Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

September 2012

Email: info@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org Website: www.Friendsofhuntleymeadows.org



President's Message September 2012

Hello and welcome to our new FOHMP Board members! At the annual membership meeting in June we elected four new members to the Board. Ashley Thompson has been a regular visitor to HMP since she was a child and has been volunteering the past two years as a Volunteer-on-Duty and at the visitor center information desk. Kat Dver has been volunteering since 2008. She is currently volunteering as a program leader and is doing a research project at HMP on crayfish. Elena Ryan first visited the park 2 years ago and is now a seasonal employee working at the Visitor Center on weekends. Elena has also provided Park Staff with statistical analysis of water levels and rainfall using data collected in the park and she has been instrumental in launching a very well received update of the HMP Dragonfly Guide. Dorothy Raduazo began volunteering at HMP in 2005 as a VOD and is now a valuable member of the Herbarium crew.

Goodbye to three of our FOHMP board members. **Andy Higgs**, **Marianne Mooney** and **Adam Bucher** have moved on to new adventures. We wish them well and thank them for their dedication to the FOHMP membership and HMP Park.

On behalf of FOHMP, I'd also like to thank the families and friends of **Lennie Bloch** and **Cathy Eckhof**. These two women spent many years volunteering at the park and memorial donations in their name have been generously made to FOHMP. I will remember them both fondly.

One more goodbye to make...HMP Staff member, Ann Stat, will be retiring on September 4, 2012, after 26 years with the Park Authority. Ann began working at HMP in 1990, just after I started there and I've always felt that we grew into it together. We learned about wetland habitats and how to team teach so that both of our strengths flourished and we had so much fun doing it! We trained volunteers, created programs and camps and ran special events as well as the many "other duties as assigned". Since I switched from being an employee to a volunteer, Annie has been a driving force in keeping the HMP volunteer program vibrant along with her talents in creating a living exhibit (bird feeding station), programming and sales. She

has been the backbone in programming through several staff changes and has done it enthusiastically and graciously. **Thank you Annie!**

Hello to the successful Parking Donation Program! In our first year of collection, we made a \$7,000 profit which will be used for the following in the coming year: 40% for Weekend Staffing of the Visitor Center, 20% to support the salary of the Natural Resource Apprentice position, 20% for program supplies for the new Outdoor Classroom at HMP and Historic Huntley House, and 20% for Visitor Center operating supplies and grounds and trails maintenance. FOHMP should be very proud of the success of this program!

Hello to two new additions at HMP, the Historic Huntley House and "Dragonflies of Huntley Meadows Park". Historic Huntley is open on Saturdays for tours through November. Our newest publication, "Dragonflies of Huntley Meadows Park", has been selling very well! If you have not had a chance to check it out, please do. There are copies available for sale at the HMP Visitor Center.

Hello to you! Fall is a great time to visit and take a walk on the boardwalk. The beavers have been busy and I'm sure that you will find yourself surprised and delighted. Hope to see you there!

Kathi McNeil, FOHMP President

The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park would like to thank the following new Lifetime members:

Brian E. Freburger Carolyn Gamble Dave Norman Fred Siskind Nancy Vehrs

If you would like to give a "lifetime" of support to Huntley Meadows Park by becoming a life member, please send a donation of \$150 to:

Treasurer, FOHMP, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria, VA 22306



Park Manager's Message

A Walk on Huntley Meadows' Wild Side



Staffing Transitions – hellos and good-byes!

Huntley Meadows Park will be 40 in a few years! As we approach that significant middle-age benchmark, we see the park moving through many changes and transitions, including the opening of Historic Huntley, the Wetland Restoration Project, our new Outdoor Classroom and increases in both programming and resource management. In addition, we've weathered several rounds of budget cuts and probably have several more ahead of us. It's also a time of significant staff turn-over as several of the park's veterans start new chapters in their lives. and we welcome new staff and new positions for an everevolving park.

