

Friends of Lake Accotink Park FLAP



ISSUE 02

JUNE 2019

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NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Mary Keeser, President FLAP

Thank you for your wonderful feedback concerning FLAP and our positive impact. We have continued to work several important projects, activities and efforts; additional information is provided in this newsletter and on our social media. We have refined our 2019 project and activates schedule, and have filed Friends of Lake Accotink Park – FLAP 501c3 Charity certification documents. We have accomplished the relocation and planting of the tree and the FLAP Pollinator Educational Garden and are working on scheduling speakers. Critical to our overall success are our Committee Directors, members and volunteers. We need your talents, skills, and dedication to lead or work with (a few hours a month) the following FLAP Committees: Stewardship, Recreation, Fundraising, and Special Projects. Please do encourage your neighbors, colleagues, friends and family to get involved and make a positive difference to your Lake Accotink Park. To volunteer send your contact information to contact@flapaccotink.org. Thank you for being an active member of FLAP, together we can make a positive impact for our community and our Lake Accotink Park. See you on the trail.

FLAP NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) newsletter is distributed quarterly to provide information about the park, raising its awareness and visibility in the community. Distribution includes all FLAP members; the district offices of the three magisterial districts that border Lake Accotink Park: Braddock District, Lee District, and Springfield District; and the following communities for posting on their website or inclusion in their community newsletters: Canterbury Woods, Carleigh Homeowners Association, Danbury Forest, Kings Park, North Springfield Civic Association, Oak Hill, Ravensworth Farm, Stonehaven, Springfield Civic Association, and West Springfield Civic Association.

FLAP BOARD

2018 -2020

POSITION	NAME	e-Mail
President	Mary Keeser	president@flapaccotink.org
Vice President	Anthony Vellucci	Vice.President@flapaccotink.org
Secretary	Jim Hickey	secretary@flapaccotink.org
Treasurer	Meghan Walker	treasurer@flapaccotink.org
Member At Large	Dave Gibson	memberAL@flapaccotink.org

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Contact@flapaccotink.org



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OUR IMPACT

FLAP Volunteers continue our positive impact to Lake Accotink Park and its visitors. Our monthly cleanups remove debris-trash from the marina, trails and woodlands, you are seeing our results! WE NEED VOLUNTEERS



Caring for our FLAP Pollinator Educational Garden

By Kerri Blackman, Pollinator Garden Designer



You may have noticed the new pollinator garden at Lake Accotink this year. This garden will provide habitat and food sources for pollinators and also serve as an aesthetic enhancement to the park. However, it will take teamwork to keep the garden beautiful and thriving. Seasonal volunteer workdays will be pertinent in getting the garden off to a good start, as well as more regular maintenance such as watering and weeding. Here are some general guidelines:

Late Winter/Early spring: Fertilize shrubs. Cut back grasses to just above ground level. Cut back Wood Aster to 6" above ground level. Remove old/dead foliage from other perennials.

Summer: Clip spent flowers on Columbine, Ragwort and other perennials. Weed out invasives such as Garlic Mustard, Japanese Stiltgrass and Japanese Honeysuckle. Be careful of Poison Ivy!

Fall: Cut back Bee Balm and Columbine to ground. Leave Mountain Mint seed heads and stems standing through winter for wildlife habitat. Continue to weed out invasives.

Ongoing Maintenance: Deep water all plants weekly, or twice weekly during the driest summer days. Weed out invasives weekly to keep them from overcrowding the natives.

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CRITTER OF THE QUARTER

By Dave Gibson, FLAP Member At Large

NATIVE? BEES



FLAP volunteers, including a troop of Junior Girl Scouts, did the Park a great service in April when they planted over 400 individual plants near the large pavilion. While we are pleased that the new FLAP Lake Accotink Pollinator Educational Garden will provide years of beauty and pleasant surroundings for park visitors, the garden has already begun playing an important role in sustaining the park by attracting and nourishing pollinating critters.

Who are the pollinators? A yellow swallowtail butterfly (our state insect) was first to visit the garden even while we were planting. In our garden, we targeted several types of pollinators: butterflies, birds, humming birds and, perhaps most importantly, bees. Five of the 14 kinds of plants are intended to attract pollinating bees. Think beyond honeybees, which are 17th Century imports from Europe. There are around 4,000 species of native bees in North America and over 400 in Virginia. Some 70 percent of them are ground-dwellers, including the “miner bees” whose nests might be mistaken for ant hills. As pollinators, they are remarkably efficient. A single red mason bee can do the work of 120 honeybees in collecting and distributing pollen.

