



## Junior Naturalists Join a Global Tree Banding Project

Some shiny new additions at Pickering Creek are getting noticed by visitors and EcoCampers alike. In response to a guess from a summer EcoCamper, “No, that’s not a bracelet on that tree; we are measuring its growth. Like the notches on your door frame at home, scientists like to record how quickly trees grow.”

These metal bands can be found on 10 trees throughout Pickering Creek. Our Youth Conservation Leadership Club, aka Junior Naturalists (local 7th -12th graders) installed the bands this winter for the Smithsonian Institution’s Global Tree Banding Project. Participation in the project ties in with two of our Junior Naturalist Program’s central goals – participating in citizen science and learning about careers in science.

Our Junior Naturalists are joining students from around the world to contribute to an ever growing collection of data related to tree growth. By monitoring the rate at which our local trees grow, our Junior Naturalists are helping scientists learn how our forests are responding to climate change.

Because climate change may alter ecosystems like forests at a faster rate than native wildlife can adapt, scientists are learning what they can do now so they may help wildlife populations continue into the future. Our Junior Naturalists may one day be those scientists helping to ensure the success of native plants and wildlife.

Uncertainty surrounding ecosystem responses to climate change is a common concern worldwide. Currently, Pickering Creek uses Audubon focal bird species to help monitor the health of its ecosystems. In our forests, students learn about and look for the Wood Thrush, a species that has experienced a 50% decrease since the 1960s due to habitat fragmentation and destruction. Thankfully, the forests at Pickering Creek will remain protected; however, forest habitat changes due to climate change are uncertain. The Tree Banding Project is one of many research projects focused on learning about these potential changes and how we may prepare our landscape for species, like the Wood Thrush, for our changing world.

The EcoCamper was a little disappointed that the metal bands were not bling for our trees but enjoyed learning that trees, like them, are measured regularly. During your next hike on Pickering Creek’s trails, keep your eyes peeled for the chest-height tree bands and think about their connection to a global research project, and how climate change will greatly affect all habitats and the wildlife that depend on them.

The Youth Leadership Conservation Club, aka Junior Naturalist Program, is funded in part by the generosity of participants in the Fund-a-Need auction held at Tour, Toast & Taste in June.



Junior Naturalists Erin Pogue, Alinne Delgadillo, and Laurel Pogue (left to right) take a measurement for the Smithsonian’s Global Tree Banding Project at Pickering Creek.

Dedicated to  
Community-Based  
Conservation  
of Natural  
Resources through  
Environmental  
Education  
and Outreach  
on the Eastern  
Shore of the  
Chesapeake Bay

## Harvest Hoedown Sunday October 12, 11 am- 4 pm

Join us for our 23rd Annual Harvest Hoedown celebration at Pickering Creek! Enjoy a wonderful day with your family. Hoedown has fun for everyone including live folk and bluegrass music on two stages, hay wagon rides, crafts, exhibits by artisans, children’s activities, great food and boat rides on the CBMM’s Winnie Estelle.

Admission is \$10 a car. Rain or Shine.



10th grade biology students from Easton High School get their hands dirty planting native wetland plants in a restored freshwater wetland at Pickering Creek in April.



## Inspiring Environmental Stewards

# Local Students Take Action on the Eastern Shore

**Getting students outdoors** for real first-hand nature experiences on a regular basis is Pickering Creek Audubon Center's number one, primary goal—day in, day out, for 33 years. Pickering is making its mark on the community and the Chesapeake Bay by helping entire generations of people understand their own impact on the environment through meaningful interactions with nature throughout their school career.

Middle and high school students from Talbot, Dorchester, and Wicomico Counties worked hard during the 2013-2014 school year to make a difference for wildlife in their communities. Throughout the school year, Pickering Creek staff worked closely with teachers and students to remove invasive species, increase native habitat and improve water quality to benefit wildlife, and connect students with their local environment.