Good-byes:

After 26 years in the Park Authority, (23 years at Huntley Meadows Park), Ann Stat will be retiring this fall as the park's Volunteer Coordinator, and looks forward to being a substitute our veterans for many years of **exceptional** service, wishing teacher for Arlington County, and a volunteer at Huntley Meadows Park. Her personal touch with each and every volunteer, daily attention to the park's sales desk and bird feeding station, and her passion for teaching will all be missed, not to mention her world-famous volunteer recognition parties!

In addition, Melissa Gaulding, the park's Program Director, is engaged to be married and will be moving to Chicago in October to start a new life with her husband-to-be. We are of course happy and excited for Melissa and her new family, but sad for Huntley Meadows Park, and we'll miss her first-class interpretive expertise, artistic skills and irreverent sense of humor, not to mention her wonderful hats and colorful collection of clogs.

Hellos:

As you all know, when Carolyn Gamble retired in March, we were sorry to say good-bye, but excited to say hello to Karen Sheffield who filled her position. Karen worked at Riverbend Park, Great Falls Park and the Audubon Society before we convinced her to join us at Huntley. She's done a fantastic job already with developing Historic Huntley, management of the park's increasingly complicated finances, teaching us how to better use the park's on-line program system, and sharing many excellent ideas about the Outdoor Classroom, updating park signage and improving our business plans for program development.

We also welcomed Geoffrey Cohrs this spring, as Historic Huntley's first ever History Interpreter and Site Coordinator. Geoff hails from Richmond where he developed and led tours for the Virginia Historical Society. Within days of starting at Huntley, Geoff fit right in as part of the team, and in a few weeks was leading excellent weekend tours, developing exciting fall and winter programs, and teaching us all new facts about Historic Huntley.

Last, but certainly not least, we were lucky enough to be

joined this summer by four exceptional new interns: Kylie Starck, Celeste Sharpe, Kristen Stauff and Owen Williams-all of which have changed the park for the better and made lasting contributions. Due to generous funding provided by Friends of Huntley Meadows Park, we're thrilled that Owen will be with us on a part-time basis for a full 12 months, to help Dave and Brian with their long list of resource management projects. And Kylie will be staying on with the Resource Management Division as a Roving Naturalist this fall, so we hope to see her back at Huntley Meadows Park as well!

As I write this, we are advertising and interviewing for Ann's position, and may have a new Volunteer Coordinator by the time you read this, and hope to have filled Melissa's Program Director position by end of fall. So please join me in thanking them lots of luck in their new lives, while also welcoming our exciting new staff into the Huntley Meadows Park commu-

Project Updates

Historic Huntley – after a wonderful and well-attended opening (200+ excited visitors) on May 19th, Historic Huntley is open, staffed and gearing up for new programs this fall, winter and spring! Geoffrey Cohrs, our new History Interpreter and Site Coordinator, has been working with park staff, our excellent Historic Huntley intern (Celeste Sharpe), Friends of Historic Huntley, Carolyn Gamble (who's still helping out as a volunteer!), and staff from other cultural resource parks. All so he can learn as much and as fast as he can to run weekend tours, school and scout programs, care for the site and create interpretive materials. Check out our website to learn more, stop by for a Saturday tour, and please contact Geoff if you'd like to be an Historic Huntley volunteer!

Outdoor Classroom - Our Outdoor Classroom Teaching Pavilion will be completed by end of September, if not before, and open for business as a site for birthday parties, group rentals, school programs and evening classes. Almost every cent for this project came from donations, including many thousands of dollars from Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and the will of Willa Howard, a long-time park volunteer.

Wetland Restoration – Working with Wetland Studies and Solutions Institute on the final design, permitting and management plan for this project has been an exceptionally positive and educational experience in teamwork and collaboration. Please join me at one of my monthly, free Park Manager Walk and Talks for the latest updates on this project, and keep an eve open for public meetings this late fall and winter. The plan is to break ground in the summer of 2013-please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Kevin Munroe, Park Manager



Huntley Meadows Park News



A Farewell...

Nature inspires me! Huntley Meadows Park inspires me! Being surrounded by such beauty and feeling so enriched by my experiences here has taught me some life changing lessons. I'd like to share some advice from nature that will always stay with me:

Wetland-take time to reflect.

