

New Volume 4 Edition 1  
THE RANCOCAS CREEK  
ASSOCIATION

The New Creekside News



**The "New" Creekside News** is an e-newsletter for, about, and by the Rancocas Creek Association - free to all, published quarterly (**January, April, July, October**). The Creekside News was previously distributed weekly (1930's) to all residents free of charge - for the first copy - any additional copies were sold for 2 cents per copy!

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Creekside News January 2020

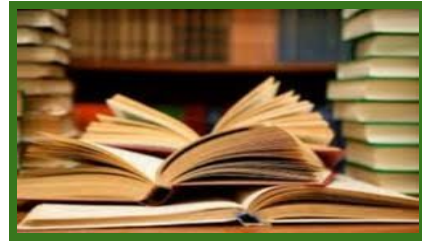
## The Ornithologist Corner

Contributed by Ranger Jacob



### The Hermit Thrush

The Hermit Thrush is a small songbird found throughout New Jersey in the winter. Compared to the other birds in the Thrush family, such as American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds, their wintering range expands further north. They are found in a variety of habitats dominated by woody species and forage for their food on the forest floor. In spring and summer they rely on a diet primarily of insects, but resort to feeding on seeds, grains, and berries in the winter. With their brown upper body and spotted belly, they blend in perfectly with the leaves scattered on the ground. You can find them on the edge of forest openings rummaging through the leaf litter looking for food. They are often spotted in groups of chickadees and titmice. So if you have a bird feeder set up in your yard by a forested woodlot, you just may entice a Hermit Thrush to peer out and look for the seeds that fell onto the ground!



### Ellie's Corner

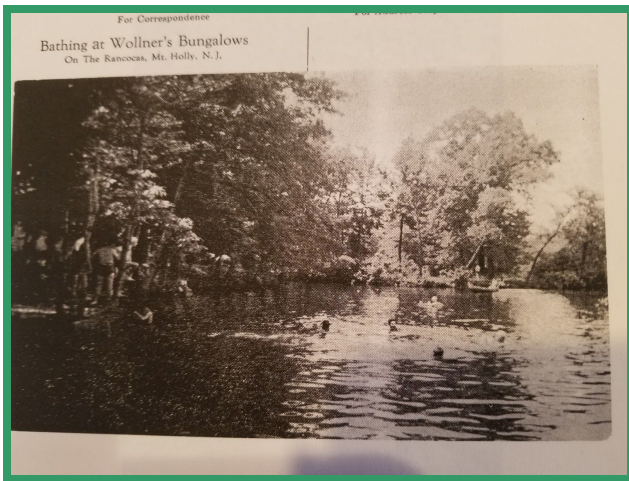
*"To me it is important not to live in a throwaway society...that you respect what came before." Eleanor Gesensway.*

The banks of the Rancocas Creek has in its residents a remarkable membership of truly talented and interesting persons. Please enjoy another excerpt from Ellie's book - "An Oral History Project: Life Along the North Branch of the Rancocas Creek between Mount Holly and Smithville, New Jersey".

Stanley Wollner was born in 1921 in a little house on Garden Street in Mount Holly, near our beloved Rancocas Creek.

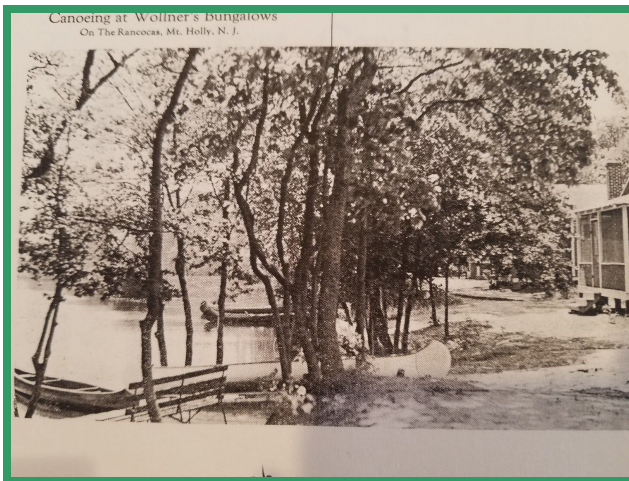
In the 1920's Wollner's father purchased about 25 acres along the creek adjoining the water company and although he sold some of the acreage, he retained about 15 acres upon which "Holly Haven" was built.