Over the 2013-2014 school year, all sixth grade students at Easton Middle School, St. Michaels Elementary School, and Tilghman Elementary School participated in a series of lessons that allowed them to investigate the importance of local wetlands for wildlife, water quality, and Eastern Shore communities. Students learned about wetlands as a natural resource and the characteristics of wetland soil, tested the water quality, discussed the benefits of native plants while dissecting native cattails, and examined how wetlands provide critical food and habitat for wildlife. In May, the sixth grade service-learning program culminated in habitat restoration activities in each schoolyard, where students

connected what they learned about the benefits of wetlands and native plants to their school and local waterways.

At Tilghman Elementary School, sixth graders removed invasive Phragmites and planted native Marsh Hibiscus in its place. Students at St. Michaels Elementary cleaned up native garden beds in the school's courtyard before planting native Purple Coneflower, New York Aster, and Boneset. Easton Middle School sixth graders spent three days constructing a brand new schoolyard habitat behind the school's athletic fields. They planted over 300 native herbaceous plants, mulched, and watered the new site. Many students loved the change in their normal routine; one Easton Middle School student said, "I liked being outside during school, getting dirty, planting with my friends, and hanging out with the teachers from Pickering Creek." This project was supported by a Chesapeake Bay Trust mini grant and Pickering Creek supporters.

Sixth graders from Talbot County weren't the only middle school students putting their hands in the dirt with Pickering Creek during the 2013-2014 school year. Pickering Creek educators worked alongside staff from Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Cambridge, Maryland, to provide a hands-on, educational experience for Dorchester County sixth graders. During the month of April, every sixth grade student from Dorchester County Public Schools attended a day-long field trip at the Refuge. Part of their field trip experience included a session with Pickering

Creek staff, where students discussed the importance of native salt marsh grasses to the success of the Refuge's ecosystems. Students pulled on boots and chest waders and ventured into the wet and muddy marsh armed with Smooth Cordgrass plugs and can-do attitudes. In an area of the Refuge where staff is actively removing invasive species and replacing them with natives, 300 sixth grade students planted over 3,000 native salt marsh grasses.

High school students also got in on the planting action during the past school year through the Governor's Stream Restoration Challenge and the Audubon Watershed Experience. Ninth grade Environmental Science students at Easton High School and St. Michaels Middle High School participated in the Governor's Stream Restoration Challenge project, focusing on habitat restoration and forested stream buffers along the local Tanyard Branch stream in Easton.

Partnering with the Town of Easton, Talbot County Public Schools, Talbot County Government and Environmental Concern, and as part of Governor O'Malley's Stream Challenge, Pickering Creek developed an inquiry-based, hands-on program to connect the Environmental Science students in Talbot County with their local water sources. During the spring and fall semesters, students from Easton High School and St. Michaels Middle High School spent time collecting data for a site assessment survey along the Tanyard Branch to determine the best course of action for planting 1,400 trees to increase the stream's barely existing forested buffer. During the site visit with Pickering, students recorded bird and plant species, tested soil and water quality, and assessed the macroinvertebrate population within the stream. Back at school, students used their data to create and present a planting plan to Pickering Creek and Environmental Concern staff. The students returned to the site in mid-October for a planting day - with help from students from Chesapeake

Christian School in Easton, 1,400 trees were planted over eight acres.

The Audubon Watershed Experience (AWE) program, our signature program for high school students, included four in-school and field experiences for tenth grade high school students at Easton High




Easton Middle School 6th graders work together to create a new native habitat garden behind the school's athletic fields.

School, Sts. Peter and Paul High School, and James M. Bennett High School in Salisbury. Over three months, Audubon staff connected 467 students from Talbot and Wicomico County with the landscape and wildlife within their watershed while investigating human impacts, environmental issues, and the benefits of native plants, wetlands, and habitat restoration. High school and elementary school students planted seven native species, totaling more than 1,000 native plants, along the edges of a restored freshwater wetland at Pickering Creek Audubon Center. In addition to engaging directly with scientific data and the local landscape, high school students created their own habitat restoration plans, mentored local 4th and 5th grade students

about habitat restoration and environmental issues, and wrote press releases about their experience in the AWE program. This project was supported by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and Pickering Creek supporters.