Honeybees are colonial and produce commercially viable wax and honey, which makes it practical to keep and move them around in hives. Trying to “keep” native bees would be akin to herding cats. They are solitary, not social; they work as individuals, not teams, covering more area than honeybees. They do not have a queen or produce wax or honey. They drink nectar from flowering plants and mix some of it with pollen for nesting material. Few of them can sting.

Native bees are “cavity nesters.” A hollow reed or a hole in the ground will do. Many like to chew their way into wood and appreciate “starter” homes that can be made as drill holes in wood blocks or bundles of tubes. Mama bee lengthens these tunnels and makes tandem cells, laying one egg per cell. Hatchlings near the entrance to the tube have to successfully chew their way out or the whole brood in that tube dies.

Why the question mark in the title? It's because our interconnected world has brought non-native species into our populations of native bees. A recent UVA study found that the blue orchard mason bee has become a rare sight as two species of Japanese mason bees are moving in. Developments like this are leading entomologists to replace the term “native bees” with “solitary bees.”



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FLAP UPCOMING MEETINGS – EVENTS

By Meghan Walker

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflakeaccotinkpark/>

JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
6/9/19 Monthly Cleanup at 3 locations: Danbury Forest, Inverchapel trail entrance, Marina. 9 am- 11 am	7/14/19 Monthly Cleanup at 3 locations: Danbury Forest, Inverchapel trail entrance, Marina. 9 am- 11 am	8/11/19 Monthly Cleanup at 3 locations: Danbury Forest, Inverchapel trail entrance, Marina. 9 am- 11 am	9/8/19 Monthly Cleanup at 3 locations: Danbury Forest, Inverchapel trail entrance, Marina. 9 am- 11 am
6/27/19 Quarterly Membership Meeting at 5610 Inverchapel Rd, Springfield. Starts at 7:30pm			9/19/19 Quarterly Membership Meeting at 5610 Inverchapel Rd, Springfield. Starts at 7:30pm



VOLUNTEER TO CLEAN OUR Lake Accotink Trails



WHEN: 2nd Sun of every Month

TIME: 9:00am - 11:00ish

WHERE: Several Meeting Locations

*Lake Accotink Trail entrance Ellet and Inverchapel Road

*Lake Accotink Marina

*Lake Accotink Trail entrance at the end of Danberry Forest Drive (Kirkham and Uxbridge Ct Playground)

*Lake Accotink Trail entrance Queensbury and Hatteras

Register: https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/organization_details/71653
<https://www.facebook.com/friendsoflakeaccotinkpark/>

ACTIVITIES: Pick-up trash bags from FLAP Volunteer lead and hit the trail to fill your trash bags with debris carelessly dumped, dropped - forgotten

QUESTIONS: contact@flapaccotink.org

Note: Long sleeves, gloves, boots and long pants are encouraged

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LAKE ACCOTINK STAFF NOTES

By Joshua Smith, Lake Accotink Park Manager



Operations: Park Hours: 7:00 AM – 7:30 PM

The Marina new operation hours: Weekends/Holidays 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM,
Weekday hours, 2:00 PM – 8:00 PM, begin June 17th

Programming and Events:

Registration is open for **summer camp**. Popular offerings like our Dog Obedience Series, Mountain Biking classes, and Kayak classes are already starting to fill up don't miss your chance to register. Lake Accotink has expanded its summer camp offerings and now has truly unique summer camp experiences for your child(ren). Find a complete list of programs, events and camps on our website, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/classes-camps>.

Volunteer Events:

Registration: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/volunteer>

Facility Maintenance and Improvements:

Ongoing and Upcoming projects including;

- Continuing work on Carousel
- Completed relocation of rentable picnic areas
- Completed relocation of pollinator garden and cleanout and planting of the traffic circle at the marina
- Continue Refurbishing carousel horses
- Contract has been signed to remove debris at the top of the spillway-long-term solutions are being explored
- Completed shade structures for rentable birthday party areas
- Continue working boat storage solutions
- Information Kiosk around the trails and in the core area have been updated and cleaned



Need to report damage or maintenance concerns? Please call the visitor center, 703-569-3464. We appreciate your support!

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SNAKES at Lake Accotink Park

By Tony Bulmer, FCPA Lakefront Naturalist

Fairfax County is home to 18 different species of snakes. We have only one venomous snake and that is the eastern copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*). Snakes play a vital role in the ecosystem that we are a part of. The main benefit humans receive from snakes is protection from rodents; rodents can cause certain illnesses in humans. In fact, rats and mice are known to spread more than 35 diseases to humans.

