



New Volume 5 Edition 3

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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The Ornithologist Corner

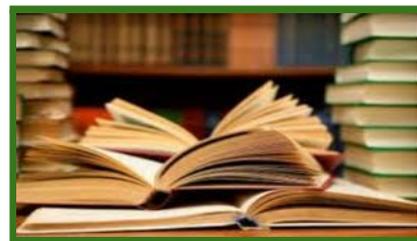
*Jacob Poinsett
Audubon Society*



The Red-Headed Woodpecker

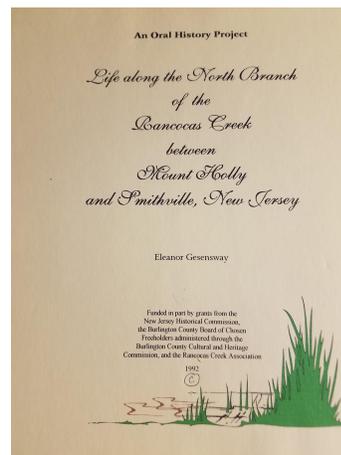
Of the seven woodpeckers that occur in New Jersey, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and the Red-headed Woodpecker are the only migratory species. While the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker winters in the southern part of the state, the Red-headed Woodpecker breeds in uninterrupted upland forests in Northern New Jersey and mixed oak-pine forests in Southern New Jersey. Unlike their sapsucker relative, the Red-headed Woodpecker's population has steadily been in decline. High fashion in the late 1800s and early 1900s known as "plume hats" contributed to many Red-headed Woodpecker deaths for their highly sought-after feathers. More recently, habitat destruction and loss of suitable nesting sites to European Starlings and House Sparrows have made matters worse. The woodpecker is now listed as threatened and considered rare in much of the northeast. The National Audubon Society has deemed

healthy habitats for the Red-headed Woodpecker as Important Bird Areas (IBA's) and a couple are here in Burlington County; Franklin Parker Preserve and Brendan T. Byrne State Forest. So when you're hiking the trails at either location, look for a robin-sized bird with a solid red head and black and white plumage throughout the rest of its body.



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".

Excerpts from interviews with Carl and Ruth Laessig. (July 1990)

Carl and Ruth Laessig lived at "Vale Haven"

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on Shreve Street. Born in 1906 and 1909 respectively, they left us in 1994 and 1993, leaving a lasting and loving legacy.

Carl was born in Philadelphia and "discovered" the creek when he was 17 years old. He "bought a canoe and put it in the Neshaminy Creek on Frankford Avenue ... (he) paddled down to the Delaware ... and wondered ..." where does that go - exploring until he ended up in the Hainesport area. The Rancocas Creek became his "second home", he loved it that much. It would take 2 hours to paddle from Neshaminy to Hainesport - with a few dips in the creek along the way!

Ruth was born in Bryn Mawr and Carl introduced her to canoeing, camping, and of course, the Rancocas Creek! He "courted her for 4 years and she finally relented!"

Carl built the home on Shreve Street "myself, everything except the electric. The first summer we lived in the cellar. We had the roof on with tar paper before the shingles so we were safe from the rain. Then we had hurricane Hazel (1954) ... we lost 24 trees. ...

Carl "worked at Smith Machine at Smithville for about 20 years all together. They treated me good there. ... I retired from Smith in 1974 when I was 68. ... About 3 or 4 years ago Smith Machine was bought out and they moved all the machinery out."

Both Carol and Ruth summarized that the attraction of this area was that the creek used to be "clean; nice sand bottom. ... You could walk to the store in Mount Holly. Everything was handy. Now, it's too handy. That big mall wasn't there and up at the Fairgrounds wasn't a shopping center."

The Mount Holly Farmer's Market



The Mount Holly Farmer's Market is held every Thursday from 3 pm until 7pm.

The RCA is there to answer questions and to support our neighbors - we would love to see you there! Stop by to say hello to the magnificent Tom K!!

Some other vendors include **Vincent's Ice Cream** - who could ask for anything better on a hot summer Thursday?! Maybe some lemonade - **Tea for All** is there.

How about some fresh, local produce - **Pinelands Produce Farm, RT Eckert Produce Farm...Hoophouse** and **Daniela's** will provide some great treats!

Or visit **Simply Made, The Rod Homestead, Boheme Foods, Shepherds Pasture, Fords Nest Flowers, Barn and Stone Soaps, Simply Made**, and more!!!

And do all this, while being serenaded by live musicians!

Please consider supporting the Farmer's Market - the vendors are our neighbors - and without them, there is no market! Thanks for your support!

The RCA is meeting in person again!



After a year of 'zooming' it was so very refreshing to meet in person.

Linda Hynes, Burlington County Commissioner, was at this first in-person meeting to greet members and visitors in the beautiful Smithville Park.

It was certainly fitting to meet along the Eastampton Spillway along the peaceful and wonderfully mesmerizing Rancocas Creek. A special thank you to Tom K for an impressive set-up for our meeting.