Tree-stand tall, sink your roots deeply in the earth and branch out.

Egret–practice patience and be a keen observer.

Hummingbird—it's good to be energetic, just drink plenty of liquids.

Frog-take a leap of faith and spend time at your pad.

Flower-bloom where you are planted and enjoy hanging out with your buds.

Goldfinch-be colorful and SING YOUR SONG!

Volunteers—have a big heart and give generously of your time, talents and passions.

As many of you know, I will be retiring on Tuesday, September 4. This has been a wonderful 26 years working in the parks and it's amazing to think that I've had the honor to work 23 of them right here at Huntley Meadows Park. I appreciate all the opportunities I've had to grow professionally and personally. I love the people I've been blessed to know over the years and treasure our friendships. My retirement is both exciting and challenging. Huntley Meadows has been my home for over two decades and you are my family. How fortunate I've been to have a career which is my passion and to have wonderful people in my life. A heartfelt thank you to you all.

Ann Stat



Park Manager Walk and Talk

Saturday September 15, 4:00-6:00pm

Saturday October 13, 4:00-6:00pm

Saturday November 17, 3:00-5:00pm

Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on a walk to share questions about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the park is known. Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center, 703-768-2525. (Adults) FREE!

My first few months at Huntley Meadows Park as the Natural Resource Manager's Apprentice...

I have been working at Huntley Meadows Park as the Natural Resource Manager's Apprentice since April. This is a new, part-time, year-long position at the park and I have been lucky enough to participate in a wide variety of natural resource management activities under the guidance of David Lawlor, the park's resource manager. Thanks to the generous funding of the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park group and with the help of Dave Lawlor, Brian Moore and Kristen Stauff, it has been a great start to the year at Huntley Meadows.

So far, I have worked on fighting invasive plant species including Autumn Olive, Porcelain Berry and Java Dropwort. I have also located and mapped Purple Milkweed occurrences, participated in bird point counts as well as wetland and stream restoration planning, and learned a great deal about wildlife ecology, plant identification and park management. The park is filled with so much interesting history and so many nooks and crannies that it is constantly surprising me with new and interesting experiences and challenges.

Previously, I completed a master's degree at American University in environmental studies and have worked on field data collection in wetlands, stream restoration construction and tree inventories. I'm looking forward to broadening my skill set and knowledge base in wildlife management and overall natural resource management and I hope this will help propel me further in a career in ecological restoration, natural resource management and conservation.

Owen Williams



Huntley Meadows Park News



Kristen Stauff, Resource Management Intern

I am currently studying Wildlife Ecology and Management at University of Maryland (Go Terps!), where I will be completing my senior year in the fall. This past semester seemed like an endless hunt for an internship, so when I got the call for an opportunity to interview for a position at Huntley, I was beyond ecstatic. After being fortunate enough to be selected as the Resource Management Intern for this summer, I was so excited to begin my job and be introduced to Huntley Meadows Park and its staff. After my first day on the job, I knew this summer would be one to remember. I soon realized how much of a treasure this park was as not only a wildlife sanctuary, but for all of its staff, volunteers, and visitors. I felt so honored that I was going to be able to be part of this Huntley Meadows Community.

I was most excited to start the water quality testing because that was something I had never done before. I spent a lot of my time this summer staring into a microscope, reading all the macroinvertebrate identification books, and learning how to walk in waders without falling into the wetland. In addition to learning so much about aquatic entomology and water quality testing, I learned more about plant identification than I ever thought was possible in just a few short months. I can now confidentially state the name of almost every tree in the park and I even learned a good amount of meadow and wetland plants. I now have a keen eye for spotting invasive plants and get great satisfaction when I am out in the woods removing them. I have also gained much more experience driving ATV vehicles and using mapping tools such as GPS and GIS.

As graduation quickly approaches and daunting task of applying to jobs waits, I know I will never forget the summer I spent here at Huntley. I am so grateful for the staff and volunteers who took me under their wings this summer, teaching me their wide breadth of knowledge. I feel so privileged that I got to spend my summer with such an extraordinary group of people in such an amazing park and am so thankful for all the donations that made this possible. My summer really would not have been the same without such an opportunity and I really can't express my gratitude enough.

