



# FRIENDS OF PATUXENT

Vol. 29 • No. 3

www.friendsofpatuxent.org



July-August-September 2018

## What is the Big 6 Anyway?

Brad Knudsen, Refuge Manager

**W**e seem to like to see the word “BIG” in front of numbers. The “BIG 10” (or is it now the “BIG 12??”) refers to a traditional college sports NCAA conference. The “BIG 5” – of course equates to the amazing large mammals of Africa which include elephant, rhino, lion, leopard, and Cape buffalo. (Some even argue it SHOULD be the “BIG 7” and include crocodile and hippopotamus!) I am sure there are other examples. The one I want to focus on today is the “BIG 6” as it relates to the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS).

The Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 has been hailed, and rightly so, as the organic and unifying legislation the NWRS had been lacking for decades. Having strong bipartisan support in Congress, it clearly stated “The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for **the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats** within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.”

So management of our 566 refuges comprising over 850 million acres as a SYSTEM for wildlife conservation purposes was a clear intent of the Act. Then, it spelled out clear expectations that certain uses would be considered priority public uses – also called “wildlife-dependent recreational uses.”



Photo by Brad Knudsen

Here is where the “BIG 6” comes in. These uses, not listed in any priority order were/are hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation

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## Patuxent Goes Wild

By Bobbie Deegan, Member of Friends

**O**n the evening of Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, Event Chairman Charlie Deegan, Refuge Manager Brad Knudsen, and Center Director John French welcomed more than 300 invited guests to the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *A Night on the Wild Side* at the National



**Night on the Wild Side Chair, Charles Deegan and Lieutenant Governor of Maryland Boyd Rutherford**

Wildlife Visitor Center at Patuxent Research Refuge. The Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors first began planning this annual outreach effort in late

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## What is the Big 6 Anyway?

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– the “BIG 6!” While these uses must still be deemed compatible (i.e. – not interfere with the refuge purpose or NWRS mission) on a refuge-by-refuge basis, it is a mandate that such uses receive “enhanced consideration” in planning and management initiatives within the NWRS.

Not every refuge is able to accommodate all six uses, obviously. Some have no suitable fishing areas, for instance. Some may have overriding endangered species concerns that preclude public access or recreation of any kind. At Patuxent, however, every single one of the “BIG 6” is alive and well! Patuxent has one of the longest and most varied hunt programs in Region 5, starting September 1, and continuing through January, including deer, waterfowl, rabbits, squirrels, and mourning doves, plus several days in April and May for turkey season. Fishing is offered at seven different locations between South Tract and North Tract, including a short stretch of the Little Patuxent River. Our National Wildlife Visitor Center is a perfect facility for environmental education and



Photo by Bad Knudsen

interpretation programs. And featuring 26 miles of hiking trails, a 6 mile auto tour route on North Tract, and with roughly 75% of the refuge open to the public, opportunities for wildlife observation and photography abound!

Over the past several years, Patuxent has averaged some pretty impressive numbers of visits associated with the “BIG 6” public uses. Take a look

- 6,000 hunting visits, 1,000 fishing visits, 18,000 for photography, 80,000 visits for wildlife observation, 9,000 visits (on and off-site) for environmental education, and 8,000 visits for interpretation. Granted, some of these numbers are easier to come by than others, as they are based on registration information, environmental education, or permits issued/sold (fishing/hunting respectively).

Bottom line – if you enjoy the outdoors, whether it is photographing a mountain laurel or fishing for panfish or hiking just to see what you can see in the woods or fields, Patuxent Research Refuge is a prime spot to come out and enjoy one of the “BIG 6!” Or – heck – why not all SIX of the “BIG 6?!” They are ready and waiting for you!!!

## Thank You to the Following Supporters for your Donations to the Friends of Patuxent- January through May 2018

- Michelle Billand
- Dr. Maureen Byrne
- John F. Coleman
- Ellen Cornett
- Dirk Supply
- ECHO – Joan Nolan
- Tracie and Jay Hovermale
- Barbara McHuron
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- Katherine Turk



**Friends of Patuxent** is published quarterly and can be read online or mailed to our Friends upon request.

Many of the regular newsletter contributors and assistants are volunteers. However, we welcome and encourage all volunteers and Friends to submit items for the newsletter by sending or bringing them to:

**Editor, Friends of Patuxent Newsletter**  
**ATTN: Ross Feldner**  
**11811 Ivanhoe Street**  
**Wheaton, MD 20902**

Or email to [ross.feldner@verizon.net](mailto:ross.feldner@verizon.net)

All articles submitted to the Friends of Patuxent Newsletter will be reviewed by newsletter staff prior to their publication. We reserve the right to not publish submissions based on length, content or suitability.