'Holly Haven was a little bungalow colony' with about 14 bungalows that were rented out.



Rancocas "Holly Haven" 1935

Postcards



Some of the bungalows were given names by the residents. 'There was one done in stucco with little tiny seashells and things...They were painted different colors...They were very simple bungalows...They all had porches...Some were screened.'

'In front of them was a little promenade; then the bank and a couple of docks. There was a dock for shallow bathing and a dock where you could dive where the water was 12 or 14 feet deep. There were trees all along the edge of the creek.'  
'...(E)verybody had their own canoes or if they didn't they would get them from

Hacks.'

'...(A)nd the creek was beautiful. Even as a child I could see that. It was a large body of water. You had the main creek and then you had a little bay across from his property. It was visually lovely. You had a lot of sky and you had it reflected in the water. It's a classic beauty.'

'There was a resident artist named Campbell who would march through there. Sometimes he would stop and paint.'

'Hacks was always part of everything because that was transportation...the means of getting up the creek.'

'...(V)isitors ... always said, "This is like the most beautiful English river." I always thought that was the highest compliment you could make until I saw some of the English rivers and they couldn't hold a candle to the Rancocas.'

These stories from our original residents resonate such pride in the creek. Let's do our part to restore and maintain that beauty.

## RCA Creek Maintenance

The Rancocas Creek Association is very grateful to our youth volunteers, Mason and Royce, for the diligent work put forth thus far regarding our creek maintenance.

Areas of erosion are being identified and mapped.



Beginning signs of erosion.



More advanced erosion.



By traversing the creek in the spring months, some of the larger debris can also

be identified for removal - we will not wait for the rush of the Annual Fall Float pre-clean-up!

Research is ongoing regarding evergreen stream revetment in hopes that we will be able to deter some erosion and rebuild the banks.

Exploration is underway about methods of removal of invasives and replenishment of native flora.

Anyone interested in assisting with any of these projects, please contact Claudia or Morgan.



In that vein, the RCA is addressing identification of invasive flora that is of concern to our environment. This month, we will look at the 'mile-a-minute' weed (*Persicaria perfoliatum*). Native to Asia, this weed was introduced to us around the 1930's and it crowds out and strangles the native plants.

If you have mile-a-minute, you can document it through [Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System \(EDDMapS\) - Mile-a-Minute Vine](#)

*University of Georgia. Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health.*

Site provides state, county, point and GIS data.

Maps can be downloaded and shared.



An informational sheet - <https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/fnr/fnr-481-w.pdf> is attached for your information.

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## BEST PRACTICES FOR A CREEK FRIENDLY YARD

Taken from 'SavetheSource.org'

Garden with native Species -

Native species are adapted for our environment, so they do not need fertilizer, pesticide, or extra water, unlike non-native species. This can save you money and reduce a potential source of pollution. Native plants also provide a whole host of additional benefits. For example, they help infiltrate water into the ground, prevent soil erosion, and provide vital habitat for pollinators and animals.

Minimize Turf Grass -

While it's nice to have some yard space

with turf grass, one strategy for creating a creek-friendly yard is to reduce the size of that turf grass lawn and plant it with native species.

Minimize Impervious Cover -

Impervious cover is a hard surface where water can't soak into the ground. Keep paved driveways and concrete sidewalks small. Where possible, replace with gravel, permeable pavers, or stepping stones.

Cover exposed soil -

Sediment erosion is a large source of pollution in our water. If you have exposed soil in your yard, cover it with mulch or fill in the area with plants.

Plant a Buffer Area -

Think about where you can strategically place a buffer area in your yard. Native plants with long roots create a "sponge" that soaks up extra water and pollution before it can travel further. If your yard connects directly to a creek, planting suitable native species between your yard and the creek can help stop pollution in its tracks before it reaches the creek, and may also reduce flooding. A buffer may also be appropriate between your yard and the road, though you should be careful not to impair drivers' visibility.