Kylie Starck, Naturalist Intern

I grew up playing outside, exploring new places and examining all of the plants and animals around me. As a kid my best friend and I discovered a beautiful untouched and secluded part of the woods where a large tree had fallen and connected the banks of a flowing stream. Perched on the fallen tree above the water our legs dangled back and forth as we talked and laughed away most of the day. It was the perfect canvas to let our imagination soar while escaping the buzz of the city just beyond. Years later after high school graduation we decided to go back to our spot and visit our old friend, the great fallen tree. As we climbed up the last hill, our hearts dropped. Our most peaceful place had been torn apart, smothered in cement and the banks of the stream had been leveled and rerouted; it had been completely stripped of its natural life. I decided to dedicate the rest of my life toward environmental education and conservation.

Since I have been trying to get my career for the environment off the ground, I was ecstatic to receive the internship position as a Naturalist at Huntley Meadows Park! It was just the opportunity I had been waiting for. I worked with staff and volunteers who helped me to enhance my ability for tree and plant identification and macro invertebrate study through water quality testing and resource management. I also worked on program development and implementation for the public. I loved teaching and working with the kids in all of the summer camps. I have so many wonderful memories of the outdoors as a child myself that I feel lucky to have the opportunity to share my passion with others. It was so great to watch the kids get excited about our programs and the things they would discover on our nature walks. I also learned a lot about how a nature center runs and what it takes to keep it up. This unique opportunity has provided me with the skills and knowledge to succeed in my career in environmental education and conservation.

I am truly grateful to Friends of Huntley Meadows Park for the fantastic chance to work at such a beautiful wetland. Without your generous support opportunities like the one I have received wouldn't be possible. I thank you for the best summer of my life.

Celeste Sharpe, Historic Huntley Intern

Working as the cultural resource intern for Historic Huntley has been a truly enjoyable way to spend this summer. Learning about the mysteries of Historic Huntley, being a part of its public debut, and helping to write school programs has given me a valuable experience that I can take with me as I continue my PhD program at GMU. I am very thankful for the opportunity to do such interesting work, and would like to express a big thank you to everyone at Huntley Meadows Park for being so friendly and welcoming. I look forward to continuing as a volunteer and to the parks' continued success!



Natural Resource News



R

eel like getting outdoors, spending more time in the woods and wetlands, and contributing to the physical welfare of Huntley Meadows Park?

Volunteer opportunities at Huntley Meadows Park are available through the Resource Management Volunteer (RMV) Program. This program focuses on activities that directly assist with the substantial upkeep and resource management directives of our 1554 acre park by assisting the park staff with activities like stream cleanup, support of restoration projects in ecologically important areas, invasive plant removal (outside of the current IMA Program site), plant surveys, trail monitoring, and park maintenance.

We are currently looking for volunteers who are interested in helping with the following projects:

- Surveys of Insects, Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians found around the Visitor Center
- Upkeep of the Plantings around the Visitor Center
- Trail Monitoring
- Invasive Plant Removal

A number of these projects can be done independently at times and on days that fit your schedule, while other projects are group events that occur on both weekdays and weekends.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to be informed of upcoming events, please send an email to: HuntleyRMV@gmail.com and let us know you would like to help!

The Monday Morning Birdwalk

The Huntley Meadows Park Monday Morning Birdwalk slid into summer with some pretty good seasonal and migration sightings. This season, however, we have detected a decline in the customary visits of shorebirds. There have been the usual numbers of Wilson's Snipe, Killdeer, and the occasional Least and Spotted Sandpipers, but very few Yellowlegs. The usual species and numbers of wintering ducks persisted until about April 23 when numbers were abruptly down. The Monday Birdwalk Group usually makes note of its first sightings of Swallows at Huntley as our unofficial indicator of spring. This year, Northern Rough-wing Swallows were first seen on March 19, Tree Swallows on March 13, and Barn Swallows on April 9. Our highlights for this quarter were topped off by a Prothonatory Warbler at its nest in a snag near the Heron trail from April 23 until June 11. We were able to watch parental trips to and from the nest during this period. After the 11th, there was no further detection of this bird suggesting to us that the brood had fledged. On June 4, the group spotted a Yellow Warbler presumed to be a late migrant. Our average species count for the period was 47.5 with the highest count on May 7 of 62 species.