With the 2014-2015 school year underway, Pickering Creek is gearing up for another year of hands-on, action-oriented experiences for local students. Pickering Creek will continue to provide the sixth grade service-learning curriculum and project for all sixth grade classes in Talbot County. In addition to working with the Talbot County sixth grade, Pickering Creek will expand the existing relationship with sixth grade students and teachers in Dorchester County Public Schools thanks to a significant grant from the NOAA B-Wet program to provide a year-long meaningful watershed experience program culminating in a habitat restoration project for each of the three middle schools in Dorchester County. The Audubon Watershed Experience continues to grow, as the 2014-2015 school year will see the return of both public and private high schools participating from Wicomico County and Talbot County, as well as the addition of two high schools from Caroline County. The Governor's Stream Restoration Challenge project will be repeated at three additional sites this year, and will include elementary and middle school students in addition to high school students.

Providing students with the opportunity to investigate their local landscape and watershed through experiential, interdisciplinary, and action-oriented experiences allows students to make strong connections to their community and their environment. And, perhaps most importantly, it allows students the chance to put their mark on a landscape that will be around for generations. Pickering Creek is committed to providing these important opportunities for exploration, investigation, action, and reflection to all students. 

# Pickering's New Shallow Water Wetland Awaits Visiting Shore Birds...and You!

*"When I was a kid, I loved building mud puddles for frogs," commented Ned Gerber as he guided a group of us through Pickering's newest wetland ponds. "Now I do it for a living!"*

Ned is Director of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage (CWH). He and Pickering Creek Audubon Center Director, Mark Scallion, along with Chris Pupke, of CWH and formerly Pickering Creek, began planning and implementing the construction of Pickering's wetlands in 2002. "Not everyone was convinced the project would work," Ned explained, describing the reaction to planning for the first site.

Happily for birds and plants and other wildlife, this first wetland of 24 acres along the Center's entry drive was such a success that, over the next five years, 50 more acres were transformed into vibrant wetlands. Now, every spring and autumn, the resulting pools and adjacent seed-rich meadows have become a haven for migrating birds, sustaining them on their journeys.

"The place is a birder's delight," commented David Bent, a member of the Talbot County Bird Club who performs bird-counts almost every week at Pickering and who joined the morning's expedition. The newest wetland is shallower than the others and, Bent, explains, will attract shorebirds such as sandpipers and yellow-legs that benefit from being able to wade

along the shore and snatch their meal along the water's edge.

As we stood atop the Center's existing 10 foot tall viewing platform (a virtual skyscraper within the flat characteristic landscape of Maryland's Eastern Shore), we saw avenues of clay—pushed into berms that will surround the new wetland. In other places stood piles of topsoil, scraped from the earth before the deeper digging began. The topsoil will cover the berms, which then will be planted with native grasses.

Mark and Ned see the completed project in their minds' eyes: boardwalks around the wetland to cover muddy areas, spaces here and there between trees for visitors to peek through, a new viewing station with equipment for Pickering's educators to use with visiting classes.

Indeed this will be a haven for students and wildlife. Students from Caroline County and Wicomico County will visit the new wetland this fall to learn about how wetlands affect wildlife and water quality, with their trip culminating with the installation of wildlife friendly shrubs in the newest wetland that will provide food and cover for birds, insect, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. In the spring

both middle and high school students from Talbot County will conduct their hands on investigations of the wetlands.

Of course, early concerns about the feasibility of creating wetlands had justification. Not all lands can be converted. As explained in a 2003 article in *Winging It* (the newsletter of the American Birding Association, Inc.) about the first Pickering wetland created with Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage: "Most of the historic wetlands on Maryland's Eastern Shore have been drained to make them viable agricultural fields. Soil maps provide a guide to the part of a farm containing so-called hydric soils, indicative of historic wetland sites. Pickering, like many Eastern Shore Maryland farms, has extensive hydric soils that were ditched and drained for farming long ago. Heavy machinery was brought in to help restore the field's original hydrology." To prepare for the present digging, Ned and his team from CWH studied the soil composition of the area of the new site and created a map from which to work.

Ned is adamant about the importance of wetland preservation: "Without it, there would be no wildlife left on the Eastern Shore, on its lands and in its waters." Teresa Kampmeyer of the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service was quoted in *Winging It*: "Wetlands help to improve water quality, reduce erosion, and aid in

flood prevention while providing a wildlife habitat for wetland and upland bird species. They store water after it rains, allowing water to percolate slowly in the ground, evaporate, or be absorbed by the roots of wetland plants. This temporary storage reduces the peak water flows after a storm event."