Diseases carried by rodents can be spread to humans indirectly, through fleas, ticks, or mites that have fed on an infected rodent.

Snakes play a vital role in protecting humans from these diseases because they eat rodents. The best way to interact with snakes is to leave them alone. Most snake bites occur when people either go off trail in the park or when people pick snakes up. It is a good idea to stay on the trail; a snake may bite to protect itself if you reach for it, step on it or try and handle it. Many snakes rely on camouflage and camouflage only works if you stay very still which make the snakes almost invisible. Leaving the trail increases the chance you will not see the snake, and this is when bites occur. Here are some of the keys why you should not handle snakes. Many snakes rely on “mimicry” for their own survival. If a non-venomous juvenile eastern rat snake resembles a venomous copperhead hopefully the hawk won’t eat it. So, distinguishing non-venomous snake vs a venomous can be a bit tricky. Here is some of the keys; A copperhead has an elliptical pupil and all other snakes in Fairfax County do not. The pattern on a copperhead is said to resemble a saddle on a horse or a Hershey kiss. Copperheads also have a hole between their eye and nose which is a heat seeking pit that helps the snake hunt. Again, snakes are here to do an important job, they do not want to bite and the best way to interact with them is to leave them alone. You can always take pictures and send the photos in for identification. Happy Trails.

Copperhead being relocated by Karen Roos, Program Manager Lake Accotink Park Among her many certifications is a certified Snake handler



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White-tailed Deer Fawns - Don't be a Fawn Kidnapper – Bears on the Move

**By Katherine E. Edwards, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist®
Fairfax County Wildlife Management Specialist
Fairfax County Police Department – Animal Services Division**

With summer quickly approaching, newborn wildlife is abundant in Fairfax County. White-tailed deer fawns are typically born from May to July, with peak fawn drop in our area in June. It is often surprising, but not uncommon, for residents to find young deer

fawns on lawns, in bushes, tall grass, gardens or flowerbeds on residential property.

Newborn fawns are unsteady on their feet and unable to keep up with their mothers, so mother deer will purposefully hide their young fawns for safe keeping during their first few weeks of life. Female deer (called does) will leave their young alone for hours at a time to avoid leading a predator to its location. Even though she may be out of sight, the mother is likely nearby and knows where she left her fawn.

As a natural defense, the fawn will lay bedded down and motionless in efforts to remain unseen. Fawns are born with very little scent and are camouflaged by their white-spotted coat, making it harder for predators to find them. Mother deer will return several times each day for very brief periods of time, often at dawn and dusk, to nurse, groom or move her fawn. This behavior continues until the fawn is about 3 weeks old and can travel with its mother.

Often these actions go undetected by people and many people who find a fawn alone on their property believe the fawn to be orphaned or abandoned, prompting calls to wildlife officials and the Fairfax County Animal Protection Police. In most cases, these fawns are only temporarily left by their mothers for their own protection and there is no need for human intervention.

Only if a fawn is showing obvious signs of injury or distress, such as wandering and crying incessantly, swollen eyes, or has visible signs of trauma (like open wounds or broken bones), or if there is a dead lactating doe nearby, should you seek help for the animal. If an animal is displaying these signs, contact a permitted wildlife rehabilitator, veterinarian or the Animal Protection Police for further assistance and instruction.

A fawn's best chance of survival is to remain in the wild under the natural care of its mother. Even under the best circumstances and with the best professional care, the survival rate of rehabilitated fawns is low. If you find a fawn that is lying quietly and appears uninjured, please leave it alone. Keep children and pets away from the area and do not attempt to handle the fawn, capture it, or feed it. Make sure to give the fawn plenty of space because the mother will be wary of you. If you have handled a fawn or have attempted to "rescue it", and less than 24 hours have passed, you should return it immediately to the place where you found it. Its mother will be looking for it!

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By Katherine E. Edwards, Ph.D., Certified Wildlife Biologist® (continued)



Bears on the Move

While seeing bears isn't something that most residents in Fairfax County would expect – the area is still considered bear country. Sightings have been increasing in recent years as the bear population in Virginia grows, including highly developed and populated areas of Fairfax County. Multiple bear sightings are reported in Fairfax County each spring and summer as bears wander into residential areas in search for food. Many of these are younger yearling bears (essentially teenagers) that are venturing out on their own.

Black bears have a natural distrust of humans, are shy, and usually avoid people.

