

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

June 2013

Email: info@friendsofhuntleymeadows.org
Website: www.Friendsofhuntleymeadows.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark>



President's Message

Dear Friends,

This past May 5, 2013, we celebrated Wetlands Awareness Day. This turned out to be a memorable day for all of us who work, volunteer and enjoy Huntley Meadows Park. At this event, we paid tribute to a true Champion for the Environment, Norma Hoffman. Our tribute to her tireless and ongoing work on behalf of Huntley Meadows Park will be that the Visitor's Center will be re-named as the Norma Hoffman Visitor's Center. Hooray for Norma! What a wonderful way to celebrate the many varied activities she has pursued over the past 30+ years on behalf of Huntley Meadows Park. As many of us know, without Norma's persistence to stop the construction of the road, we would not have this beautiful place. Thank you Norma for all that you do and all that you have done for Huntley Meadows Park. Now we know that we will have this beautiful natural place for those who follow in our footsteps.

We had an official naming ceremony at Wetlands Awareness Day and enjoyed hearing from a number of Norma's fans. Harry Glasgow, a true Norma fan, was the Master of Ceremonies. We also had Clayton Medford, Chairman Bulova's Chief of Staff, who shared many kind words describing Norma's accomplishments over the years. Kevin Munroe, Park Manager, shared a recent experience at a Wetland Restoration Project presentation where Norma was also in attendance. He told us that at this event and after a tough set of questions, Norma stood up and shared her (and FOHMP's) full support of the Wetland Restoration project. As Harry and Clayton said, she may have been the tiniest person in the room, but she spoke with the loudest voice! I talked with Kathi McNeil, former President of FOHMP, and Kathi said, "I am so grateful to Norma for being there to guide me and her Friends at Huntley Meadows as we were advocating for Huntley Meadows." I also shared a few words too and it was such an honor to be on the same podium as this great woman!

In case you didn't know, Norma has mentored 3 generations of leaders here at Friends of Huntley Meadows Park. This of course does not include leaders that she inspired all along the way, especially those who worked for and founded other Friends Groups throughout Northern Virginia. Norma, as co-founder of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park, inspired an important citizen's activist movement for parks here in Northern Virginia and beyond. Now those of us who hold our parks near and dear to our hearts can be actively involved in making sure these natural places are protected and will be around for

many generations to come.

Did you know there are more than 15 formally established Friends groups all across Northern Virginia? There are Friends groups for Fairfax County Parks, including Friends of Green Spring, Friends of Riverbend and Friends of Colvin Run to name a few. There are also Friends groups for area National Parks, like Friends of Dyke Marsh. That's quite a movement all across Northern Virginia (and beyond) to preserve and protect our parks, all inspired by Norma Hoffman. Hundreds of people are out there every day following in Norma's footsteps. Norma championed for the environment here at Huntley Meadows Park before anyone really understood how important this place would become for all of us here in Northern Virginia.

How important is this? Can you imagine a 4-lane road going through Huntley Meadows Park? In case you didn't know, it's not there because Norma stopped this from happening! If one looks at the aerial photo of Huntley Meadows Park in the Visitor's Center, it is amazing to see the development including houses, apartments, and roads bumping right up against the boundaries of the park. What an amazing oasis this is.

There are many stories that can be told of all of the activities that Norma has pursued over the 30+ years that she's been involved with Huntley Meadows Park and the FOHMP. We'll share more of these soon through our Web site www.fohmp.org and on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark>.

In closing, I want to take a moment to speak with the voice of someone/something very important to all of this. I know now when I walk the trails, listen to the wind rush through the leaves on the trees in autumn, and when I hear the birds singing loudly, it is really Mother Nature saying thanks to Norma for making sure that we can still have this very special place to enjoy. All of us who follow in your footsteps can be proud to say that we learned from you and we will continue to enjoy all that is Huntley Meadows Park, all because of you.

We send a very special thanks to you, Norma, from all of your Friends at Huntley Meadows Park.

Cathy Ledec, FOHMP president

(Turn to page 4 for pictures!)



Park Manager's Message

Wetland Restoration Project Construction Begins!



So much going on at Huntley this summer! Lots that I'd love to talk with you about. However, considering the scope and significance of the Wetland Restoration Project, I think it's important that I provide a summary and review. I imagine most of you have heard all about the project and been to one of our 20 public meetings or 42 Park Manager Walk and Talks. However, the following breakdown of *why, what, when* and *how* of this large and important project may still be helpful. If you'd like more detailed info please see **LEARN MORE**, and, as always, feel free to contact me directly.