The Huntley Meadows Park Monday Morning Birdwalk happens each week. It starts at 7 AM in the summer, requires no reservation, costs nothing, and is open to all. Monday morning is a great time to play a little hooky, and come on out for a beautiful early morning walk with some great birders.

Harry Glasgow

Fall Art News



Friends of Huntley Meadows Park 2012 Photography Contest

Give Us Your Best Shot!

Entries due November 4 to 17
Awards reception December 9, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

We hope you have all been taking photographs wildly this spring and summer—there have been many willing subjects - particularly the family of muskrats! You may drop off your entries—four per person—for \$5/picture—between the dates of the 4th through the 17th of November. The opening of the show (Reception) will be from 2 to 4 pm on Sunday the 9th of December and will close on February 28th. Rules for the contest will be available again at the front desk, nothing has changed—so look through your pictures and decide which ones you will enter. Remember, there are three months remaining for you to snap that fabulous picture—fall colors coming up, the butterflies and dragonflies now swarming around the beautiful hibiscus—and who knows what else will greet you as you prowl down the boardwalk and wander through the trees!!!

The FOHMP Photo Contest is a nature-themed photography contest and a Friends of Huntley Meadows Park fundraiser. We invite all to submit your favorite photos taken at the park. Contestants must submit photos between **November 4-17**, **2012**. No late entries will be accepted. A panel of judges will select photos from the pool of contest entries. Selected photos will be exhibited at the HMP Visitor Center and all exhibited photos may be used by the Park for promotional or fundraising purposes. All proceeds from the sale of exhibited photographs and entry fees will be used to support Huntley Meadows Park.

Contest Rules

- 1. An entry fee of \$5.00 must accompany each photo, maximum submission is 4. The fee is waived for those 18 and younger.
- 2. All photographs must have been taken at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax County, VA.
- 3. Photographs taken with both film and digital cameras are acceptable.
- 4. Only photographs of a nature theme will be considered (plants or animals.) Photos may contain images of people as long as the provisions in the Copyrights and Permissions section are followed. Please contact the Park for this information.
- 5. Photographs must be matted. Mounts should be standard sizes and should not exceed 18"x24".
- 6. Name, address, and telephone number should be entered clearly on the BACK of the mounted photograph. No identifying marks should appear on the front of the photographs, to preserve anonymity.
- 7. The decisions of the judges are final.
- 8. Photographers will be notified before December 1 if their photos will be included in the exhibit. Photographs that are not included in the show may be picked up at the opening reception on December 9 or by February 28, 2012.

Award Categories: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and Honorable Mentions.

Entry Forms are available at the Visitor Center along with a list of eligibility requirements.

Many thanks to these final 2012 Birdathon donors:

Paula SullivanAnders PriceFred SiskindCarolyn WilliamsDexter HinckleyDonald McMinnKaren YoungNancy and Edwin DupreeJere Gibber and J.G. Harrington

Lynn Scarlet Robert Kinzer Alex Russin

Barbara and Stephen Polo Mina Eggerton Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

Andrew Stifler and Nicole Perry Sharon Lynn Betsy Stephens
Sheila Dacey Alan Matson

We have surpassed the \$2700 goal with your help. Thanks again to all who donated to the Birdathon to fund this year's resource management intern.

Huntley Meadows Park Happenings

Wild Side Wagon Ride!

Sundays: September 9, September 23, October 7, October 21, and November 4,

Rides depart at 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Take a 90-minute tractor ride with a park naturalist to parts of the park that are difficult to reach on foot. Relax as you ride through forest, meadow, and wetland habitats. Look for and learn about songbirds, wildflowers, butterflies, and waterfowl, then stop for a snack at the observation platform. Meets at the South King's Highway entrance to the park. Reservations required. (Families with children ages 5 and up) \$6 per rider

The Sky's the Limit—Art Show Opening Sunday September 9, 2:00-4:00pm

Meet painter Maremi Hoof, whose show features a particular interest of hers: blue sky and cloud patterns. On view through October. Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center, 703-768-2525. FREE!