As we completed our morning's tour, Ned pointed out that Pickering Creek is unique in offering the general public an opportunity to observe wetlands in action. He and Mark have worked, over the years, to install the Pickering wetlands using the USDA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Landowners too can take advantage of these programs, which offers a sum (per acre) to replace marginal farmland with conservation practices that improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat.

With the coming of autumn rains, Ned, Chris and Mark will watch as the new "puddles" begin to fill. They may adjust the newly installed weir that permits them to level the water over the several wetland fields and prevent flooding. Dave Bent and other birders will be on the lookout for bird species new to Pickering, wading in the shallow water and snatching their meal. And Pickering Creek Audubon Center will welcome its guests (free of charge, 365 days a year)—newcomers and old friends—to visit its new shallow water wetlands.

The project is supported through the USDA Conservation programs and a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust.



Topsoil is piled before the wetland is dug out and then placed on the berms to encourage plant growth.



Photo by Middleton Evans

Restored freshwater wetlands at Pickering Creek host a variety of exciting bird species not commonly spotted in Talbot County, including this Hudsonian Godwit, which was hanging out in the wetlands for a few days late this summer. A large shorebird with a long, upturned bill, the Hudsonian Godwit breeds in the Arctic and winters in southern South America. Its remote breeding and wintering grounds have kept it one of the least well known of American shorebirds.

Egrets visit the new wetland soon after it is completed.



Photo by Royce Ball

After the first rain, shallow ponds form in the new wetland.

Advance registration required for all programs  
by calling 410-822-4903.

## e-Bird Monitoring

First and third Mondays  
from September 15-May 18  
8-10am

Birders of all skills are encouraged to assist volunteer leaders with bird monitoring along the Center's trails. Document what birds are using our newly installed freshwater wetland as well as collect data that allow us to track long-term trends on how birds use the Center. We have identified over 180 species at Pickering Creek over the past two years!

## Harvest Hoedown Prep Days

Thursday, October 9, 3:00am-5:30pm  
Friday, October 10, 10:00am-12:00pm

Come tie up the cornstalks, place the bales of hay and get Pickering Creek decorated for its annual open house event.

## Volunteer Open House

Thursday, October 9, 5:30am-6:30pm  
Learn more about the Center's volunteer program and upcoming events during this informative hour long session.

## Hike and Brunch with Nature Author Bryan MacKay

Saturday, November 1, 2014  
\$75 per person

Following a walk through the majestic Pickering woods with nature author Bryan MacKay, enjoy a bloody mary, mimosa, OJ or wine before a hearty brunch of grits, country ham, biscuits and assorted fruit, cheeses and omelettes or eggs cooked to order by former Pickering Board member, Dick Welch.

Join author and naturalist Bryan MacKay for a hike to learn about the flora and fauna of the area and hear the unique stories of someone who has known Pickering Creek for over 30 years. Bryan MacKay organized the first environmental education program for children at Pickering Creek in about 1982 as a volunteer. He has been interested and active in PCAC ever since, serving six years on the Board of Trustees. Professionally, Bryan is senior lecturer emeritus in the Department of Biological Sciences at UMBC, having recently retired after 33 years of teaching. He is the author of three guidebooks to natural places in Maryland. His most recent book, "A Year Across Maryland: A Week-by-week Guide to Discovering Nature in the Chesapeake Region", has just been published by the Johns Hopkins University Press.

Seating is limited. To reserve your seat, please send a check payable to Pickering Creek Audubon Center, 11450 Audubon Lane, Easton, MD 21601

This event is generously donated by Dick and Margaret Welch and Bryan MacKay.



Take a Tour of Pickering Creek on  
Winnie Estelle.

## Harvest Hoedown

Sunday October 12, 11:00am-4:00pm  
\$10 per car

Bring the whole family for a day of great music and activities at our annual open house. Hayrides from the Pickering Farm to Waterfront, rides on the CBMM's Winnie Estelle Buyboat, four blues and bluegrass bands on the main stage, two great bands and tons of activities in the Audubon Kids Zone and many new artisans this year!