Article submission deadlines:

Issue			Issue		
No.	Months	Deadline	No.	Months	Deadline
1	Jan-Mar	December 1	2	Apr-Jun	March 1
3	Jul-Sept	June 1	4	Oct-Dec	September 1

To become a member of the Friends of Patuxent or send a donation, please see “Membership Application” on page 19.

# Around the Refuge

Photos by Matt Beziat



*Eastern Box Turtle at North Tract*



*Multiflora Rose at North Tract*



*Tulip Poplar on the North Tract*



*Black Locust on the North Tract*



*Painted Turtle at North Tract*



*Swollen Bladderwort at North Tract*

# Partnership Preserves Critical Data Set for the Bird Banding Laboratory

Nancy McAllister, Bird Banding Lab Biologist

Over the past several years, the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) at Patuxent has partnered with several organizations to bring work experience to students with disabilities while preserving the BBL's critical set of bird banding data. This program has served as the model for USGS to roll out a national version of the program.

The USGS has partnered with the Fairfax County Public Schools Secondary Transition to Employment Program (STEP) to offer on-the-job training opportunities to volunteers, aged 18-22, who have earned special or modified high school diplomas. From July 2015 to February 2018, 50 STEP volunteers, teachers, job coaches, and school and government employees worked in a joint effort to digitize hard copies of bird banding data, as well as transcribe and catalog images to make them available to be uploaded to the Web.

BBL Biologist, Nancy McAllister finds her work with the program extremely rewarding.

*“Often our students’ unique gifts and talents contribute to our projects in ways that others could not. Their attention to detail is second to none. It’s been wonderful to see our students develop robust skill sets in the STEM fields.”*

As a result of this project (currently led by Derek Masaki, Elaine Nakash, and Nancy McAllister), approximately 310,000 pages (21% of the BBL's large



*Blue-winged Warbler*

set of critical records) are accessible through the BBL database and the BISON Web application. The challenge of scanning and tracking hundreds of thousands of pages provides a great

hands-on learning opportunity and work experience for these volunteers, while filling a critical need for the BBL. Several of the STEP students have been hired as USGS employees following their completion of the program.



*“It’s a grand slam for all involved,” said Dawn Childs, USGS Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Units. “Recent high school graduates with special needs get real-world experience while helping USGS scientists on projects ranging from grizzly bears and energy to historic documents and bird mi-*

*Continued on page 19*

# We Appreciate Our Volunteers!

*Diana Ogilvie, Volunteer Coordinator*

The Volunteer Appreciation Picnic at North Tract was scheduled on what happened to be the first sunny day in more than a week, but the weather “person” warned of scattered afternoon thunderstorms.

## Finally, a day with no rain

About 35 volunteers and staff braved the weather forecast and journeyed to North Tract anyway to enjoy some dry outdoor time.

## Are they ready yet?

Hungry volunteers gathered around the grill, expertly “manned” by Jeff Bolden and Joe DiGiovanni. Grilled burgers and dogs appeared soon after.

## Salads, sides and desserts

Volunteers rounded out the menu with delicious potluck contributions.

The weather cooperated. We had sunshine, mild temperatures and an occasional refreshing breeze. By the time we ate, the picnic tables were comfortably in the shade. For the rest of the afternoon and evening, new volunteers and old volunteers became acquainted as we all celebrated the things that make the Refuge special – the nature all around us, the great outdoors and the Patuxent family. Many thanks to those who came early to help set up, who came to the picnic, and who stayed late to help clean up. You all made it a memorable day. 🐦

**Thank you for the support you give us every day!**



Photo by Jerry Herman



Photo by Nell Baldacchino



# Box Turtles Do Not Live in Boxes

Lowell Adams, Board Member, Friends of Patuxent

The eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina*) does not live in a box, but research indicates it is being “boxed in” by human development, and populations are declining in metropolitan areas. The decline of box turtles is associated with habitat loss and fragmentation, lack of recruitment into breeding populations, removal from the wild for pets, and mortality on roads. Roads are considered a serious direct threat to the box turtle. Loss of 2% of the adult females in a population to additive mortality, such as roads, may result in a long, irreversible decline to extinction.

