigured to incorporate the current L Trail and end the new loop at the dam. The inner A portion of the current loop will revert to its original name -- the Guy Nearing Trail (in honor of the Sanctuary's first Director-Naturalist). This will be an in-and-out trail ending at a scenic view overlooking the pond (a bench will be installed at the viewpoint). In addition, the side path to Pillar Point will be realigned away from the cliff edge.

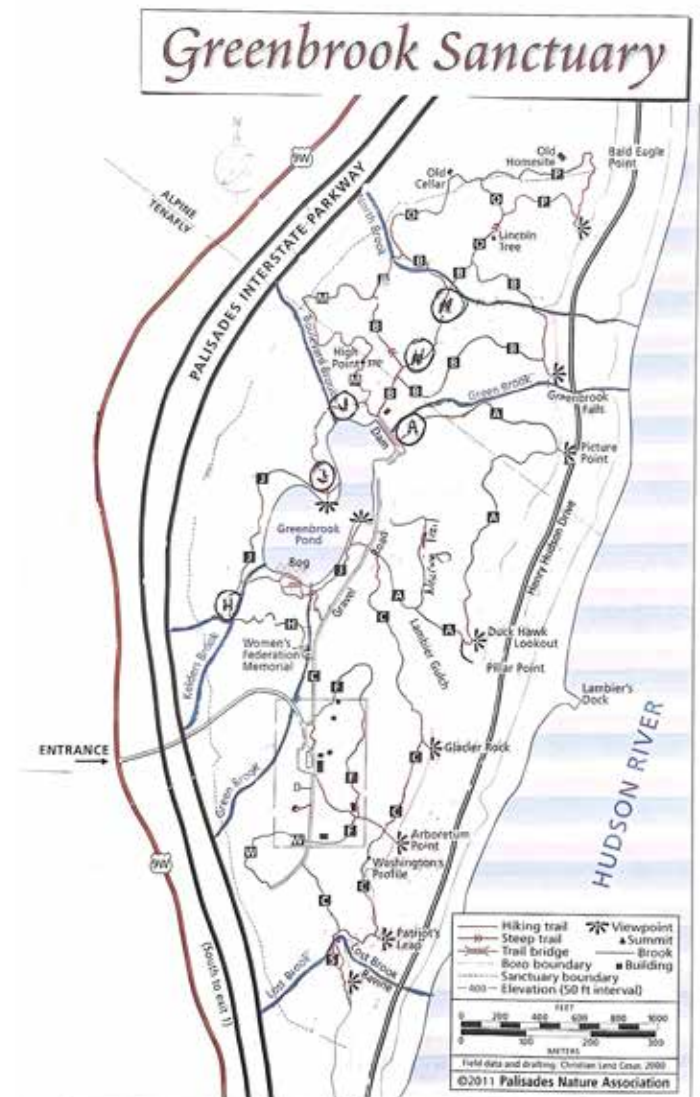
"B" Trail is currently a loop with a bisector that is also labelled B (from the dam to O Trail). The present set-up results

in a confusing number of junctions where B goes in multiple directions. The new B configuration restores the original conception of B Trail as a loop with a bisector designated with a different letter (as the existing N Trail will be closed, the letter N will now be used for the bisector).

"J" Trail will be reconfigured as a loop around the pond by incorporating the existing inner D Trail. J's current multiple pathways west of the bog will be eliminated by extending H Trail across Kelders Brook on a current J-labeled path to connect with the main J loop.

Please continue to enjoy the quiet pleasures of Greenbrook as a member while giving more space to the other species whose continuing presence is central to the Sanctuary's purpose.

— CHRIS CONNOLLY *PNA Council President*



Sanctuary map with trail changes

SUMMER 2024 ALMANAC

Programs subject to change. • For more information call 201-784-0484 or email: pnanaturalist@gmail.com

Saturday, June 8 — 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Evening Walk

A leisurely stroll through the sanctuary to look and listen for Late spring plants and animals.

Saturday, June 15 — 8:00 – 9:30 AM

Breeding Birds of Greenbrook

Come help us find signs of birds that breed in or around Greenbrook.

Saturday, June 22 — 10:00 AM – NOON

First Hike of Summer

First hike of the new summer through the sanctuary.

Saturday, June 29 — 9:00 – 10:30 AM

Early Morning Walk

Take in the cool morning air on a walk through the Sanctuary.

Saturday, July 6 — 10:00 AM – NOON

Patriotic Walk

A walk focusing on some history and notable Patriotic Points in Greenbrook. This will be a long but informative hike that will cover a large area of the Sanctuary.