However, bears may be attracted to food sources in residential areas. Bears are attracted by bird feeders, garbage, outdoor pet food, compost piles, fruit trees, bee hives, and berry-producing shrubs. If addressed quickly, situations can be resolved almost immediately by removing the food source. Sometimes, the bear may return searching for food, but after a few failed attempts to find it, will leave the property and move on.

Never feed a bear under any circumstances. In Virginia, it is illegal to feed bears on both public and private lands (4VAC15-40-282. Unauthorized feeding of bear). Feeding bears (whether deliberate or inadvertent) can habituate bears to people and cause serious property damage. These actions are often detrimental to the bear itself as bears that have lost their natural fear of people may have to be destroyed. You can help keep our communities safe and the bear population healthy and wild by removing food attractants on your property and communicating with your neighbors if a bear is seen in the area. For information on safety precautions and measures to minimize conflicts with black bears if one is seen in your community, please visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/bear-aware-season-bear-sightings/> or <https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/bear/>.

Unless the animal is sick or injured, or poses a threat to public safety, the Fairfax County Animal Protection Police do not take actions to remove bears from a neighborhood. Bear sightings should be reported to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries through the Virginia Wildlife Conflict Helpline at (855) 571-9003. The Fairfax County Animal Protection Police can be reached through the Police non-emergency number at 703-691-2131.

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FAIRFAX COUNTY and FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY NOTES



MASTER PLAN UPDATE

By John C. Cook, Braddock District Supervisor



"The Board of Supervisors included the full dredge and forebay construction as a capital project in the budget passed this month. The Board also directed the County Executive to return to the Board with an Action Item to approve the specific funding mechanism, by this Fall. There are a couple different funding options under consideration. We expect the Board to support whichever option is recommended by staff."

FLAP NOTE: Adam Wynn, Senior Landscape Architect and Project Manager, is taking over the reins from Gayle Hooper to lead the master planning effort.

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/planning-development/lakeaccotink>

FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY-FCPA and FRIENDS OF LAKE ACCOTINK PARK-FLAP

By FLAP



On Tuesday, May 28, 2019, Sara Baldwin, Fairfax County Park Authority Deputy Director/COO, Josh Smith, Fairfax County Park Authority Lake Accotink Park Manager, and Mary Keeser, President Friends of Lake Accotink Park – FLAP, signed a Memorandum of Understanding-MOU to document the working relationship between the two organizations. The MOU had been underway for several years and was the result of many FLAP Board and FCPA discussion, meetings and compromises. This agreement outlines the roles, responsibilities and foundation for working together on projects and events impacting Lake Accotink Park.

We are all very pleased with the results of the extensive planning meetings, look forward to working together to support Lake Accotink Park and our FLAP missions. The Park Authority appreciates all the time and energy given by the FLAP members and leadership and looks forward to continuing to work together for many years to come to support projects and events at Lake Accotink Park.

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SOUND OFF - OUR LAKE ACCOTINK PARK



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SOUND OFF

FLAP Board

The Richard David Stutzke Foundation

On behalf of the Friends of Lake Accotink Park – FLAP, we would like to extend our thanks to The Richard David Stutzke Foundation-RDSF, for their most generous donation to our FLAP Pollinator Educational Garden project. Sharon Stutzke, President of the RDSF shared a love of caring for our environment through education and volunteerism with her husband Richard. Sharon's parents were among the first residents of Ravesworth Farm, and were often seen with their children (Sharon, Jim, Mike) enjoying Lake Accotink Park. FLAP relocated the pollinator garden from its old location in the circle due to safety concerns and accessibility. This old garden had no signage and contained a minimal variety of plants. After years of discussion, planning was ramped up last March and culminated with FLAP and professional landscapers clearing the new area and planting over 14 varieties of pollinator plants. A large Sugar Maple tree was planted in the traffic circle surrounded by mulch and a narrow ring of sod.

Signage identifying the 14 varieties of pollinator plants along with what they attract is currently being designed and is focused at educating the public on the benefits and impacts of such a garden to our environment. Encouraging all to plant, at any scale, a pollinator garden guaranteed to positively impact our environment. Our deepest gratitude and thanks to Sharon and the RDSF.

Reconstruction of the Amphitheater

Deb Van Heest, Co-Pastor, Community of Christ



The Community of Christ Church worked with the local Boy Scout's, Troop 991, to revamp the campfire amphitheater site and install Bat house. Construction began on May 24th and was completed shortly after. Thank you to Boy Scout Lead Samuel Kluck for taking this on as his Eagle Scout Project and Mr. Ed Haggerty and the rest of Troop 991. There will be a community-wide cookout and award presentation re-dedicating the church campfire site and recognizing the young Eagle Scout, Sam in the near future.