A former student of mine at the University of Maryland, Susan Hagood, conducted her PhD research on the eastern box turtle in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. One of her study sites was Wheaton Regional Park, where she collected data on box turtle mortality resulting from roads. During field seasons of 2005-2006, Susan found that female turtles were killed on roads in greater proportion than their distribution in surrounding populations. Females in search of egg-laying sites tend to move more than males. In doing so, they are exposed to greater risks in crossing roads. Road mortality in Wheaton Regional Park fell within the 2-3% range believed to be inconsistent with population growth, thereby presenting a serious threat to the long-term survival of box turtles in the park.

Dr. Paula Henry, a researcher at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, and one of her colleagues studied the eastern box turtle in Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C. Rock Creek is one of the largest national parks in a major city in the United States. The population density of turtles (0.97–1.61 tur-



gles per ha) was low when compared with nearby areas of Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (8.3–8.9 turtles per ha) and Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia (10.25 turtles per ha). In Rock Creek Park, males outnumbered females more than five to one. Dr. Henry and her colleague found no significant evidence of natural recruitment into the population. The old age structure, little productivity and recruitment, low population density, removal

as pets, and high potential for substantial road mortality, particularly for females, led these investigators to conclude that long-term survival of box turtles in the park was uncertain.

Several measures might assist box turtle populations in developed areas. Areas in which turtles are known to attempt road crossings on a regular basis might be targeted for improvements, such as addition of culvert/fence systems that provide turtles with alternatives to at-grade crossings. Signage cautioning motorists to be on the lookout for turtles crossing the road, and traffic calming structures, such as speed humps or bumps that reduce vehicle speed, also may be effective in helping to reduce mortality of box turtles on roads. Further research on the issue, leading to better management practices, may help to ensure survival of populations in developed areas. I hope so. 🐢

## Friends Welcome New Board Members

The Friends of Patuxent welcomed two new board members who were elected in May, **Ken Cohen** and **Dave Zahren**. Ken is the current president of the Prince George’s Audubon Society and has been a member of various Audubon chapters for more than 40 years. He is a retired lawyer who was also a federal prosecutor in the Western District of New York state where he had a long history of enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. He has been a birder for more than 50 years.

The Friends also welcome Dave Zahren, a former science teacher, an award-winning writer, producer, and host of television science and public affairs programs, and a meteorologist for the Washington, DC, ABC affiliate, WJLA-TV. Dave was chosen as Maryland’s Teacher in Space candidate, one of 100 candidates selected from 40,000 applicants nationwide to vie for a flight aboard the Challenger. He is a senior instructional specialist for Prince George’s Schools Office of Television and is in his 8th season as host of Baltimore’s popular “It’s Academic” TV show on WJZ-TV.

# Visiting Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

Mary Beth Mattison

One of my first visits to Patuxent Wildlife Research Center was in November, 2012. My sister and I went to the Holiday Bazaar and bought several gifts at the booths and the well-stocked gift shop. We also bought a solid geode and watched as a man cut it open for us, hoping it wouldn't shatter while he cut it, and it didn't. My sister took one half and I took the other. I kept mine on a shelf at home and often looked at the minerals inside.

A few years later, one of my great-nephews became fascinated with geodes. He was about 7 at the time. When I heard of his interest, I gave him my geode. I wrote down the names of the minerals inside and sent that information along, too. He was thrilled to get it. He's 9 now, and his interest in geodes hasn't waned.



*Tree showing beaver damage*

In November, 2017, several of my relatives and I went to the Holiday Bazaar. The youngest relative was a toddler at the time. He especially enjoyed seeing the American kestrel and the Eastern Screech Owl that the volunteers showed us.