WHY: In the late 70s and 80s, Huntley's central wetland was a hemi-marsh (also called emergent marsh) and it supported a locally-rare community of plants and animals. Since the late 80s the wetland has experienced several impacts and changes that have collectively reduced its overall biodiversity, i.e. many of those locally-rare plants and animals have decreased or left. The primary impacts have been silt deposition, changes in beaver activities and water levels, and spreading of aggressive plant species like cattails and rice cutgrass. To restore the wetland's biodiversity and bring back the full community of hemi-marsh plants and animals, the Huntley Meadows community has decided to engage in wetland restoration. This decision came from 21 years of research with three different environmental engineering firms, and public discussions that included 62 public meetings and programs.

WHAT: The wetland restoration project consists of four primary aspects: 1) a berm and water control structure that will allow staff to control and manage water levels, 2) five deeper pools that will provide year-round habitat and summer refuge for aquatic life during droughts, 3) increased wildlife habitat in the form of woody debris used to create brush shelters and loafing logs, 4) increase the wetland's size and footprint so that it extends into the adjoining woodlands.

WHEN: Set-up of staging areas and access routes started in mid-April. Primary construction and earth-moving in the actual wetland will be July-October. Our goal is to have the project completed by December.

HOW: The project design was created by *Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc. (WSSI)*, in very close collaboration with park staff and 22 years-worth of public input and research. The actual construction is performed by Fort Meyer Construction and Tessa Construction. Construction is supervised by both Fairfax County Park Authority staff and WSSI staff. The berm and water control structure will be a combo of earth, rocks, vinyl sheet piling and an underwater box made of concrete, metal and piping. The deep pools will be excavated with earth moving equipment and the removed soils will be used to create habitat islands with native plantings (all plants used for the project will be species already present in the park). The primary access for the project will be from the Hike-Bike Trail (off of South Kings Highway) which will need to be closed to the public for months at a time. Some vehicles will also be on the woodland Cedar Trail for short periods of time. The boardwalk and observation tower will remain open for the whole project, and neither will be altered. An in-depth long-term management plan is being created to manage and monitor the wetland. The management plan and design were guided in large part by the habitat needs of a list of hemi-marsh species we refer to as Target Species.

LEARN MORE: The above is a very brief summary. Please check out our website, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/restorationproject.htm> or come to a **Park Manager Walk and Talk** (free, no reservations required) for much more detail and discussion: June 15, July 20, and August 17, all from 5pm-7pm at the park visitor center. For questions and concerns: press and media can contact the Public Information Office at (703) 324-8662, and visitors can contact the park manager at (703) 768-2525. Please spread the word, stay in touch and visit the park to watch the process!

Kevin Munroe, Park Manager



Natural Resource News



Plant Saves and a Tree Spade!

In preparation for the Wetland Restoration Project, Huntley Meadows Park staff organized several plant saves to move and preserve some of the high-quality plants located within the project construction area. The area of interest is on the south side of the Central Wetland and west of the old beaver dam and is full of interesting plants and shrubs that prompted staff to save as many plants as possible.

We set up two types of plant saves, manual plant saves using shovels and manpower to move all the smaller plants and shrubs and then we used a tree spade attached to a bobcat to move the larger shrubs and small trees of interest. First, we manually moved herbaceous plants and small shrubs with the help of HMP volunteers, local county staff and Fairfax County Park Authority staff members. We conducted plant saves on March 8th and 9th using manpower and shovels to dig up and move the plants. These two plant saves alone rescued well over 250 native plants and shrubs. Most of the plants were transported a short distance within the park to an area outside of the construction Limits of Clearing, where they would not be harmed and some plants were moved to the native garden at the Resource Management Office. The many species moved during these first two plant saves included: Button Bush, Brushy Broomsedge, Blueberry, Swamp Rose Mallow (i.e. hibiscus), Soft Rush, Arrow-wood Viburnum, Swamp Rose and miscellaneous Heaths.



The second method we employed to save plants was renting a hydraulic tree spade for two weeks. We attached the tree spade to a Bobcat. The Bobcat was loaned to us by Joe Nilson, (the manager of Area 3, his staff are responsible for the upkeep of all unstaffed FCPA parks east of I-95), his office is located next to HMP Resource Management Office. The Bobcat with the tree spade attached resulted in a very cumbersome combination to maneuver through a wet forest and we found out the hard way that getting stuck was very easy to do. It took a couple of days to determine proper techniques for using the tree spade in the wet areas on the edge of the wetland. However, we devised methods of removing and moving the shrubs/trees without getting stuck and by the end of the second day we were becoming very efficient at moving large shrubs with the bulky machine. Staff focused on moving big shrubs and small trees with high wildlife value into the safe areas. We considered several things while relocating the shrubs and trees including: current and future elevation, future inundation levels as well as current and future exposure to the sun. A total of 60 trees and shrubs were moved including at least 20 different species. Many of the shrubs were 30-40 year old enormous shrubs that had been on the edge of the wetland since its creation in the early-mid 70's.