Commissioner Hynes explained the county's role in how the commissioners divide the duties. Commissioner Hynes' duties include the waterways and environmental issues. She was generous with her time and responded to numerous questions from the members and provided helpful contact information for officials at all levels of government. She seemed to genuinely enjoy meeting with us and was given an open invitation to join future RCA meetings.

RCA extends a warm and sincere thank you to Commission Hynes.

Tree Removal Project

Thanks to everyone who donated, supported, and gave encouragement for our tree removal project.

Ralph's Tree Service started with the removal project. We still have much to do!

While you are paddling along the north branch, if you come across any trees that impede your path, please take a picture and record the coordinates then send it to "Rancocas@gmail.com", we will add it to the list!

As a result of the July storm, we had some new trees added to the creek. Thanks to Ralph's Tree Service for promptly removing them so that paddlers could maneuver more easily.



Paddle Safety

Learn how to use your kayak!

Paddle safer!

Timothy Williams has upcoming teaching dates for south Jersey. All kayaks (sit-on-top, sit-in/fishing) all levels of skill. Small group (5 persons) and private/semi are available at various locations and times. Those interested in kayak rolling MUST have OFFICIAL COVID-19 vaccination certificate. Rolling is 1:1 only except for paddling partners, where 1:2 ratio is acceptable. For additional information, reservations, and payment, please contact Timothy Williams directly. Email - liquidaffairspaddlesport@yahoo.com Note: you must bring your own/borrow equipment.

August 2021

Monday, Aug. 2 - An Introduction to Kayaking

Tuesday, Aug. 3 - Essential Strokes

Wednesday, Aug. 4 - Self and Assisted Recovery and Rescue

Thursday, Aug. 5 - Essential Strokes

Friday, Aug. 6 - Self and Assisted Recovery and Rescue

Saturday, Aug 7 - An Introduction to Kayaking



Training locations are in Burlington County and may include Mill Dam in Mount Holly or Harrisville or Oswego Lake, etc. September dates will be available through Timothy Williams, or check Facebook - South Jersey Kayakers.

Spotted Lanternfly

Chickens, Praying Mantises Among Likely Lanternflies Enemies¹

Potential predators of the spotted lanternfly are being brought into focus thanks to shutterbugs who have captured images of birds, insects, mammals and even fish consuming the invasive planthopper.

Their snapshots are helping researchers at Penn State zoom in on native species that might feed on the destructive pest, which first was discovered in the U.S. in Berks County in 2014, and since has spread to at least 34 Pennsylvania counties and to surrounding states.

Of the 660 photos and observations submitted to scientists in the College of Agricultural Sciences, chickens and praying mantises are heading for a photo finish in the race to eat the spotted lanternfly, according to Anne Johnson, a doctoral candidate in entomology. She is conducting the study with Kelli Hoover, professor of entomology.

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<https://extension.psu.edu/chickens-praying-mantises-among-likely-lanternflies-enemies>

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"The overwhelming response to our request demonstrates what we suspected — that native predators may play a larger role in spotted lanternfly control than may have been assumed previously, perhaps giving us more biological options to help manage this pest," she said.

However, Johnson cautioned that while the results of this study look promising, more research is needed to substantiate the impacts native predators will have on lanternfly populations.

Hoover explained that because the spotted lanternfly is a non-native insect, it did not arrive in the U.S. with its natural enemies to keep its numbers in balance, unlike in its native environment of Asia, where several predators, including parasitic wasps, devour it. However, importing new species to the U.S. as a control measure requires numerous studies on environmental impact and regulatory approval, which is a lengthy process.

In the meantime, Johnson and Hoover are conducting their field and lab experiments to find species in the U.S. that will prey on spotted lanternflies. Last fall, through news and social media outreach, the researchers asked residents in the spotted lanternfly quarantine zone to upload relevant photos or sightings to the Facebook page, Birds Biting Bad Bugs. The notifications came pouring in not long after.

"We didn't expect to receive as many reports as we did or for the project to attract as many people as it did," Johnson said. "Most of the responses were from

Pennsylvania, but we also received reports from other areas impacted by the spotted lanternfly, particularly New Jersey."

Leading the bird predators is the chicken, with cardinals, catbirds, blue jays and the tufted titmouse rounding out the top five. In the arthropod category, the praying mantis takes the top spot as the most reported predator; yellow jackets, orbweaver spiders, wheelbugs and ants also were strong contenders.

There were a few surprises among the reports, including sightings of squirrels, bats, frogs, goldfish and a garter snake ingesting lanternflies. "Being that these species also are predators, it makes sense," Hoover said.

The past year's research focused on predation of the adult stage of spotted lanternflies; currently, the scientists are gathering data on predation of eggs and nymphs. "We are grateful for the support we have received so far and are eager to have citizen-scientists continue to help us to advance our work."

Other aspects of the research will focus on whether the spotted lanternfly's preferred diet — *Ailanthus altissima*, known as tree of heaven — influences how it might taste to birds. The researchers theorize that the chemicals in tree of heaven might cause the insect to have a "bitter" flavor, especially in later life stages when the pest is eating profusely and has gained the characteristic warning colors of red and black.