The toddler eventually got tired, so his parents took him home for a nap. But my sister, sister-in-law and I stayed



*Beautiful foliage along the tram trail*

and rode the tram on a tour of the Refuge. It was crisp and sunny outside – a perfect autumn day. The volunteer leading the tour made our tram-ride educational, interesting, and fun.

It was a memorable day, spending time with my family at a beautiful Refuge. It was actually one of my favorite days last year and I hope to go to the Holiday Bazaar as often as I can from now on. 🐦

Photos by Mary Beth Mattison

## The Game Is On.... From the Wildlife Images Bookstore

By Evelyn Kirby

With the hot humid weather of July, August and September it's a good time to stay indoors near the air conditioner. While you are inside trying to stay cool it's the perfect opportunity to pick up a game or puzzle to entertain your family from Wildlife Images Bookstore in the Refuge Visitor Center.

Here is part of the selection for all ages to challenge your mind and have fun while you stay cool.

### Puzzles

**The Towering Tree Puzzle**, for ages 3 and up - Join adorable critters in endless combinations to tell stories and provide hours of entertainment.

**The Cornell Lab of Ornithology** – Four different puzzles, each with a QR code to download in order to hear bird songs. Two puzzles are 100 pieces of one bird, and two are poster size with multiple birds.

**Wooden "Cut-out" puzzles** – These big piece puzzles are ideal for toddler's first puzzle.

### Games

**Match Games** – The bookstore has a variety of "match" games with animals and birds for players of all ages.

**Playing cards** – Each deck of cards has 54 different creatures with descriptive information about each. You can learn "fun facts" while you

wait for your opponent to play.

**Bingo – Bug Bingo and Bird Bingo** are two beautifully illustrated games.

They bring a fun and educational twist to the traditional game of bingo.

These games and puzzle plus many more are available in Wildlife Images Bookstore. Many items are small and transportable, an ideal gift to carry in your suitcase when taking a trip.

Remember, your purchases help Friends of Patuxent fund special projects at the Refuge. 🐦



# Little Known Facts About Patuxent Picnic Ground and Barbeque Pit

by Matthew C. Perry

**D**uring the mid-1940s, after much of the early construction work on buildings and roads was completed, the Refuge staff built a picnic ground for employees. The area located near the present Service Buildings was complete with a grill and oven under a wooden shelter, an open large barbeque area, and a Spring Reservoir. The site selected for the picnic area was probably chosen because of the location of the spring, which provided excellent drinking water. The site was equipped with two outhouses, installed with porcelain toilets. An interesting addition to the area was a large circular camp fire site approximately 30 feet in diameter and made of concrete blocks. The site probably was used for many stories and tales, that if known would reveal much about Patuxent history.

A Fish and Wildlife Service picnic was held at the Refuge at the picnic ground in the early summer of 1948. A softball game between the Refuge staff and the Central Office staff occurred before the barbeque, most likely on the Refuge grounds. The staff from the Refuge won the game by a slight margin over the Central Office, which made the event especially successful for Patuxent employees.

It is unknown how many times the picnic ground was used for social events, but in the early 1970s, the area was in total disrepair and appeared that activities had been absent for at least a decade. In the late 1970s, Montpelier Housing Development was constructed on the western border of Patuxent and some homes were built within 100 feet of the picnic ground. The development also brought erosion and trash to the site. The site has not been disturbed over the decades and all remnants of the picnic




*Constructing barbeque pit and spring reservoir for the headquarters picnic ground, mid-1940s.*



*Picnic ground grill and oven prior to construction of the shelter house, mid-1940s.*

area still exist. The spring reservoir is still there, but now used by frogs and not humans.

In the 1990s, when Dr. Jim Kushlan was director of Patuxent and attempt was made to have more social functions for the Patuxent staff. A gazebo

was constructed between Gabrielson and Merriam Laboratories and several Patuxent picnics were held in this area. Unfortunately, the Patuxent Employees Recreation Association became inactive in the mid 2000s and social activities have been conducted only at irregular intervals in recent years. 



# Summer Exhibits in the Hollingsworth Gallery

Faith Leahy-Thielke, Patuxent Volunteer

This summer in the gallery, we'll enjoy the photography and artwork of Daniel Brizuela in July; Mark Hendricks in August, and prior exhibitor, Ikumi Kayama in September.