Saturday, July 13 — 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Annual Butterfly Count

Help us find, identify and tally butterflies found in Greenbrook. Sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association.

Sunday, July 14 — 1:00 – 2:00 PM

A Meadow in Summer

See what is blooming in the newly restored Fair Field. A walk led by Sandy Bonardi.

Saturday, July 20 — 10:00 AM

Rain Date for Butterfly Count

Or a general nature walk.

*** Sunday, July 21** — 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Musical Concert

An outdoor concert by two prominent woodwind musicians, Christine MacDonnell and Michael Ryan. Free admission

Saturday, July 27 — 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Morning Nature Walk

Saturday, August 3 — NOON : – 1:30 PM

Trees in Summer

Learn to identify trees using leaves, seeds and bark.

Saturday, August 10 — 10:00 AM – NOON

Mushroom Discovery Walk

Paul Sadowski from the New York Mycological Society will guide us on an introduction to the great variety of fungi found within Greenbrook's boundaries. Details on page 3.

Saturday, August 17 — 10:00 AM

Rain date for Mushroom Walk

Or a general nature walk.

Saturday, August 24 — 10:00 – 11:30 AM

Quick Hike Around the Pond

Saturday, August 31 — 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Late Summer Nature Walk

* MUSICAL CONCERT



Christine MacDonnell and Michael Ryan

On July 21st at 5:00PM, Greenbrook members will be treated to a Concert Under the Trees. Christine MacDonnell and Michael Ryan, two accomplished woodwind musicians, will perform a small concert in our pavilion.

Christine MacDonnell, a graduate of The Juilliard School, is a clarinetist and multi-woodwind specialist. As a professional performer, she is proficient on all clarinets, saxophones, flutes, and double reeds, and can be seen in various Broadway and off-Broadway productions, as well as performing at Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, NJSO, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Northeast Philharmonic Orchestra, Albany Symphony, and others. She has served two US Presidents in the "President's Own" Marine Band as a clarinetist. You can hear her performing in the new Broadway musical, "Suffs", and she is a Yamaha and Daddario Performing Artist.

Micheale Ryan, a graduate of New England Conservatory of Music, is a former member of Sarasota Opera Orchestra. She relocated to New York City after being cast in the off-Broadway show "Swingtime Canteen." She stays active in the theater world by substituting in various Broadway orchestras, including "Lion King" and "Wicked." Micheale performs with Christine in the chamber ensemble Metamorphic Winds, and can be heard performing with clarinetist Richard Stoltzman on his recording "Aria."

No tickets are required, just show-up and enjoy the music.



Morning Fog Through the Trees Photo by Evan J. Zupfer

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS: CYCLE 1 — Donna Lotz, Christine Ingels, Kathy O’Sullivan, Rosann Flynn, John McEwan, Gun Dronge, Christina Mugnano, Jeremy Frisch, Dana Cohen-Jaffe, Cathy Herkert, Christopher Given, Patrick Brennan, James VanZetta, John O’Dea, Sarah Pactor, Ilana Cuttler, Jorge Quintana

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS: CYCLE 2 — Charlotte Kruman, Joe Figuerinha, Hugh Rodgers/Tara Brown, Buntari Keitt, Ralph Cohen, Alan Schwimmer, Cory Levine, Philip McManus, Jo Hastings, Daniel Shapiro, Kata Basca, Jason Youner, Geraldine Iannaconi, Andrea Weitzner, Jeffrey Lubchansky, Abel Gelman, Lukas Cohen, CJ Han, Daidra Designs LLC, Wendy Bost, Maria Haggerty, Janie Semprevivo, Amanda Matsuzaka, Edna Berkovits, Lyndon Llanes, Molly Hartz, Jacob Pollack, Bruce Kienle, Robert/Barbara Cohan, John and Gloria Murphy, Stephanie Ulrich, Yosef Tzalel, Howard Peckler, Lawrence Chau, Gabriele Schmitt, Sebastian Geary, Howard Youngman, Owen Belci, Amy Ko

Membership entitles you to join Greenbrook’s online community on Meetup.com. View pictures, calendar of events and more. Email 2greenbrook@gmail.com or call Membership Director Mike Gallo with online questions: 201.280.0160.

Palisades NATURE NOTES

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Join Us.

THIS FORM IS FOR NEW MEMBERS ONLY.

Yes, I want to become a member of Greenbrook Sanctuary.

- | | | | |
|---|--------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship | \$ 250 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor | \$ 100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | \$ 50 |
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Please make checks payable to: PNA, PO Box 155, Alpine, NJ 07620, or join on our web site.