## Bee-utiful Pollinators

Sunday, October 19, 1:00-5:00pm  
\$50 per person

Explore the art and science of beekeeping with George Meyer of BeeGeorge Honey. He has kept bees for more than 40 years and maintains about 150 colonies in Talbot County. He'll cover honey production, pollination, Colony Collapse Disorder, honeybee behavior and biology and many other topics.

## Fall Trail Day

Saturday, November 1, 9:30am-Noon  
Many hands are needed to trim, mulch, and line the nearly four miles of trails at the Center.

To register to volunteer, please call  
Samantha at 410-822-4903.

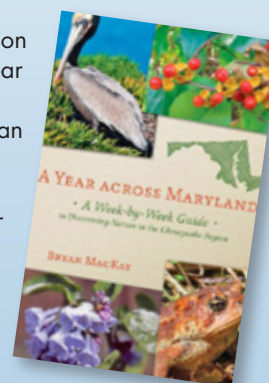
For more information on volunteer  
opportunities at Pickering, please  
visit [www.pickeringcreek.org](http://www.pickeringcreek.org).

## A Year Across Maryland Presented by Author Bryan MacKay

Wednesday, November 12, 7:00pm

\$10 per person

Enjoy a presentation by author of A Year Across Maryland and naturalist Bryan MacKay as he leads you on a guided tour of our state with superb photos of plants and animals. When is the best time to see broad-winged hawks migrating southward on autumn winds? Where can you go to see pink lady's slipper orchids in bloom? And what is the traditional method for harvesting that holiday party door hanging, mistletoe? A Year Across Maryland provides answers to these questions and insight into happenings in the natural world around us.



## An Evening with Middleton Evans, Noted Baltimore Photographer of all that is Maryland

Friday, May 15, 2015, 6:00 PM

\$100 per person

Hosted in the home of Richard and Ellen Bodorff, enjoy cocktails, heavy hors d'oeuvres and a slideshow and talk by Middleton Evans, a Baltimore native who has spent the majority of his 25 year career photographing the many faces of Maryland. Mr. Evans will speak about the natural treasures in Baltimore's Patterson Park, the subject of his new photography work, "Miracle Pond" to be released in April 2015 for Earth Day. Evans has devoted 15 years to this endeavor. All attendees will receive a copy of "Miracle Pond."

Seating is limited. To reserve your seat, please send a check payable to Pickering Creek Audubon Center, 11450 Audubon Lane, Easton, MD 21601

This event is generously donated by Richard and Ellen Bodorff and Middleton Evans.



## Marsh Grass Restoration Days

Saturdays: March 28, April 11, April 25

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Plant marsh grasses this spring with Pickering Creek Audubon Center at Blackwater National Wildlife refuge to create healthy salt marshes.

## Bird Walk 'n Talk- Spring Migrants

Sunday, May 17, 8:00-10:30am

Join guides from Talbot County Bird Club as they lead seasonal bird walks. Meet at the Pickering Creek Welcome Center.

## Bird Walk 'n Talk- Waterfowl and Wetlands

Sunday, November 16, 7:30am

Join guides from Talbot County Bird Club as they lead seasonal bird walks. Meet at the Pickering Creek Welcome Center.

## 2015 EVENTS

### Bird Walk 'n Talk- Great Backyard Bird Count

Sunday, February 15, 8:00-10:30am

Join guides from Talbot County Bird Club as they lead seasonal bird walks. Meet at the Pickering Creek Welcome Center.

## Home 'Tweet' Home

Saturday March 14, 10:00am-12:00 noon  
\$25 per family

Welcome feathered neighbors to your yard in this family-friendly program. Build a birdhouse together, then find out how to set up and care for your creation. Discover which birds will use a nest box which ones to welcome into your yard. Learn how to identify new residents by their nests. Find out how to properly monitor the birds who use your nest box. Get started on a great family adventure that will last throughout the nesting season. All materials provided.

## Baywise Gardening

Saturday, June 20, 2015, 10:00am-Noon  
\$5 per person

Explore how you can make your gardens and outdoor spaces more bay-healthy and bird-friendly with UMD Master Gardeners. Tour garden spaces and natural areas at Pickering Creek.