Daniel Brizuela grew up in rural southern Mexico – Veracruz on the Gulf Coast. He writes that his childhood was filled with the wonders and beauties found in his surroundings – wild tropical forests. His parents, American and Mexican, added the gifts of bilingualism and biculturalism, as well as providing National Geographic magazines and one fuzzy TV channel for wildlife documentaries at home. Brizuela lived in Hawaii before coming stateside to the University of Wyoming where he earned degrees in photojournalism and wildlife biology. Later, at the University of Maryland, he received a Master's in conservation biology and presently works at the World Wildlife Fund in D.C.

Photography has been Brizuela's lifelong avocation – and wherever he goes, he usually has his camera with him. His favorite subjects have always been nature and wildlife, but landscapes, travel, architecture, as well as microscopic life in pond water – and any “incarnation of science and technology photography,” fascinate him as well. He wrote that he likes to tell people that he's “an explorer by conviction, biologist by education, (and) tree hugger by occupation.” The Hollingsworth showing is Brizuela's first true public exhibition. He's “excited and grateful” for the opportunity, and we certainly are at the prospect.

If you're not on vacation in August, Mark Hendricks' work will make you want to go. His photography is gorgeous and demonstrates a love of his home state and Maryland's exquisite natural beauty. Hendricks is a former


marine mammal biologist and animal rescuer. A writer as well, concerned with conservation and environmental issues, he writes that he uses his camera as a storytelling device. He has degrees in philosophy and psychology from UMBC and Towson University, and one of his “hats” is adjunct faculty at Towson. He is also a fellow in the International League of Conservation Writers.

Hendricks' “projects” featured on his website include the Piping Plover, the Delmarva fox squirrel, the Shenandoah salamander, and litter (Get trashed!). He says also that current work focuses on the “diverse habitats” of the Chesapeake watershed and Maryland's coastal bays. His first book, “Natural Wonders of Asateague”, was released in June of 2017. It's an amazing and spectacular collection of 190 color photographs that record beach and inland forest through four seasons.

Hendricks' images and articles have appeared in numerous magazines – including “Africa Geographic” – pictures furnished from a fruitful trip abroad. His work “graces the walls” of many public and private collections. They are available for sale in many formats, including numbered and signed prints. In whatever guise, they are spectacular.

We were first introduced to the work of medical and scientific illustrator, Ikumi Kayama, in March of 2016. That was just about the time she became riveted on the eagle cam set up in the National Arboretum. She wrote that watching and painting the eggs and then eaglets and their parents was fascinating. Daily for a couple of hours, by “scribbling and drawing,” she was able to take a break from the slow, tedious, “meditative” task of recreat-

ing scientifically accurate figures for publication in journals and textbooks. Kayama also spent time in Denver as a resident artist at the Botanical Garden and recorded the blooming of their Titan Arum, “Stinky.”

Kayama holds degrees from the University of Georgia (Fine Arts in Scientific Illustration) and Johns Hopkins (Master of Arts in Medical Illustration). Check out her Ted Talk online in which she explains the distinction and necessity for these types of images rather than photographic. She uses color and focus to explain to laymen what physicians try to communicate – often in “incomprehensible medical terminology”. At Studio Kayama's website I was intrigued and informed about strokes from her illustration of the three major types – something I'd wondered about since my neighbor's near-fatal experience. Drawings like these have won Kayama her Prose Awards in the clinical medicine textbook category. She is also serving as vice president of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators which involves planning workshops and conference. I'm delighted she has time in September to show off some of her work at Hollingsworth – she wrote “mostly bald eagles.” 



# Bowie Green Expo

Joyce Wineland, Patuxent Volunteer

**A**nn Hodgson, Ziaul Zannat Ahmed, and Joyce Wineland participated in the Bowie Green Expo on April 14, 2018 from noon to 4:00 at the Kenhill Center in Bowie, MD.

Our table was in the kids' room, away from most of the expo activity. On the opposite side of the room was an activity for making butterfly wings that the children could wear. Along side of us was a face painter and on the other side was Wheaton Regional Park. The latter was complementary to our exhibit since they have a similar mission and exhibits. They brought several live animals (including an owl, snake, and turtle) and pelts.

