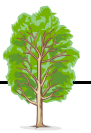


The Forest Friend



The Newsletter of the Kanawha State Forest Foundation



July 2014 Issue

www.ksff.org

Fall Quarter

"Green is the prime color of the world, and that from which its loveliness arises"

- Pedro Calderon de la Barca

Musings of the Chairman

by Chuck Jones

A seldom-used word came to mind as I thought of writing this note. Are you a conservator of Kanawha State Forest? A conservator is a person charged with the protection of something affecting public welfare and interests.

Many members of the Kanawha State Forest Foundation might say, "I am a conservationist." That's different. It means a person who advocates conservation, especially of natural resources.

You may come to the Forest to relax, picnic, or exercise, or simply to be away from your usual environs. But if you enjoy time here, you want the Forest to continue to exist, don't you?

Most Foundation members are more than conservationists. We want to preserve the Forest as a place we've come to know and love. We want to protect the Forest from all adverse effects.

A recent furor arose when Keystone Industries applied for a permit to open a surface mine (mountaintop removal) adjacent to Kanawha State Forest. The West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection issued a mining permit on May 6, 2014.

Two groups of citizens filed an appeal to the Surface Mine Board which will hold a *de novo* review on August 11, 2014, pursuant to W.Va. Code § 22B-4-3.

De novo means that the Board will consider the issues without reference to the legal

2014 Events

August 11 - Monday - 6:30 PM

Board Meeting - Kanawha State Forest, Shelter #9. Everyone is Welcome to Attend!

September 13 - Saturday - 9 AM

Margaret Denison Fall Nature Walks. Register at 8:30 AM at swimming pool area. Adults \$5; Students under 16, \$2. Hot dogs, drinks and cookies for sale. Door prizes, raffle. Contact: Forest Office, 304-558-3500

conclusions or assumptions made by the DEP-Division of Mining and Reclamation in issuing the permit originally.

The Kanawha State Forest Foundation Board of Directors passed a motion unanimously at its Quarterly Meeting on May 5, 2014, opposing this mining permit due to the likelihood that the mining operations will discourage visits to Kanawha State Forest and may well harm several zoological and botanical species here.

In short, if you are a conservator of Kanawha State Forest and desire to maintain it as the natural retreat it has become, be mindful of this potential harm and take such action as you deem wise according to the dictates of your conscience.

— Important Notice —

The Foundation Board is continuing plans to transition to electronic distribution of *The Forest Friend* beginning with the January, 2015, issue. For a seamless transition, it will be necessary for each Foundation member with internet service to ensure his or her preferred email address is listed with us. This will also allow members to receive broadcast alerts and messages. Addresses will not be shared and will be in a secured account or hosting location. We will have printed copies available to those without email, but these will not be on colored paper or professional quality. If you did not provide your email address on your new member or annual renewal form, please send it to ksff@doren.net.

Osbra Eye Memorial Wildflower Walks Reviews

by Bill Hall

The annual Osbra Eye Spring Walks were held in the Forest on April 26th under sunny skies. Following welcoming remarks and announcements by Foundation Chairman Chuck Jones, between 150-170 participants selected from ten different walk themes.

There were three separate wildflower hikes with the Polly Hollow walk focusing on tree identification as well. There was an option to use nets to collect and identify aquatic life including insects and fish from Davis Creek. State herpetologist Laura Miller and Doren Burrell caught, identified, and discussed numerous species of insects during a walk through Dunlop Hollow.

Participants could choose to stroll along shooting range road while learning about edible and useful/medicinal plants from their leaders. Others elected to listen and look for migrant and resident species of birds with Master Naturalists Jim Waggy and Kevin Cade. Understanding of ecological connections in the forest environment was the topic for a popular walk led by biologist Ben Lowman and Martha Hopper.

For camera buffs, there was also a walk specific for instruction in nature photography. Doug Wood led a forest ecology walk as well with a special emphasis on the history of the WV Scenic Trails Association in honor of its 40th anniversary.

Many thanks to Jim Waggy for developing such a diverse selection of walks and to the leaders who donated their time and expertise to our program. Special thanks also to event coordinators Martha Hopper and Rachel Kerns. As always, we are grateful for the volunteers who staffed our registration and merchandise tables, prepared and served hot dogs, and sold cookies and cold drinks after walkers returned for lunch.

Several people claimed door prizes generously donated by the State Parks Division of DNR. These included artist prints of the Babcock grist mill and Blackwater Falls as well as polo shirts with the State Parks logo. There were smiles all around during the morning, and a good time was had by all. The Kanawha State Forest Foundation invites you to mark your

calendars for our upcoming events which are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.



