

# The Pinchot Eagle



Friends of Pinchot State Park

July/August/September 2010

## Friends Hold Open House

**Saturday, June 19, 2010**

**10:00am – 2:00pm**

**Nature/Interpretive Center (Conewago Day Use Area)**

The Friends of Pinchot State Park will be hosting an open house at the Nature/Interpretive Center (Conewago Day Use Area).

Everyone is invited to stop by, meet the board members, and learn about the projects we have been working on. Light refreshments will be available.

**Pinchot Animal Mix-Up – 11:00am  
(ages 3 and up)**

Park Naturalist, Beth Kepley, will share a family-friendly program about the critters that live at Gifford Pinchot State Park.

Participants will try to identify animals by using skulls, furs, scat, mounts, and pictures. Prizes will be awarded for those who get the most correct! *Nature/Interpretive Center.*

**Wildflower Walk – 1:00pm  
(ages 10 and up)**

Wildflower enthusiast, Pat Sabold, will lead a warm summer stroll identifying wildflowers and sharing a bit of lore about the plants. *Nature/Interpretive Center.*

### Evening Program

**Wildflower Slideshow – 8:30pm  
Campground Amphitheater**

Pat Sabold will share a few of her favorite Pinchot wildflower photographs and treat participants to fascinating stories about the plants growing at Gifford Pinchot State Park.

*All programs are free to the public.*

## The Meadows: Habitat Improvement Project

*By Sally Ray, Board Member*



Board Member, Betsy Leppo, removing downed cedars from meadow.



Restored meadow showing signs of recovery.

## DID YOU KNOW...



... Hanging a camping lantern on a tree can cause considerable damage?

The lantern generates a large amount of heat which can be transmitted into the layers of the tree. The damage goes unnoticed until the bark falls off.

The old field restoration project undertaken by the Friends of Pinchot State Park is nearly complete. Seventeen volunteers cut and removed cedars and other woody growth from four areas in the Conewago Day Use area in an effort to restore these areas to meadows. The results are beginning to show. The grasses are growing; wildflowers are blooming; and there are signs of increased usage by wildlife.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 12.....National Get Outdoors Day, 10:00am-4:00pm**  
*Conewago Day Use Area, All ages*
- June 19.....Friends Open House, 10:00am-2:00pm**  
*Nature/Interpretive Center, Conewago Day Use Area*
- June 19.....Kids Activity, 11:00am**  
*Ages 3 and up*
- June 19.....Wildflower Walk, 1:00pm**  
*Ages 10 and up*
- June 19.....Evening Wildflower Presentation, 8:30pm**  
*Campground Amphitheater*
- July 10.....Christmas in July, 2:00pm**  
*Registered Campers Only*
- October 23.....Pinchotween, 2:00pm**  
*Environmental Center, Conewago Day Use Area*
- October 23.....Trick-or-Treat, 6:00pm**  
*Campground, Registered Campers Only*

For more information and an updated list of events, please visit our website: [www.friendsofpinchot.org/home/calendar](http://www.friendsofpinchot.org/home/calendar)

## Poison-ivy: Leaves of three, let it be!

By Pat Sabold, Board Member



Poison-ivy  
(*Toxicodendron radicans*)

Poison-ivy can be found throughout Gifford Pinchot State Park. Knowing how to identify poison-ivy is the first defense against its poisonous oil. It is a climbing and scrambling vine with three leaflets. The stalk of the middle leaflet is considerably longer than the two side ones.

The leaves are reddish (and often shiny) when they emerge in the spring, turn green during the summer, and become various shades of yellow, orange, or red in the autumn.

If you come in contact with the plant, immediately clean the skin with rubbing alcohol and rinse with cool water (hot water will open the pores allowing the resin to be absorbed faster). Ten minutes after contact, 50% of the resin will have been absorbed into the skin, and by thirty minutes, 90% absorbed.

Approximately 24-36 hours after exposure to

the poisonous oil, a blistering, itching rash develops. Despite popular belief, scratching will not spread the antigen to other areas of the body.

Once the rash begins, it will usually clear on its own within 2-3 weeks. Treatment is directed at controlling the itch.

To its credit, poison-ivy produces clusters of little white berries that

persist throughout the winter and provide an excellent source of food for birds and animals. ■



Poison-ivy Berries

PHOTO FROM ARCADIA LANDSCAPING INC.

## Campground Improvements

By Pat Sabold, Board Member

Have you visited the campground at Gifford Pinchot State Park lately? If so, you've probably noticed a few changes.

Over the course of the past 10+ years, many sites have been enlarged and equipped with electric service. To date, 130 out of 330 sites have electric, many of which can handle large camping rigs. Another 10 sites are slated for upgrades this summer, and additional sites in the pets area are to be upgraded next year. Each upgraded campsite has a new picnic table, a 20' tent pad, and a lantern holder.

Despite the extensive budget cuts, the park manager was able to acquire surplus bath stalls from Codorus State Park. This surplus equipment replaced deteriorating stalls on the ladies' side of bathhouse #7. To help keep toiletries dry, plans are in place to add stools and extra hooks.

David Lauffer, of Boy Scout Troop #312, is working on his Eagle Scout Project by making improvements in the "Apple" group camping area. When completed, each site will have a living pad and sleeping pad.

A few years ago, two lakeside yurts and three lakeside cottages were added to the campground. These provide an affordable and less rustic camping experience.