Our exhibit included mounts of a fox & a beaver, pelts of a beaver & a grey fox, turtle shells, and deer antlers. We distributed several kinds of brochures about Patuxent Research Refuge and the monthly schedule of public programs. We also gave out tattoos of Patuxent (Joyce's took over 2 weeks to wash away!) We also had a sign-up sheet for the visitors to receive emails about our programs and obtained dozens of signatures.

Most visitors said they were not aware of Patuxent.

Exhibitors were positioned throughout the Kenhill building and grounds, with the bulk of them in the auditorium and outdoors.

The Bowie Lions Club provided lunch for the exhibitors, for which we were exceedingly grateful. 🐦



*Some friendly greeters. Calf and goats in pen outside the building*



*Could I be any cuter?*



*Ziaul and Ann setting up Patuxent's table*


Photos by Joyce Wineland

## Keeping the Memory of Chan Robbins Alive

Lowell W. Adams, Ph.D., CWB®,  
Board Member, Friends of Patuxent

Many of you knew Chan Robbins before he passed away March 20, 2017 at the age of 98. He was an internationally known and respected ornithologist. Chan spent his entire professional career at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and, even after retirement, came in to the office 2-3 days per week well into his 90s. Those of you not familiar with his accomplishments can learn about them on the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center website (<https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov>). Click on Chan's photograph on the homepage.



In consultation with Chan's family, Friends of Patuxent established the Chandler S. Robbins Memorial Endowment to honor his legacy and love of birds. A committee has been established with representatives from Chan's family, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Patuxent Research Refuge, and Friends of Patuxent to review and select projects to keep Chan's memory alive. If you would like to assist by contributing to the endowment (tax deductible), please go to the Friends of Patuxent website (<http://www.friendsofpatuxent.org>) and click on Chan's photograph. 

## Friends of Patuxent Wildlife Holiday Bazaar

Saturday, November 3, 2018

9 AM to 3 PM

National Wildlife Visitor Center

### VENDORS WANTED

- \$15+15% of sales for a table/space
- additional table/space - \$15
- All event proceeds go to support Patuxent Research Refuge and Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.



If you are interested in being a vendor or know someone that would be interested in being a vendor contact

Mary Ann Hartnett at [2ufrommah@gmail.com](mailto:2ufrommah@gmail.com)

## Calling for Your Articles and Photos Please

We're looking for articles—your articles—and cool photos for future Friends newsletters. You don't have to be a professional writer. Just jot down a paragraph or two about a nature topic dear to your heart. Or send us a photo or two of a beautiful plant, wildlife, or people at a Refuge or Friends events.

Please consider sending us your article and/or your photos for your next newsletter. Make sure to title your article and include your name and volunteer position. When you send it, put Newsletter Article in the Subject Line of your email. We'd like to hear from YOU. Here's where to send them: [ross.feldner@verizon.net](mailto:ross.feldner@verizon.net) **Thank you so much!**



# The Mysterious Franklin Tree at Patuxent Research Refuge

Matthew C. Perry

There once was an ornamental tree at Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Maryland, that had a famous, but mysterious past history. The native tree was planted at Patuxent in the early 1950s with its origin being from a nursery. The fact that it came from a nursery is important, as this native tree did not exist in the wild at that time. Many other ornamentals were transplanted from the local woods and fields during the 1940s as part of the landscaping of Patuxent following dedication in 1939. This mysterious tree, however, was the Franklin Tree, which was discovered in a small 2-3 acre area of Georgia in 1765. By the early 1800s, the tree was extinct in the wild, but preserved at nurseries from seeds collected in Georgia in the late 1700s.

The trees in Georgia were discovered by John and William Bartram, a father and son botanist team, and described in the 1791 book *Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida*, by William Bartram. The book is commonly called *Bartram's Travels* and along with botanical findings includes encounters with wildlife and Native Americans. The tree was named for John Bartram's friend, Benjamin Franklin, and given the scientific name of *Franklinia alatamaha*. The species name is for the Altamaha River in this coastal area of Georgia and the river originally was spelled with the extra "a." This tree species, commonly called Franklinia, is in the Tea Family (Theaceae) and related to the genus *Camelia*, *Gordonia*, and *Stewartia* in North America and the genus *Shima* in Asia.