Reduce Use of Fertilizers, Pesticides, and other Chemicals on your Yard -

Before using fertilizer on your yard, conduct a soil test to see which nutrients are needed (if any). If you must use fertilizer or pesticides, target your usage and apply them only where necessary, being sure to follow the instructions. Simple changes like applying lawn treatments when there isn't rain in the forecast can affect how much they actually treat your yard, and how much becomes

pollution.

### Disconnect Downspouts

Allow downspouts to run onto permeable surfaces such as the lawn, a rain garden, or a gravel driveway. This gives water a chance to soak into the ground.

### Plant a Rain Garden -

A rain garden is a depressed garden designed to give runoff a place to soak into the ground. Just like a buffer area, rain gardens can slow the spread of pollution and help reduce flooding. Rain gardens are a great place to direct disconnected downspouts or the overflow from a rain barrel.

For information on how to participate in the Landscape Makeover Program, or Rain Garden rebates, visit [SavetheSource.org](http://SavetheSource.org).

Soils tests are available for purchase at the Rutgers Extension office for \$20 at 2 Academy Drive in Westampton.

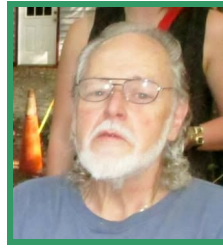
Questions regarding the Save the Source campaign may be directed to Becky Free of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance at 17 Pemberton Road, Southampton, NJ 08088. Her telephone contact is 609-859-8860 x 121.

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## RCA SUNSHINE

Birthday Greetings and Happy Anniversary to our members celebrating in January, February, and March! Continued good health and happiness to each of you.

## Condolences



Our condolences and well wishes to Anita Gooden. Our thoughts and prayers are with you upon the loss of Bill Gooden. Bill was such a valued and well-loved member of our RCA

family. Many will remember Bill working tirelessly on creek clean-up and the absolutely wonderful, hospitable, and awesome picnics at his and Anita's home after. You will be greatly missed.

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## RCA OUTREACH

The Rancocas Creek Association is starting an effort to connect our organization's ideas or endeavors to the public by focusing on educational initiatives in our community.

Programs are free; however, donations are always accepted!

Our first will be Rain Gardens - to be sponsored by RCA and held at the Rutgers Extension office in Westampton in March. Stay tuned for more details and for upcoming initiatives. If you have a topic that would be of interest, please let Sharon know.

Anyone interested in assisting by providing refreshments, facilitating an educational topic, or locating topics, please contact Sharon.

March 2020 - Rain Gardens

April 2020 - through August - tbd

## What is a Rain Garden?

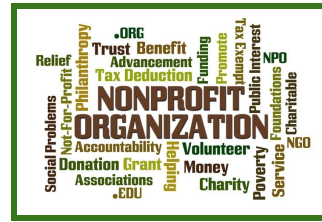
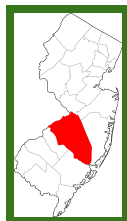
A Rain Garden, also known as a bioretention system, is a shallow depression that captures, filters and infiltrates stormwater runoff. They can take many forms - natives, shrubs, wildflowers, whichever format is most aesthetically pleasing to you. Come out to the Rain Garden class in March!!!

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The RCA has a long history. - from 1934! It was originally a "camper's association", formed by families summering along the creek.

This year we are doing a concerted effort to get substantial work initiatives going to solidify our beautiful environment. A major endeavor is mapping our section of the creek. Claudia M and Morgan A have already made great strides in outlining the needed tasks.



The RCA is a non-profit organization.

Tax deductible donations may be forwarded to RCA at 36 West Railroad Avenue, Eastampton NJ 08060;

OR you may donate through Facebook;

OR you may identify Rancocas Creek Association as your charity of choice when purchasing through **Amazon Smile** ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)). RCA will receive 0.5% of your purchase courtesy of the vendor.

So many options!

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HELP WANTED!!!!

We are looking for GRANT WRITERS!!!

Anyone love to play on FaceBook? Social Media authors are needed!

Enjoy digging through archives? We are looking for someone to go to the library and download old copies of newsletters.