WYSTA History Hike

by Doug Wood

Carl McLaughlin and I pulled together our hikers and gave instructions on how to find the Wildcat Trail trailhead. We had a wide mix of ages represented, and all appeared to be in good condition, so we decided to make the entire loop hike that Carl and I had previously explored. We carpooled over to the Dunlap Hollow parking area, counted the participants (one dozen), gave a preliminary explanation of the purpose of the hike and the terrain/trail conditions, then started across the footbridge over Davis Creek. Ascending the steep eastern face of Wildcat Ridge, we took advantage of the switchbacks to point out quite a few spring wildflower species: Perfoliate Bellwort, Star Chickweed, several violet species (Common Blue, Three-lobed, Striped, Yellow, and Dogtooth), Milk Vetch, Clintonia, Bluets, Rue Anemone, Blue Cohosh, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and others. We called attention to the numerous rock piles in various stages of vegetation succession and disrepair, signs that humans once farmed the hillside benches, likely kept in pasture grasses by the removal of stones every spring in order to expose a bit more soil and grow a bit more grass. The stones would then be available for other projects. A mule- or horse-drawn wooden sled was the favorite apparatus for collecting the piled rocks and moving them to a project site, should they be needed for lining a well, walling a corral, rip-rapping an eroding stream bank, etc.

After we reached the hilltop, we followed the crest to a junction with Polly Trail. We rested there, and Carl pulled out one of his ever-handly interpretive three-ring binders, full of old photos and newspaper clips to illustrate his explanations of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp Kanawha. After our previous discussion, on the way up-slope, of the community of Chilton (once seated in the vicinity of Dunlap Hollow and the present KSF campground) with its family gardeners and hillside livestock producers, Carl explained how Anheuser-Busch purchased the

area and introduced the extractive industries of lumbering and coal mining. Later, after much of the timber had been cut and the farmed soils had worn out and washed away, and the coal mines had closed during the depression, the land was nearly forsaken until a CCC camp in Boone County was moved to the Davis Creek watershed and renamed Camp Kanawha. Carl showed us with old photos and a map where the barracks, mess hall, and other structures were located at Shrewsbury Hollow (present-day swimming area). Our trail junction was the perfect spot to learn about these changes to the land for we could still see the evidence of hilltop pasture in the large sassafras trees that had sprouted up soon after the pastures were abandoned.

As we moved down Polly Trail, it was obvious that the northern spur ridge and the hollow west of the spur, which the trail descends into, had never been farmed. Numerous rock outcrops and associated old boulder fields made that area too rugged for grazing. None of the large Black, Scarlet, & Chestnut Oaks on the spur crest had the characteristic form of an old field edge tree with very large branches just 8 feet or so above the surface of the ground. They all appeared to have grown up under crowded, forested conditions, rendering their boles relatively free of large branches for 20 feet or more. When Chilton was thriving, surely the cattle and hogs would have been turned out into the woods there in the fall to browse on the acorns and perhaps chestnuts, but a grassy meadow likely never graced that spot in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

At the overlook boulders where Polly Trail makes a sharp turn, I had an opportunity to pass around my own three-ring binder (inspired by Carl's) containing old photo images of some of the founding members of the WV Scenic Trails Association who were also members of the Kanawha Trail Club (KTC). The KTC's predecessor group began around 1942. By 1945, the group decided to formally organize and thus named itself the KTC at that time. In those early years the KTC did a great deal of hiking, trail development/maintenance in the relatively new Kanawha State Forest

(KSF), and trail recreation promotion statewide. As the Appalachian Trail developed, an Explorer Scout named Nick Lozano was exposed to this now iconic National Scenic Trail while backpacking in the Smoky Mountains. In 1972, at an Izaak Walton League meeting in Charleston, Nick met KTC member Bob Tabor, who also was on the Board of Supervisors of the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC). Nick had dreamed of developing a long-distance trail in WV's Allegheny Mountains, and Bob had dreamed of making trail connections with the Appalachian Trail within WV. These two men met Charlie Carlson, then serving as president of the KTC, Arthur Foley, and Bruce Bond, all of whom were ATC members. The KTC, as early as 1945 had promoted the concept of the Mountaineer Trail to be established between Babcock and Cacapon State Parks. Charlie recruited KTC members Carolyn Welcker, Shirley Schweizer, and other KTC members to join the fledgling WV Scenic Trails Conference, modeled after the ATC. You will recognize Shirley's name in the annual KSF Foundation Winter Walk. All of the individuals mentioned were represented in old photographic images in my binder. In fact, one photo shows all but two of them on a hike together in KSF in 1975. In 1974, the group renamed itself the WV Scenic Trails Association when it registered with the Secretary of State's office, and the long-distance trail development dreams of several individuals began to coalesce into reality in the WVSTA's first project, the Allegheny Trail.