The Franklin tree at Patuxent lived about 10 years, but for unknown reasons died and was not replaced. How-



*Snowden Hall in 1953 showing Franklinia tree to left side of front porch.*

ever, while alive it received attention from the staff and visitors interested in unique plants. The cause of death for the Franklin tree at Patuxent could have been due to soil conditions as it has been reported as one of the problems with growing this species in other areas. The habitat in Georgia where the tree existed naturally was described by Brooke Meanley in his book "*Swamps, River Bottoms and Canebrakes*" as a three-acre sandhill bog or branch swamp of the Altamaha River.

Causes of the extinction of the Franklin Tree in the wild have been attributed to fire, flood, fungal disease (from cotton cultivation), and over collection by plant collectors in the late 1700s. Meanley considers nurserymen in England as the main cause of extinction due to their collectors, who shipped live plants to England. In the 1700s, there was great desire in Eng-

land and Europe to have rare plant specimens from the new world.

Mr. Meanley illustrated his discussion of the Franklin tree with a photo of its 3-inch blossom, which he said reaches full bloom in Maryland during August and September. He does not state where the photo was taken, but it was most likely the tree that existed at Patuxent and other photos occur of this tree in bloom. Well-known photographer Luther Goldman also took a photo of a Franklin tree blossom in 1976, but the location of this photo is unknown.

Although this plant is considered difficult to transplant, once established it could live for 100 years. The Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia states on their website that over 1000 locations now occur in the United States where the tree occurs. One beautiful specimen that I photographed in bloom in Sep-

tember 2017 occurs in my home town, Bristol, Rhode Island, at the world-famous Blithewold estate. This tree, which is about 20 feet tall, was one of three gifts of trees given to Marjorie Lyon, the owner of the estate, to celebrate her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Its flower has a great aroma and docents at the estate like to note the fact that the tree is extinct in the wild. This specimen in Rhode Island may be one of the northernmost live specimens of the tree.

Recently I asked the Patuxent volunteer botanist, Mr. Bill Harms, if there was a specimen of the Patuxent tree in our herbarium. He could not find a specimen, and in fact there is no record of the tree in the herbarium files or in the list of Patuxent plants published by Dr. Neil Hotchkiss or Mr. Bill Stickel. This fact surprised Mr. Harms and me, but with further electronic searches Mr. Harms found a herbarium specimen of the Patuxent *Franklinia* tree in the herbarium of the Georgia Southern University. Interestingly this specimen in bloom in August was given to the University by our own Mr. Brooke Meanley in 1953.

Although the Franklin tree at Patuxent no longer exists on the 13,000-acre refuge, the stories of this plant are still told, and, in an important way, demonstrate the need for conservation of habitat and protection of rare species in the wild before they become extinct from human activities. Fortunately, the seeds of the Franklin tree that William Bartram brought back to Philadelphia in 1777 survived, and the propagated plants have provided more seeds to maintain this mysteriously interesting and fragrantly beautiful plant. Recently, a board member of the Friends of Patuxent, Mr. Dale Magnum, became interested in this tree. He purchased two specimens from a nursery and planted one in his own nursery (Bell Nursery, Burtonsville, MD) and gave the other one to me. If we are able to keep them alive we would like some day to return one to Snowden Hall and recreate some memories of the interesting past history of the Hall and this mysterious plant. 🐦



**A blooming specimen of *Franklinia* from Patuxent located in the herbarium at the Georgia Southern University and given to them by Mr. Brooke Meanley in August 1953.**



**Children of Patuxent staff members in front of *Franklinia* tree in 1950s.**



**Painting of flower of Franklin Tree from Bartram's Travels.**



**Blossom of *Franklinia* at Patuxent, 1950s. Photo by Brooke Meanley.**

## The Wildlife Images Bookstore Needs Volunteers!

Spend a few hours a week in the book store—meeting other volunteers & staff in the Visitor Center; greeting visitors in the shop; and helping customers find that perfect souvenir of their visit. Bookstore hours are flexible (weekdays or weekends) and training is provided. Contact the bookstore manager, Linda Shive at [wibookstore@friendsofpatuxent.org](mailto:wibookstore@friendsofpatuxent.org).