Please let the President know if you would be willing and able to volunteer your time - thank you!

## We are Walking!

Claudia McNamara and Bill Bolger have been diligently walking along Hand Lane, Shreve Street, and West Railroad Avenue collecting trash. Thank you for your dedication to keeping our little bit of paradise clean!

Should anyone wish to join in their walks, please contact Claudia - bring your trash-bags and complete your pre-walk tick prevention routine!



## 2020 Meeting Schedule

*10:30 am - refreshments*

*11:00 am - meeting*

*Noon - adjourn*

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## Automated Trash Collection for Eastampton

And speaking of trash collections, Eastampton Township will be providing their residents with new 96-gallon wheeled trash bins. These bins will enable the waste management crew of 3 per truck to be reduced to a one-man team, fully automated and much more efficient as of February 4th.

Trash collection for the creek-side residents are still in discussion as the truck is substantially large and will not be able to maneuver the narrow dirt/gravel roads.

- Sunday, April 26
- Sunday, May 17
- Saturday, June 20 - Joiner/Barber
- Sunday, July 12
- Sunday, August 9
- Sunday, September 13 (Nominations)
- Sunday, October 11 Potluck (Elections)
- Sunday, November 8 Support-Local Gathering
- Sunday, December 13 Winter Gathering

Venue to be finalized.



## Dues



Dues remain at \$20 per household! Please forward your dues to our Treasurer, Tom Kempton at 1 Hand Lane, Eastampton NJ 08060 or, you may mail them to the RCA at 36 West Railroad Avenue, Eastampton NJ 08060.

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## Our Newsletter

Anyone interested in writing an article for our newsletter, or have news that they would like to share, should contact Sharon Astorino, Teri Montgomery, or Claudia McNamara. You may use our personal emails or our WebMaster will forward mail to us that is sent to [Rancocas@gmail.com](mailto:Rancocas@gmail.com).

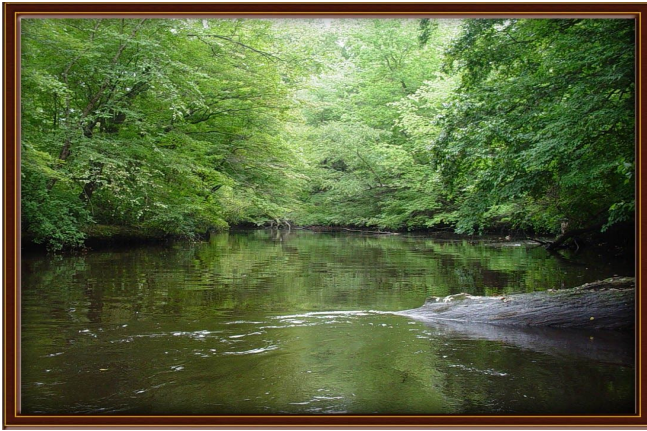
***For those of you who read this newsletter and are not members of the RCA, we would like to tell you what it is! The Rancocas Creek Association is resident's association for people who live on or near the Creek between the Smithville Spillway and the Mount Holly Dam. We are a non-profit organization. Although RCA is not primarily an environmental organization, our location and relationship to the Creek means that many issues that we take up on behalf of residents have to do with preserving the quality of the environment and ecology of the Creek.***

## ***We welcome new members!***

The more subscribed members we have, the stronger our voice to protect our environment and neighborhood and the quality of all lives along it. Dues are \$20 per year per household - not a high price to support an association that looks out for our small community and is also a source of information about local activities and development. So come on in! Join up and be part of this not-for-profit neighborhood association!

To join, simply mail your dues along with your name, address, email and telephone number to RCA at 36 West Railroad Avenue, Eastampton NJ 08060. We look forward to hearing from you and working together for a beautiful, clean creek!

## **Like us on Facebook!**



**President:** Sharon Astorino  
**Vice President:** Richard Astorino  
**Secretaries:** Judy Loane  
Claudia McNamara  
**Treasurer:** Tom Kempton  
**Parliamentarian:** Kerry Sharps  
**Editors:** Sharon Astorino  
Claudia McNamara  
Teri Montgomery  
**Webmaster:** Kerry Sharps