Be the first to hear  
about more Pickering  
news and  
other upcoming  
programs, by  
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Facebook—  
go to [www.facebook.com/pickeringcreek](http://www.facebook.com/pickeringcreek)



## Connections in the Community...and Marsh

Pickering Creek Audubon Center received a warm welcome as the Chamber's newest member at the Dorchester County Chamber Luncheon on August 13 at Ocean Odyssey. Samantha Pitts, Pickering educator and volunteer coordinator, was the guest speaker. She introduced Chamber members to the overall work of Pickering Creek in the Eastern Shore community that engage and connect people to the natural habitats that characterize the Bay region, and highlighted our recent work in the salt marshes of Dorchester County.

Dorchester County's expansive salt marshes are not only part of the local character of the county, they are vital habitat areas for waterfowl and other birds along the Atlantic Flyway. The 28,000 acres at Blackwater NWR along with adjacent protected lands like Fishing Bay Wildlife Management Area (21,000 acres) represent one of the largest protected complexes of tidal marshes in the Northeastern U.S.

These wetlands serve many functions, including nursery grounds for commercially important fish and shellfish, natural filters of sediment and nutrient pollution, storm buffers, and destinations for tourism and recreation. They also hold tremendous value for biodiversity conservation and have been recognized as a Ramsar site of global significance for wetlands and an Important Bird Area of global significance for salt marsh bird species. Sea level rise projections put Dorchester's tidal marshes in jeopardy.

Samantha highlighted the Center's project funded by Toyota TogetherGreen and Town Creek Foundation to raise awareness and public discourse about climate change's effect on salt marshes and the need to ensure their long term persistence and the assemblage of unique bird species and other wildlife that depend on them, in light of rapid sea level rise that threatens the survival of this ecosystem during this century. As Audubon works with The Conservation Fund and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to




**A 6th grade student from Dorchester County helps plant native grasses in the salt marsh at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.**

develop a framework for sea level rise adaptation and corresponding actions to conserve the tidal marshes of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding lands in Dorchester County, Maryland for the long term, the educators of Pickering Creek Audubon Center are working to get the community on board, connecting people with the marsh.

Most recently, in collaboration with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Pickering engaged local 6th graders, the Episcopal Diocese of Easton, students from Salisbury University, Washington College and Chesapeake College and many other

service and faith groups in hands-on marsh experiences. The partnerships cultivated as part of this work have mobilized over 150 volunteers to plant over 15,000 salt marsh cordgrass plants over the past three years.

By joining the vibrant community of the Dorchester County Chamber of Commerce we can look forward to making even more connections with area businesses and community leaders to continue cultivating opportunities to engage the community first-hand in realizing the great importance of Dorchester County's salt marshes to numerous wildlife species. 

## An Outstanding Inaugural Year for the George Olds & Margaret Olds Strahl Founders Circle

**Named in honor of Pickering Creek's founders**, the George Olds & Margaret Olds Strahl Founders Circle is made up of people who care deeply for ensuring that today's youth have an understanding of and a strong connection to the natural world. With an environmentally literate citizenry, we believe stewardship of our land, air and waters will cease being the work of a few, and become the culture of our society. Members of the Founders Circle provide core support for Pickering Creek Audubon Center's exceptional hands-on education programs that regularly connect students with nature at our 400 acre wildlife sanctuary. Join us in welcoming the founding members of the George Olds & Margaret Olds Strahl Founders Circle.



### Great Egret

Dr. & Mrs. Stuart Strahl, PhD

### Raptors

Mr. & Mrs. Ira Ringler  
Tom & Alexa Seip

### Waterbirds

Mr. Warren Allen  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Bodorff  
Debbie Geisenkotter & Dick Worsham  
Bill & Mary Griffin  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Lane  
Mr. Richard Marks  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Tilghman  
Bruce Wiltsie & Bill Davenport

### Songbirds

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Doehler  
Mrs. Cathie Liebl  
Cynthia Rickman & Joel Texter  
Richard Robinson  
Mrs. William C. Storey  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Thornton  
Mr. Colin Walsh