We had to step up our pace when we reached Polly Hollow in order to get back to the Shrewsbury Hollow starting point in time for hot snacks provided by the KSF Foundation. We still took some time to point out a few more wildflowers and remnants of old coal mine drift mouths and ventilation openings. Carl and I mentioned the WVSTA's second long-distance trail project, the Mary Ingles Trail, a portion of which runs through Kanawha State Forest and includes part of Wildcat Trail, which we first traversed at the beginning of our hike. We picked up a little trash along the

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way—some KSF users are careless, and others are useless, but most seem to be conscientious about how they treat the Forest. “Hey, how did we end up with 13 hikers?” I had forgotten that we had been joined part way through the hike by a latecomer whose physical condition was so good that she was able to catch us at the junction of Wildcat and Polly Trails just in time for Carl’s historical interpretive talk. Carl and I were both glad that our variously aged hikers had shown physical stamina as well as interests in both nature and history. These characteristics were shared by the founders of the WVSTA 40 years ago, many of whom honed their trail-development skills on Kanawha State Forest’s trail system.



Mountaintop Removal

by Jim Waggy

On July 8, the recently formed Kanawha Forest Coalition hosted an informational meeting at Village Chapel Presbyterian Church in Kanawha City to talk about an expanding mountaintop removal mining operation near Kanawha State Forest. Almost 200 people attended the meeting to learn about what is happening and to voice their concerns.

On May 5, 2014, WVDEP approved a permit to allow a significant expansion of an existing mountaintop removal mining operation. Under this permit, the mining will approach closer and closer to the Forest over the next 10 years.

One indication of how close the mining operations will be to the Forest is that blast warning signs have already been posted at several trailheads along the Forest’s shooting range road. The permit gives the coal company the right to close off access to the shooting range road and to prevent people from using the trails in that section of the Forest on the frequent occasions when blasting is occurring.

The Kanawha Forest Coalition has come together because we believe the WV Dept. of Environmental Protection should never have issued this permit. This is a terrible location for MTR mining. We believe DEP did not sufficiently

take into account the impacts of this MTR operation on Kanawha State Forest, the increased risk of flooding to a Loudendale community that suffered a devastating flood just 11 years ago, and the health risks to nearby Charleston communities from airborne toxic fine dust particles.

The Kanawha Forest Coalition includes residents of Loudendale, residents of other nearby communities such as South Hills and Mount Alpha, people who use and appreciate the Forest, and others. We are pursuing a variety of paths to appeal and oppose this mining permit. The momentum of this opposition movement is building rapidly. You many have noticed the yard signs sprouting around town proclaiming, No MTR Next to Kanawha State Forest.

To learn more about the Kanawha Forest Coalition, including how you can participate and how you can help, go to facebook.com/kanawhaforestcoalition. Among other items, you’ll find an online petition to sign; you can print paper petitions to circulate; and you can sign up to be notified of future public meetings. You can e-mail us at KanawhaForestCoalition@gmail.com. If you let us know you’d like a yard sign, we’ll get one to you (or more than one if you know others who would like them). The more people we have supporting this effort, the greater our chances of success.



Nature Quiz

Q. This is a flat-topped tree with pinnately compound leaves of 11 to 17 pointed leaflets. Bark is gray, and older trunks have dark fissures divided by lighter ridges. Flowers are small and greenish and usually in catkins. Fruit is fibrous and in drooping clusters, encapsulating a rough and bony nut with very oily and edible meat ripening in September. Husks of the nuts contain a brown stain that colors the fingers. *[Answer to appear in the next newsletter.]*



General Ecology Walk

by Martha Hopper

Ben Lowman, assisted by Martha Hopper, led fifteen people of all ages up Davis Creek to discover its inhabitants which included insects, fish, salamanders and crawdads. The younger members in our group wisely wore boots and were the first to tackle the art of rock turning. Ben gave us a crash course in this delicate operation. Most importantly, both hands must be free. While standing downstream, one hand lifts up an edge of the rock and the other hand grabs at anything you might displace. Nets were sometimes used, especially when small fish were discovered. Another important step is to replace the rock just as it was. Of course, we returned all critters back to the stream.