I would like to thank all the volunteers and staff who came out and helped with the plant saves and tree spade work, we couldn't have done it without you. I would also like to thank, Joe Nilson, who loaned us the Bobcat and operator for two weeks. I'm very proud of the work we all did and have to say it was one of the most rewarding projects I have been involved in since I started working at Huntley Meadows Park almost nine years ago.

David Lawlor, Natural Resource Manager

Species	# Relocated
Misc. Heath	13
Blueberry	11
Arrow wood Viburnum	6
Pignut Hickory	6
Misc. Oak (willow and pin)	4
Elderberry	3
Silky Dogwood	3
Ironwood	2
Black Cherry	2
Black haw Viburnum	2
White Oak	1
Dangleberry	1
Black Gum	1
Holly	1
Sweet Gum	1
Buttonbush	1
Maple	1
Persimmon	1
Total Plants Relocated =	60

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park News

Pictures from the Norma Hoffman Visitor's Center Naming Ceremony...

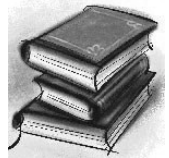
Photos courtesy of Charles & Susan Lepple



Please donate your used nature books to our Friends of Huntley Meadows Park book sale. Drop off books at the Visitor Center desk. Books should be in good condition, not too old.

All funds from the book sale support Huntley Meadows' education and conservation mission.

Thanks for your help!



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

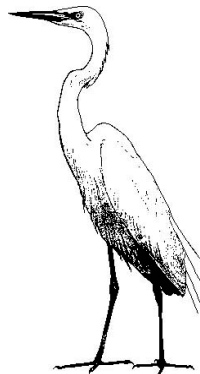
- Kathryn Allemon*
- Phil and Nyd Budig*
- Dennis and Nancy Chrisbaum*
- Margaret Church*
- Susan Craig*
- Karen Hutchison*
- Bill Riblett*

We appreciate the support from our members that allows FOHMP to achieve our goal of helping to preserve and protect the park.

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

Treasurer, FOHMP
 3701 Lockheed Blvd.
 Alexandria, VA 22306

Thank you!
Connie Carpender, Membership Chair



Huntley Meadows Happenings

Huntley Meadows Park Summer Calendar!

June

15 Saturday

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults) 5:00-7:00pm. Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on these monthly walks. Find out about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the Park is known. No reservations needed. Canceled if rain. FREE

22 Saturday

Summer Solstice Campfire

(4yrs-Adult) 8-9 pm. Join a naturalist at the campfire to hear stories of summer solstice traditions and stars. Roast marshmallows over the embers. Child must be accompanied by a paid, registered adult. \$5 Registration code: 3403877901

29 Saturday

Evening Stroll

(6yrs-Adult) 8-9:30 pm. Take this rare opportunity to visit the wetland after dark! Watch for fireflies, listen for owls and maybe catch the beavers at work! Canceled if rain, child must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$6 Registration code: 3403827901

29 Saturday

Historic Huntley Summer Social

(4yrs-Adult) 2-4 pm. Celebrate summer while enjoying refreshments, a cool breeze and period games at the Villa with a View. Child must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$8 Registration code: 5783899801

30 Sunday

Dragonflies

(Adults) 9-11:30 am. Learn about the lifecycle, behavior and identification of Huntley's dragonflies! Venture to the wetland to observe them in action. Canceled if rain. \$6 Registration code:3403842301

30 Sunday

How to Draw Your Dragon(fly)

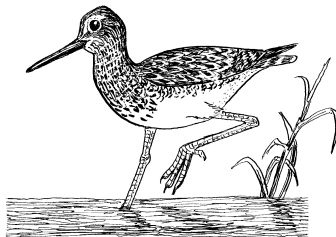
(12yrs-Adult) 12:30-2pm. Join naturalist/artist Margaret Wohler (illustrator of Huntley's own Dragonfly Guide!) to learn tips and techniques for drawing dragonflies and other insects you might find in the park. \$6 Registration code: 3403820101

July

7 Sunday

Birding for Beginners

(12yrs-Adults) 8-11 am. Interested in birding? We can get you started! Learn about the birds in the park and basic identification skills. Children 12-16 must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$6 Registration code: 3403842501