Birding for Beginners

Sunday September 23, 8:00-11:00am

Interested in birding? We can get you started! Learn about the birds in the park and try out different optics. A park naturalist helps you sharpen your bird identification skills. Seasonal topics will be emphasized. Program begins in the parking lot at the visitor center. Reservations required. (12 years and up) \$6 per person.

Birth of a Wetland

Saturday September 29, 1:30-3:30pm

Walk along woodland streams with Park Manager Kevin Munroe tracing the wetland from its beginning in the Woodstone neighborhood down Barnyard Run to the marsh boardwalk. Canceled if rain. Reservations required. (Families) \$6 per person

Night Walk

Saturday 6 October, 6:30-8:30pm

Enjoy this rare opportunity to be in the park after dark! Walk through the woods to the wetland with naturalist PJ Dunn,

looking for hunting bats and working beavers. Canceled if rain. Reservations required. (Adults) \$6 per person

Birding for Beginners

Sunday November 18, 8:00-11:00am.

Observe the transition of our bird community as the summer breeding population moves south and winter residents arrive. A park naturalist helps you sharpen your bird identification skills. Meet in the parking lot at Visitor Center. Reservations required. (Adults) \$6 per person

Just for Kids

Storytime in the Forest

Thursdays, Sept 6, September 20, October 4, October 18, 10:00-11:00am or 1:30-2:30pm

Listen to a nature story in our outdoor classroom, followed by a craft or other activity. Register online. (3-5) years) \$8 per child

Young Explorers

Mondays starting September 17, 3:00-4:30pm

During this six-week series, explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about a wide range of science topics: patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have some reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. (No class on October 8th) Reservations required. (6 to 9 years) \$76 for six-week series.

Nature Snoopers

Mondays starting September 17, 3:00-4:00pm

During this six-week series, kindergarten-age children explore seasonal nature topics through walks, stories, crafts and other activities. Reservations required. (5-6 years) \$76 for six-week series

Science Series for Home Schools

Wednesdays starting September 19. 1:30-3:00PM

During this six-week series, explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about a wide range of science topics: patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have some reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. Reservations required. (6 to 9 years), \$76 for six-week series.

Science Series for Home Schools

Thursdays starting September 20, 1:30-3:00pm

During this six-week series, explore marsh, meadow, and forest to learn about a wide range of science topics: patterns of cycle and change, plant parts and characteristics, animal life needs, observation and the five senses, and how objects are classified. Students must have some reading and writing skills and be comfortable working in a group. Reservations required. (9 to 12 years), \$76 for six-week series.

Young Naturalists

Mondays, starting November 12th, 3:00-4:30pm

Reservations required. (9 to 12 years), \$77 for four-week series.

November Scout Merit Badges

November 5, 8:00am-noon, Bird ID, \$24

November 5, 1:00-5:00pm, Art, \$29

November 6, 8:00am-noon, Bird ID, \$24

November 6, 1:00-5:00pm, Art, \$29

All programs require reservations unless they are free. Sign-ups can now be done online at the Parktakes site www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes and search on "Huntley Events:. Or call 703-222-4664. For help or information, call Huntley Meadows Park at 703-768-2525.

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Membership and Renewal Form

Please support Huntley Meadows Park by joining our Friends group. By becoming a member, you will help to protect and preserve the park. Dues help fund new initiatives and programs and your membership will help us to be stronger advocates for the park. Fill out and mail the application to this address:

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

	dexandria, VA 22306
Dues information: \$15 Individual \$20 Family \$10 Student/Senior \$150 Lifetime Membership	ACAMUTIA, VII 22500
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park 3701 Lockheed Blvd Alexandria, VA 22306 703-768-2525



Please check your mailing label for accuracy and notify us of any changes. Your membership expiration date is in the upper left corner.