NOTE: FLAP will be coordinating speakers, educational hikes and much more from this location, easy access to the LAP trail.



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YOUNG FLAPers



By Nathan VanBrunt

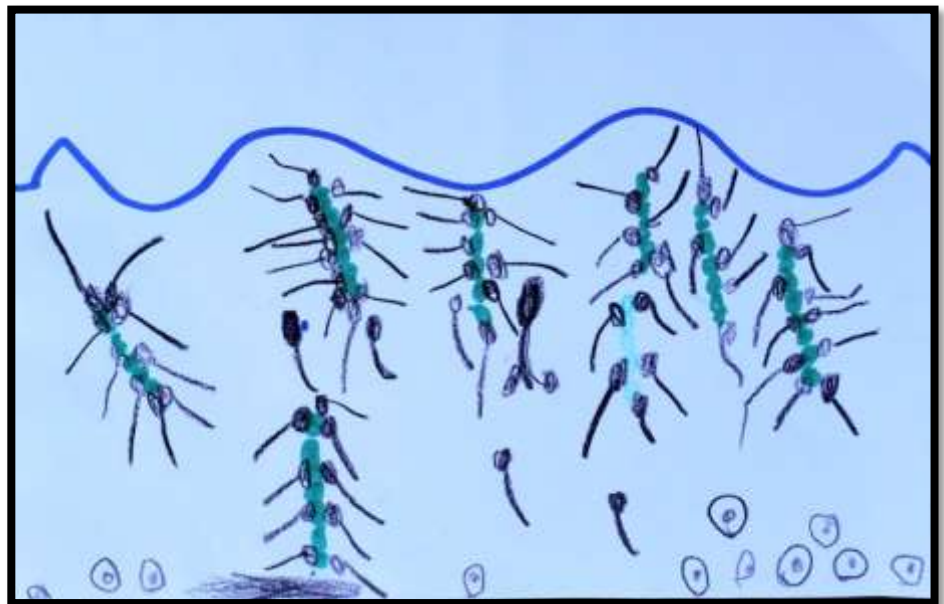
This earth project is by 4 year old Nathan likes to make the earth happy by picking up trash. He's so accustomed to the monthly FLAP

LAP clean up that whenever his family goes to LAP to walk the trails alongside the stream, he picks up trash.



By Bryann VanBrunt's

Here's a drawing from 6year old Brynn of tadpoles eating plants in the creeks of the Lake Accotink.



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COMMUNICATIONS and OUTREACH

Positions OPEN – Volunteer(s) needed

You can make a positive impact - Volunteer any amount of time to help lead or serve on any of the below committees (a few hours a month). Join us at our many volunteer events. Minimum age to serve on a committee is 16 – no maximum age. The majority of our activities / events are perfect for the entire family – we provide service hours.

POSITION	NAME	e-Mail
Membership	Elissa Myers	membership@flapaccotink.org
Community Outreach and Communications	OPEN	communications@flapaccotink.org
Stewardship		stewardship@flapaccotink.org
Recreation		recreation@flapaccotink.org
Fundraising		fundraising @flapaccotink.org
Special Projects		specialprojects @flapaccotink.org

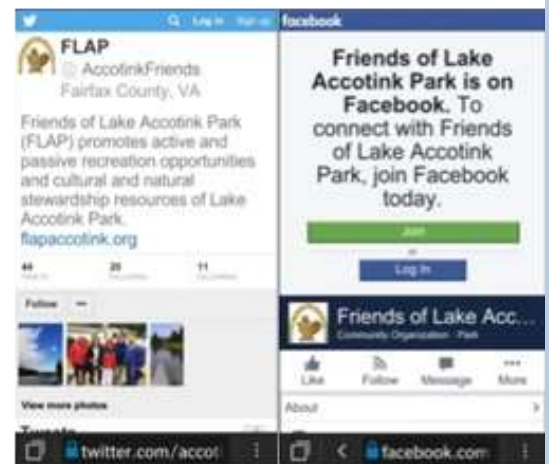
*****Please Submit your articles for next quarters FLAP Newsletter “Sound Off” and “Young FLAPers” sections to: communications@flapaccotink.org***

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Mail Donations to:

FLAP or Friends of Lake Accotink Park

P.O. box 1203, Springfield, VA 22151