We were told that there are likely ten kinds of crayfish in the Forest, including one invasive which is the rusty crayfish, probably brought here by fishermen to be used for bait. We found several of them marked with their red "eyebrows." Hiding under some of the rocks were two-lined salamanders, easy to identify because of a line running down both sides. We were intrigued with the small portable case of rock fragments that held the larvae of the caddisfly. Stoneflies were also found, which are good indicators that Davis Creek is a healthy stream as they will not survive in polluted waters. Wading in the creek and finding these hidden treasures was a great experience and a reminder that all of us need to help keep our streams clean.

All species of Plecoptera are intolerant of water pollution, and their presence in a stream or still water is usually an indicator of good or excellent water quality. Caddisfly larva with portable case of rock fragments.



White Hollow Trail Wildflowers Walk

By Bill Hall

The day dawned clear but with a chill for the Osbra Eye Wildflower Walks—perfect weather to begin the ascent up the slope of White Hollow Trail. Three hardy women hikers and myself were led by Jerry Westfall on a 3+ hour loop in search of spring flora in Kanawha State Forest. We located (and Jerry identified) nine different species near the road before we had even crossed the foot bridge over Davis Creek.

Some of those in bloom included Creeping Phlox, Marsh Blue Violet, and Wood or Carolina Vetch. More showy species along the lower trail section included both red and white varieties of Wake-robin. Common Blue and Long-spurred violets, Wild Geranium, Lousewort or Wood Betony, Slender Toothwort, and Blue Cohosh were also in early bloom. The leafing structures of Meehanian, Yellow Mandarin, and Dwarf Crested Iris were discovered as well.

The temperature rose as we began to climb and found Wild Ginger and a healthy patch of Goldenseal in full bloom along our path. We were breaking a sweat when we finally reached the ridgetop and were greeted by two species of heath, Huckleberry and Highbush Blueberry. Jerry helped us to distinguish them by the color of their stems and twigs. Wintergreen was also found, and its only teaberries were consumed by two of our curious group. With a Red-shouldered Hawk soaring overhead, we located Trailing Arbutus, Striped wintergreen, and the purple-veined leaflets of Rattlesnake Weed before starting down the mountain.

We ended our walk on Spotted Salamander Trail where we found the bright yellow flower of Lesser Celandine in the wetland area. The unusual Bladdernut tree was pointed out by Jerry as our last species of the day.

Our outing was educational with interesting plant lore and invigorating as well—an ideal way to spend a beautiful spring morning.



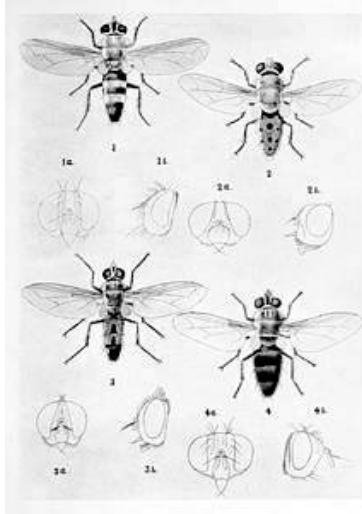
Insects and Arthropods

by Doren Burrell

This is a list of the insects and other arthropods that we found on the Insect walk during the

Osbra Eye Nature Walks:

Stilt Bug, Tarnished Plant Bug, Cherry Lacebug, Water Strider, leaf hopper, Soldier beetles, unspotted Lady Beetle, Poplar Weevil, Leaf beetle, Sweat bee, Digger bees, Bumblebee, Leaf-cutter Bees, Red-spotted Purple Butterfly, Spicebush Swallowtail, Tiger Swallowtail, Dusky Skipper, Spring Azure Butterfly, Alfalfa White Butterfly, Geometrid larva, Pygmy Grasshopper, Hover flies, Tachinid flies, Crane fly, Sawfly larva, Grass spider, Lynx spider, Jumping spider, Velvet Mite, and Apheloria millipede.



Wonderful Weekend

by Barb Koster, Karen Bess, and Christy Carr

This past weekend was the Spring Outing for the Kanawha Trail Club. While most of the outings are in faraway places, this one was right at home in KSF. I must say this was a wonderful weekend for us. We experienced nature and the outdoors in a way that left us all with a sense of amazement at what nature has to offer us if we only hit the trail! Friday night was the night hike that I led up Rattlesnake Rd. It was a great evening with more Scarlet Tanagers than I have ever seen on a hike. The temperature was perfect for the evening.