Campers no longer need to leave the campground in search of firewood and ice. The Friends of Pinchot State Park now offer bundled firewood and bagged ice within the campground. Proceeds will be used to improve facilities and educational programs throughout the park. ■

# Kayak Escape

By Rose-Anna Behr

It seems like a bit of a hassle to load up the kayak after a rough day at work - ringing phones, crashing computer, and a looming deadline. But my friends insist, and besides there is still plenty of daylight. We arrive at Pinchot's Boat Launch #1. There are lots of boat trailers in the parking lot, but where we are going, few motorized boats venture.

After getting the kayaks launched, we head toward the shallow end of the lake. A few strong strokes and already the worries of the day are fading. We thread through the lily pads toward Beaver Creek. The green frogs are plinking their courtship song in the cattails along the shoreline. The Red-winged Blackbirds are reminding us spring has arrived.

We pass the last bass fisherman where Pinetown Road nearly meets the lake. Here green frogs give way to the last of the season's



PHOTO BY ANNE MUIREN

Padding Beaver Creek

spring peepers and a full compliment of pickerel frogs. We catch a quick glimpse of a wood duck as he rounds the next corner. The creek twists and turns. The current is so subtle it's no trouble to paddle against.

We get sidetracked in the overflow channels, small maze of wildflower blanketed islands, not quite sure we will make it over that submerged log. The woodpeckers are yammering in the trees overhead - always heard, seldom seen. A few twists and turns more and we

reach the upstream end of our journey - an old ford, long since grown over. It's time to turn back.

We float downstream with the current. Twilight begins to gather. A barred owl calls in the bottom lands. A sliver of moon graces the evening sky. The creek opens up to the lake and we resign ourselves to being land lubbers once again. "There should be a prescription for this," my friend quips. I agree, and we all need to write that prescription for ourselves. ■

## Habitat Improvement

(Continued from page 1)



PHOTO BY SALLY RAY

Little Wood-satyr (*Megisto cymela*)

Over 40 species of butterflies are found at Gifford Pinchot State Park. While butterflies can be found in a variety of habitats, most species are attracted to some type of opening. The meadows provide a mix

of nectaring plants as well as host plants that are necessary for the larvae to feed on. Other interesting insects may be found in the meadows such as bees, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets and flies.

Birds utilize the meadows. The grasses provide seeds for the seed eaters and an abundant supply of insects for the insect eaters. Turtles may gravitate to these open areas in order to nest. The warmth of the sun helps to incu-

bate the eggs.

Small mammals such as moles, shrews and mice are drawn to the food bank. As one looks up the food chain, there are predators that are



PHOTO BY SALLY RAY

Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*)

nourished by the small animals that flourish in such a habitat. Bats use these open areas to feed at dusk and dawn. While all habitats are of value, meadows are a rich resource that is dwindling across the state. These meadows are an asset and add to the natural diversity found at the park.

Many thanks to all who helped with this habitat improvement project. ■

# Timing is Everything

By Bob Kross



Dutchman's-breeches  
(*Dicentra cucullaria*)

PHOTO BY PAT SABOLD

The saying "timing is everything" pertains not only to boxers and comedians, but to nature enthusiasts as well. The timing of your walks around Pinchot has to do with what you intend to see.

In mid-April, after several trips on Alpine, Midland, and Fern trails, I was describing to a friend the amazing number of wildflowers I saw. My friend said that he might go to Pinchot sometime over the weekend to see the flowers.

When I spoke to my friend later, I was surprised to hear that he had walked the same stretch of trails and hardly saw any flowers. Why such a difference? I knew the trails had plenty of Virginia bluebells, trout lilies, bloodroot, Dutchman's-breeches, and even some early-opening trilliums. What had happened to all of them?

Timing really is everything. I walked the trails at 1:00pm on a warm sunny day and my friend walked the same trails late afternoon on an overcast day. Spring bloomers, to protect the nectar, close at night or when there is a potential for rain. This probably explains why I saw an amazing variety of open wildflowers and my friend saw seemingly nothing.

Similarly, if birds and mammals are your interest, take your cue



Spring-beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)

PHOTO BY PAT SABOLD

from hunters and fishermen and go in the early morning or late afternoon, when the animals are most active. No matter what you are looking for, plan your walks accordingly. ■

## National Get Outdoors Day

Sat., June 12, 2010  
10:00am - 4:00pm

Gifford Pinchot State Park  
Conewago Day Use Area

Activities include kayaking, disc golf, hiking, fishing, children's events and more! Come to the Conewago Day Use area and check out the schedule for the day. Bring a picnic lunch and plan to spend the whole day at the park. All activities are free and open to the public.



2200 Rosstown Road  
Lewisberry, PA 17339  
(717) 432-5011  
Email: FOPSP@aol.com

### ADVISORY BOARD

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*This volunteer advisory board is dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural and recreational resources of Gifford Pinchot State Park for present and future generations.*

Friends of Pinchot State Park is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

**Newsletter Editor: Pat Sabold**  
psaboldFOPSP@aol.com

Publication deadlines are the 15th of each quarter (March, June, September, December). The Advisory Board reserve publication decisions.

### FRIENDS OF PINCHOT STATE PARK

Annual Membership Application

**Make checks payable to: PPF**  
(include FOPSP on the memo line)

Mail form with payment to: Friends of Pinchot State Park, 2200  
Rosstown Road, Lewisberry, PA 17339

NEW MEMBERSHIP     RENEWAL

<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (age 65+)	\$5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to make a
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I would like to receive my newsletter via email.

Friends of Pinchot State Park was formed in March 2009 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions to PPFF are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

*Memberships are for one year, June 1 through May 31.*