### Hummingbirds

Dr. & Mrs. William Barnes, PhD  
Mr. David Bates  
Ms. Catherine W. Cooper  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Engvall  
R. Middleton Evans  
Will & Lee Gordon  
William & Maxine Millar  
Outlaws Unlimited  
Rachel & Robert Papkin  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Passarella  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Peters  
Cemmy & George Peterson  
Mr. & Mrs. William Reybold  
Joseph & Usha Robillard  
Les & Caroline Roslund  
Mark & Susanna Scallion  
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Shaner  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Siegmann  
Mr. Hugh Simmons  
Mr. Peter Stifel  
Dr. & Mrs. William Thomas  
Mr. & Mrs. John Trax  
Mr. Rodger Waldman  
Margaret & Dick Welch  
Mark Yates

*If you would like to join this fine group of supporters please call Mark or Susanna at 410-822-4903.*

# Making Friends and Building Habitats at Magnolia Meadows and Cambridge Club

**“Let’s put a bird feeder HERE!”** a child said to her mother as she glued a postage-sized picture on a map. “And a picnic bench HERE!”

Around her, twenty-eight other members of the Magnolia Meadows community prepared their maps, some drawing serpentine paths; others, creating patches of flowers and shrubs, and all taking part in designing a space that will become a friendly habitat for birds—and the community—to enjoy.

Over the past year, Pickering Creek staff has met monthly with residents of Magnolia Meadows and Cambridge Club, two properties owned by Fairville Management Company, LLC, to develop bird-friendly communities.

There were walks in the woods to observe and identify birds and other creatures. On one occasion, residents created bird feeders. On another, Pickering staff brought bird mounts to illustrate how the structures of feet and beaks enable different species to take advantage of the features of different habitats. Participants used tweezers to pick up seeds like a goldfinch and a plastic pipettes to sip water like hummingbirds sip nectar. At a potluck dinner, residents enjoyed a game of Jeop-Birdy where they dug up their knowledge of birds in pop culture and movies to natural history facts learned in school to compete.

Not all activities took place on home sites. Cambridge Club residents enjoyed an afternoon at Blackwater National Wildlife refuge’s annual Eagle Festival. During the following Pickering Creek program at Cambridge Club one young resident was eager to share a picture of a hawk he took at the festival.

Magnolia Meadows families had the opportunity to observe bird banding at Pickering Creek, conducted by the Smithsonian’s Urban Nest Watch. Parents and grandparents watched and laughed at the antics of their children playing a migration game with Pickering staff. All residents were spellbound when Smithsonian

Nestwatch staff showed them a Carolina wren caught in a mist net. They focused intently throughout the banding process. They took home a lasting experience that helped them see birds in a new light, their natural resiliency and their fragility in human ecosystems.

Residents of all shapes, ages and sizes came out in early August to make bluebird



**Residents of Cambridge Club plant 500 native plants to improve habitat on the property.**

boxes, a few of which will be used on site at Magnolia Meadows and Cambridge Club, with the rest to be used as replacement boxes for Pickering’s bluebird trail. For some residents, decorating the boxes for cavity nesting birds was the high point of the evening, though for some of the young residents, using a drill for the first time to make the entrance hole may be most memorable as neighbors come together to create habitat for birds.

The final step in the partnership will be the creation of bird and other wildlife-friendly habitats at each site, incorporating ideas of the residents’ thoughtfully prepared maps. The newly planted areas will include spots to rest and play for both the human as well as the wild residents of each community.

Funded by Toyota TogetherGreen, a partnership



**Outgoing Pickering Board President, Bill Griffin, assists a young resident in drilling the entrance hole for the Bluebird Box**

between Toyota and National Audubon Society, this project invited families of each community to take part in monthly activities focused on helping residents realize the natural world of their neighborhoods. Pickering Creek chose to partner with Fairville Management Company because it manages 30 properties in Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and is recognized as a leader in the affordable housing community. Working with a company with significant landholdings such as Fairville offers Pickering an opportunity to work within the local community to convey the importance of managing property with wildlife in mind, while also encouraging the management company to consider managing their other properties as bird-friendly communities when they see how their residents can benefit as well.



# The Year in Pictures at PCAC



Guests enjoy playing “Birds in the Wind” at this year’s Tour, Toast & Taste held at Forrest Landing.