"Bright colors inform potential predators that they taste bad, just like we see with the orange and black warning colors of monarch butterflies," Hoover said.

There also is the potential that eating spotted lanternflies, particularly those that have fed on tree of heaven, could be toxic to predators. While the citizens' observations currently do not support this notion, with many reporting no difference in behavior following predators' lanternfly consumption, Johnson and Hoover plan to delve further into the theory.

The researchers anticipate having a report ready for publication this fall. For now, they believe their preliminary findings — which Johnson will present at the Eastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America's meeting this month — could help homeowners this season.

"I recommend homeowners take steps to attract these predators because they will help to control not only spotted lanternflies but other pests, too," Johnson said. She pointed to the Penn State Extension website for information on how to attract beneficial birds and insects.

Margaret Brittingham, professor of wildlife resources, Sara Hermann, assistant professor of entomology, and Allison Cornell, assistant professor of biology at Penn State Altoona, are aiding the study.

For the latest science-based information about the spotted lanternfly or to subscribe to a monthly spotted lanternfly newsletter,

visit Penn State Extension's Spotted Lanternfly website.

Nymphs:



The spotted lanternfly is an invasive planthopper (a type of insect) in the U.S. It is native to certain parts of Southeast Asia.

Adult:



Frequently asked questions regarding this pest may be seen at <https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly-frequently-asked-questions>.

RCA SUNSHINE



Birthday Greetings and Happy Anniversary to our members celebrating in July, August, and September! Continued good health and happiness to each of you.

Stream Visual Assessment Protocol Training (SVAP)

On November 4, 2020, Dr. Christopher Obropta, Extension Specialist in Water Resources with Rutgers Cooperative Extension conducted training for RCA members and volunteers on SVAP.

The RCA is planning on continuing that training in June as we acknowledge how important it is to recognize that healthy, resilient streams, riparian areas, and flood plains operate as a connected stream corridor system and will continue work to ensure that the Rancocas creek is a healthy body of water.



CLASSIFIED ADS



FREE STUFF! Craig K has a cabin full of stuff that he is happy to give away. There's some vintage furniture for someone who's into restoration, old hand tools, and an unbelievable amount of odds and ends that must be of interest to someone. Please email him at craig_katz@yahoo.com if you'd like to have a look.



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!

Dues



Dues remain at \$20 per household! Please forward your dues to our Treasurer, Gary Pollak at 3 Birch Avenue, Mount Holly NJ 08060.

You may also pay through PayPal (\$20.74) - please email us at Rancocas@gmail.com to ensure you are credited with the membership!



2021 Meeting Schedule (tentative)

10:30 am - refreshments

11:00 am - meeting

Noon - adjourn

We are meeting in-person again!

The Saturday experiment has ended! Meetings will revert to Sundays only due to the results of the meeting's poll. Thanks!

Sunday, August 29 - tbd

Sunday, September 26 - tbd

Sunday, October 10 "Potluck"

Sunday, November 7 Support-Local Gathering

Sunday, December 12 Winter Gathering

Road / Creek Clean-up dates to be determined

Our Newsletter

Anyone interested in writing an article for our newsletter, or have news that they would like to share, should contact Sharon

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Astorino or Claudia McNamara at 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 residents' association for people who live on or near the Creek between the Smithville Spillway and the Mount Holly Dam, or who enjoy paddling along the creek. 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!

The 3 "M"s that make the Rancocas Creek "go"!

Membership - Encouraging friends and neighbors to join - \$20/year/household - the larger the membership, the stronger the voice!

Mailings - A newsletter geared to the membership is produced quarterly. We try to limit emails to a minimum!

Meetings - A minimum of 8 meetings per year; the third Sunday or Saturday of the month is preceded by coffee and refreshments, although lately they have all been virtual! Some meetings have speakers and run a little over the usual one hour.

The RCA has over 85 years of history; formed by people summering along the beautiful Rancocas. The creek-side cabins were summer camps for families from Camden, Philadelphia, and other surrounding towns. RCA has had its ups and downs, some years with vigorous activity, others being barely active. RCA was instrumental in requiring the landfill to respond to health issues, paying for city water along Shreve Street, Kates Tract, and Paducah Road. Our main goal; however, is to maintain the beauty and health of the Rancocas Creek.

Consider joining us, and/or contributing to have some of the large trees removed through <https://charity.gofundme.com/.../cam.../tree-removal-fund...>

or through PayPal using rancocas@gmail.com as the identifier.

New members, simply mail your dues along with your name, address, email and telephone number to RCA, 3 Birch Avenue, Mount Holly NJ 08060. We look forward to hearing from you and working together for a beautiful, clean creek!

Like us on Facebook!



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|-------------------------|--|
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| Vice President: | Richard Astorino |
| Secretary: | Claudia McNamara |
| Treasurer: | Gary Pollak |
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| Editors: | Sharon Astorino
Claudia McNamara
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| Creek Liaisons: | Jenna Champion
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