13 Saturday

Evening Stroll

(6yrs-Adult) 8-9:30 pm. Take this rare opportunity to visit the wetland after dark! Watch for fireflies, listen for owls and maybe catch the beavers at work! Canceled if rain, child must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$6 Registration code: 3403827902

20 Saturday

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults) 5:00-7:00pm. Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on these monthly walks. Find out about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the Park is known. No reservations needed. Canceled if rain. FREE

August

10 Saturday

Boardwalk Astronomy

(12yrs-Adults) 8:30-10 pm. What's new in the night sky? Join park naturalists as they take you on a tour of constellations, comets and other current events happening in the heavens above. Child must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$6

Registration code: 3403865101

17 Saturday

Park Manager Walk and Talk

(Adults) 5:00-7:00pm. Join Park Manager Kevin Munroe on these monthly walks. Find out about the wetland restoration project and learn about the wildlife for which the Park is known. No reservations needed. Canceled if rain. FREE

18 Sunday

Sketches in Nature

(9-13yrs) 1:30-3pm. Join a park naturalist in our outdoor classroom to learn tips and techniques for adding sketches to your observations of the natural world. \$6 Registration code: 3403822501

24 Saturday

Evening Stroll

(6yrs-Adult) 8-9:30 pm. Take this rare opportunity to visit the wetland after dark! Watch for fireflies, listen for owls and maybe catch the beavers at work! Canceled if rain, child must be accompanied by a paid registered adult. \$6 Registration code: 3403827903

25 Sunday

Sketches in Nature

(15yrs-Adult) 1-2:30pm. Join a park naturalist in our outdoor classroom to learn tips and techniques for adding sketches to your observations of the natural world. \$6 Registration code: 3403850401

For online information and registration go to:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>
 and search on "Huntley"





Huntley Meadows Park News



Huntley Meadows and Historic Huntley Summer Camps!

Huntley Meadows Park is renowned for its rich natural history, but it also has an amazing cultural history. This summer we are pleased to offer several week long camps where children will get a chance to see that history come alive. First on the list is our Dig It! Camp where participants will get to visit an active archaeological dig in Fairfax County and possibly work with the archaeologists. This camp takes place the week of July 15th and runs from 9 am to 4 pm. Next up we have two sessions of Tracks and Traces Camp where campers will get a chance to hone their skills in reading the landscape for signs left behind. This camp truly sees the past come alive as participants figure out all the ways the land that is Huntley Meadows Park has been used. The first session starts July 29th and the second starts August 26th, both run from 9 am to 4 pm. Finally, we have The Modern Historian, a fantastic opportunity for high school students to see how historians use digital media to tell historical narratives. During this week we will go on several field trips to learn some local history and activities that will culminate in a participant produced final project. For anyone interested in pursuing a history degree in a few years, this camp will be right up your alley. Starts August 12 and runs from 9am to 4 pm. For more information about summer camps please see the summer camp calendar in this newsletter or visit our programs and events page at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/calendar.htm> and click on the Day Camps tab.

Tiny Tots – July 22-26, 9:30 am – 12 pm

Come explore the natural world with your special young person, through hikes, games and craft! Join us for creative movement, language development and nature exploration using the five senses. Register child, parent must participate.
Ages 2-3 ½ \$185 Registration code: 3402957901 or 3402957902

Scientists and Artists – Aug. 19-23, 9am-4pm

Discover nature and art through scientific observation using various media. We will explore many of the park's habitats and build a nature journal.
Ages 8-12 \$269 Registration code: 3402235501 or 3402235502

Dig It! – July 15-19, 9am – 4pm

Let's get down in the dirt and learn about the past! Campers will get to visit an active archaeological dig site, work with archaeologists, conduct experiments and meet new friends!
Ages 12-14 \$285 Registration code: 3402225101

Tracks and Traces – July 29-August 2 or Aug. 26-30, 9am-4pm

What do lighter than air aircraft, hunting, farming and racetracks all have in common? Campers will discover the answers by exploring the park for historical evidence and learning to read the landscape. Join us for games, experiments and field trips.
Ages 8-12 \$285 Registration code: 3402212901 or 3402212902

Animals of the Night! – July 29-August 2, 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Find out who's awake in the dark and search for clues they leave behind. Through games, hikes and hands-on activities campers will learn about nocturnal animals.
Ages 4-6 \$185 Registration code: 3402959202

Nature Quest – Birds! – Aug. 5-9, 9am-4pm

Bird is the word at this camp, come learn all about our feathered friends.
Ages 6-10 \$285 Registration code: 3402224703

The Modern Historian – Aug. 12-16, 9am-4pm

Campers will not only learn local history, but also how to use digital media to tell historical narrative! Discussions, activities and field trips will culminate in a final participant produced project.
Ages 15-18 \$285 Registration code: 3402209001



Attention Young Birders!