Thank you to Dick Worsham and Debbie Geisenkotter for the ‘new’ wheels to get staff out to schools!



Students plant over 1400 trees at RTC Park in Easton as part of the Governor’s Stream Challenge Project



EcoCampers ‘hanging around’ Camp Counselor Andrew Belt Cappellino (aka Desert Fox)



A hearty welcome to the new officers of the Pickering Board of Trustees. Pictured from left to right are: outgoing President Bill Griffin, Wayne Bell, Secretary, Colin Walsh, VP, Cemmy Peterson, President, and Bill Barnes, Treasurer.

## Board of Trustees 2014-2015

Cemmy Peterson,  
*President*

William Barnes, PhD

Wayne Bell, PhD

Richard Bodorff

Steve Doehler

William Gordon

Wayne Shaner

Jo Storey

Stuart Strahl, PhD

Carolyn Thornton

John Trax

Colin Walsh

Richard Worsham, PhD

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*Center Director*

Jamie Bunting,  
*Education Manager*

Krysta Hougen,  
*Summer Camp Director and  
Teacher Naturalist*

Samantha Pitts,  
*Volunteer Coordinator and  
Teacher Naturalist*

Susanna Scallion,  
*Development  
and Office Manager*

Jessica McCubbin,  
*Seasonal Educator*

Mary Helen Gillen,  
*Seasonal Educator*

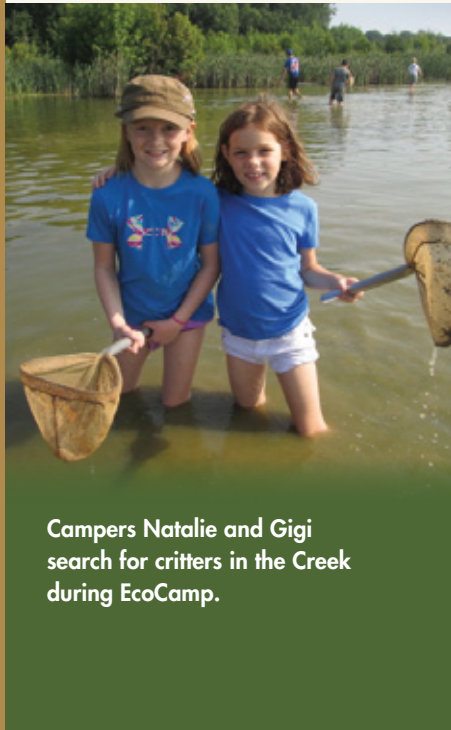
VIEWS layout:  
Liz Fisher/EC Fisher Design

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# PICKERING CREEK Audubon CENTER

11450 Audubon Lane  
Easton, MD 21601-5211

Non-Profit Org.  
U. S. Postage Paid  
Easton, MD  
Permit No. 27



**Campers Natalie and Gigi  
search for critters in the Creek  
during EcoCamp.**

## Invest in the Future

**T**here are so many ways to you can be part of Pickering Creek Audubon Center's work as one of the state's leading environ-

mental centers and preparing students to become informed stewards of the Chesapeake Bay, its ecosystems and plant and animals that call it home. Charitable contributions provide roughly two-thirds of Pickering Creek's operating budget. Apart from cash gifts, recurring monthly gifts, living tributes, matching gifts, in-kind gifts, stock or mutual fund gifts, an often overlooked giving method are planned gifts including bequests, gift annuities and others.

Discover how to make a gift that will support both Pickering Creek Audubon Center and your future,

providing you with extra income in your retirement years or helping to fund elder care, educational expenses and other needs while supporting

Audubon's mission to protect birds, other wildlife and natural habitats. Planned Gifts allow you to "do well by doing good." You can enhance your financial plans and security by maximizing the tax benefits to you and/or your family while helping to assure that Pickering Creek Audubon Center's work will continue long into the future.

Visit <http://www.audubon.planyourlegacy.org/> to learn more about your options to support Pickering Creek Audubon Center for years to come! You can also contact Susanna at 410-822-4903.



**Center Director, Mark Scallion, with  
Pickering's newest friend,  
George Scallion**