Saturday morning we traveled over to Rock Camp for a hike led by Carl McLaughlin on the Mary Ingles Trail back to the main forest. The three of us did a 6-mile hike out and back while

the rest did the 8-miles back to Dunlop Hollow. An awesome day was highlighted by finding lots of Showy Orchis, Pennywort, and a Morel found by Rachel Kerns. A black snake was found lying in the sun on the side of the trail. We saw our share of birds and heard with Wood Thrushes as the highlight of those seen for the day.

Sunday was a 5:30 A.M. start by Christy and me as we are participating in the BBA and trying to locate the Eastern Screech Owl at the Forest. We were not successful this time but did manage to hear the spring Gobbler, Whip-Poor-Wills, and the ole Barred Owl that early in the morning.

After a hearty breakfast at the KTC Lodge, we started the day's hike with Kathy Hastings as our leader on the CCC Snipe Trail. We saw a ton of wildflowers-Clintonia, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, huge Wake Robins, to name but a few. Karen has mastered finding the Jacks! Our birding has become a little better after these few days with the voices become more familiar. Christy was able to identify the Palm Warbler, and we all enjoyed the moment of sighting the bird! The fun still continued after getting off the trails and into our cars for the trip back home. One last stop at the vernal pool provided me an opportunity to grab a salamander and dance around at my accomplishment.

This is only a sampling of our weekend of fun. Our little time to get away went much to quickly. Who could believe that we could have so much fun so close to home! Our only question that remains is when can we do it all again?



Welcome!

The Foundation welcomes the following new members: Carl McLaughlin of Cross Lanes and Helen Basham of Dunbar.

Thanks!

The Foundation wishes to acknowledge the generation donations of Evan & Theresa Buck and Mary Pullen. All donations go directly to Forest maintenance and preservation projects.

West Virginia's 151st Birthday Celebration

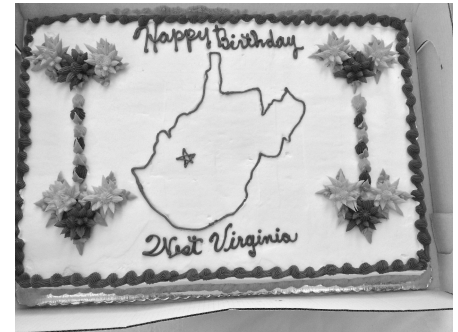
by Bill Hall

On Sunday afternoon, June 15, the KSFF held its summer concert in the park featuring the Kanawha Valley Community Band under the direction of Gene Warner. The weather was sunny and pleasant as we set up under our giant silver maple tree to honor the Mountain State. More than 100 people were present to listen to a mix of classic soft jazz, show tunes by Cole Porter, and a Lennon/McCartney medley, as well as an original composition by Matthew Jackfert titled "Musketman March," named for the WVU mascot. We were also treated to an arrangement of Almost Heaven (now officially recognized as a State song) by Delford Chaffin, Jr. We heard a beautiful rendition of "Danny Boy", and a finale of "America, the Beautiful" began to stir our feelings of patriotism. These sentiments were heightened during an encore—the resounding march "Stars and Stripes Forever" by John Philip Sousa.

Adding to the festivities was the announcement of that the KVCB is currently celebrating its 30th anniversary. This occasion has been tempered by the recent loss of long-time conductor, Bob Leighty, who was revered in his role and publicly commemorated during this performance. Tribute was also paid to the founder and first conductor of KVCB, Lee McMillen. He and the late Chuck Ellison, former president of the KSFF, conceived and developed the collaboration resulting in this annual event.

Once again, the KSFF served WV birthday cake decorated in gold and blue colors with cold drinks following the music.

Audience and band members enjoyed the refreshments and mingled briefly before parting with uplifted spirits.



Margaret Denison Fall Nature Walks

Kanawha State Forest
Saturday, September 13, 2014

Registration: 8:30 A.M. – Walks: 9:00 A.M.
Near Swimming Pool

Farewell to Summer

Wildflowers — Fungi — Birds — Pond/Aquatic Life — Trees
And Much More!

Nature Photography — Bring Your Own Camera — Auto Tour for Limited Ability Walkers

Adults, \$5 — Children - \$2

Hot Dogs & Drinks For Sale

Need More Information? Call the Forest Office at 304-558-3500

Sponsored by: Kanawha State Forest Foundation

Assisted by: Mary Ingles Trailblazers, DNR, Handlan Chapter Brooks Bird Club, and Master Naturalists