Huntley Meadows Park is going to be starting a Youth Birding Club this fall. Anyone ages 10-17 is welcome, all levels and abilities. Stay Tuned for more information!



Huntley Meadows Park Birdathon 2013



The 2013 Ken Howard and Ed Weigel Birdathon sponsored by the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park was held on Saturday, May 4. The following birders took part: Group 1 working the Lockheed Blvd side of the Park included Carolyn Gamble, Ann Stat, Katherine Lowe, Jeff Wneck, Ana Arguelles, and Harry Glasgow. Group 2 worked the South King Highway area of the Park and was staffed by Larry Cartwright, Paula Sullivan and Melina Tye, while Group 3 worked other areas in the South King Highway portion of the Park and was staffed by Ben Jessup and Jim Lingeback. The survey ran from about 5:30 or 6:00 AM until around 11:00 AM. The total bird count from all birders was 82 species. This is a disappointing decline from previous years. This situation was discussed at great length during the 'Tally Rally' at Denny's. The consensus seemed to be that weather conditions for the past couple of weeks have kept spring migration down and that this situation will correct itself when these conditions change. In the meantime, this year's Birdathon results will probably rank among the lowest in the activity's history.

As one might expect, the species with the greatest count were 177 Red-winged Blackbirds, 102 Blue Jays, 108 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and 59 Northern Cardinals. But it was a great Tree Swallow day as well, with 122 counted. With the addition of 37 Barn and Northern Rough Wing Swallows, the central Wetland was a swarm of darting swallows.

The birds of greatest interest, of course, were Warblers, but with the aforementioned weather conditions, we felt that there were many fewer than one would expect for early May. Only 12 Warbler species were counted, but there were some notables: 2 Blue-winged Warblers, a lone Prothonotary Warbler exploring last year's nest hole, a Yellow-breasted Chat was seen in the woodcock meadow and 21 Ovenbirds were heard and seen.

The purpose of the Weigel and Howard Birdathon is to raise money to allow the Friends of Huntley Meadows to fund the stipend for a naturalist intern during the 2013 summer season. The Birdathon has raised \$915 so far.

Thanks again to everyone who contributed their time, skills, and donations to this annual event. It is, as always, very much appreciated.

Harry Glasgow
FOHMP board member



Many thanks to the following people who donated to the 2013 Birdathon:

Kathryn Allemon	Curtis Gibbens	Warren & Becky Smith	Larry Cartwright
Ana Arguelles & Jeff Wneck	Andy & Judy Higgs	Lee Stang	Carolyn Gamble
Phil and Nyd Budig	Karen Hutchison	Barbara Stewart	Andy Higgs
Dennis and Nancy Chrisbaum	Jan Kool	Elizabeth Stephens	Ben Jessup
Margaret Church	Phil Kryzwicki	Ned and Lydia Stone	Ann Stat
Susan Craig	Cathy & George Ledec	Sarah Stromayer	Paula Sullivan
Michael Duffy	John I. Morton	Col. R. F. Ventrella	Melina Tye
Mina Eggerton	BJ Opfer	Margaret Wohler	Jeff Wneck
Anna Finch	Ms. Dorothy M. Raduazo		
Les Finster	Bill Riblett	Birdathon Volunteers	Staff
Carolyn Gamble	Nancy Roeper	Ana Arguelles	Kathleen Lowe

2013 Huntley Meadows Park Birdathon Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donation Amount: _____

Please make your check out to FCPA-HMP and write *donation-birdathon* on memo line.

Mail to:

Huntley Meadows Park Birdathon
3701 Lockheed Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22306

***Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
Membership and Renewal Form***

Please support Huntley Meadows Park by joining our Friends group. By becoming a member, you help to protect and preserve the park. Dues fund park conservation initiatives and educational programs. Your membership also enables us to be strong advocates for the park. Mail the application below to:

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
3701 Lockheed Blvd.
Alexandria, VA 22306**

Dues information:

- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$10 Student/Senior
- \$150 Lifetime membership

Name: _____

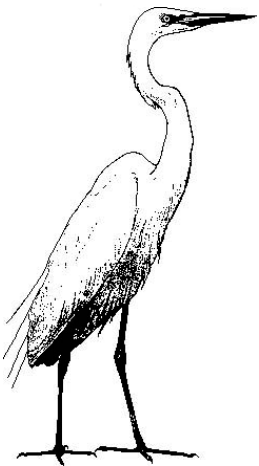
Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____



Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
3701 Lockheed Blvd
Alexandria, VA 22306



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