# Night on the Wild Side

Photos: Executive Office of the Governor, Photographer: Anthony DePanise



Guests enjoy the Hollingsworth Gallery.



Night on the Wild Side Chair, Charles Deegan greets Lieutenant Governor of Maryland Boyd Rutherford.



John French accepts check from Friends of Patuxent Chair Rich Dolesh.



Frank Cockrell holding down the front desk.



Night on the Wild Side committee member Jeanne Latham shares a laugh with Lieutenant Governor of Maryland Boyd Rutherford.



Rodney Stotts of Rodney's Raptors with one of his favorite hawks.

Photos: Nell Baldacchino and Ross Feldner



The food was “otterly” delicious



Thanks to our great bartenders.



Great music provided by Chuggalug.



Night on the Wild Side Chair, Charles Deegan working hard as auctioneer.



All aboard for the Night on the Wild Side tram ride.



Kids are fascinated by the diving ducks.



Jennifer Malpass showing guests the USGS’s bird banding display.



All our guests took home a free pollinator plant courtesy of Dale Mangum and Bell Nursery.



Before you leave, don’t forget your goody bag including new Friends of Patuxent teeshirt.

## Thank You, Friends!

Our 3rd Night on the Wild Side was a hit! This was due to a very active committee that spent months on planning and execution. Some committee members took on key roles. Ross Feldner designed the tickets, program booklet, t-shirts, and signage; Ken Lavish kept track of the invitees and reservations; Barbara Richman secured the caterers; Dale Mangum provided six-packs of seedlings for our guests; Stephanie Everett and Nell Baldacchino coordinated the volunteers and logistics; and Frank Cockrell did a great job rounding up ads. Research Center liaison Shannon Beliew and Research Refuge liaison Diana Ogilvie kept communications flowing.

As chairman of the event, I was involved in many areas. But one person more than any other deserves credit for ensuring the success of this event: Jeanne Latham! Jeanne kept us all on track during the planning process, making sure the agenda covered everything and that we set a timetable to accomplish everything. My “day job” can be a source of distraction, so it was great to know that Jeanne was there to “nudge” me if a task slipped my mind or a deadline was approaching. She also made sure that the myriad details that accompany a project like this were taken care of, either ensuring they had been delegated to someone or seeing to them herself. I am not a “detail” person, and I am very grateful to Jeanne for taking on this aspect of the execution!

So let me take this opportunity on behalf of us all to thank Jeanne for her hard work. Many, many thanks, Jeanne, for all the things you have done, and continue to do, for Friends of Patuxent!!

Charlie Deegan, Chairman  
2018 Night on the Wild Side

# Putting Conservation into Action: The Friends of Patuxent Annual Pollinator Festival

By: Rich Dolesh

There is a growing public awareness across the United States that pollinator species are in trouble. Numerous scientific studies have shown that pollinators such as many wild bee species and the much loved monarch butterfly have declined precipitously over the past 20 years. Many factors are cited in the decline—pesticides, loss of habitat, weather extremes, and more, but the fact is that pollinators are in trouble. The good news, however, is that conservation efforts can help them recover, and the even better news is that virtually everyone can help, even at the smallest scale.

In recognition of the plight of pollinators and to educate the public and bring new visitors to the refuge, the Friends of Patuxent held the first of what has become an annual event to promote the conservation of pollinators in September 2016. The first event, the Monarch Festival, was held at the North Tract and attracted about 125 people. The event featured exhibits, games for kids, a bookstore display, nature hikes, and milkweed plantings by volunteers. Building on the success of the first festival, the Friends decided to make this an annual event. In 2017, the scope of the festival was broadened to be about more than just monarchs and to include information and education about all pollinators. It proved to be an even bigger success with about 200 attendees. Volunteers and Friends board members along with Patuxent Refuge staff assisted with the activities, led nature walks, and supervised the attendees in planting milkweed in suitable habitat areas.

In September 2017, the Pollinator Festival was a great success with more than 300 people attending, mostly



families with children. Attendees, especially kids, were fascinated by watching monarch caterpillars on the underside of milkweed plant leaves go into their characteristic “J” shape and pupate into their chrysalises where they remain for 8-15 days before emerging as adults. Other kids raptly watched monarch pupae emerge from their chrysalises as adults. After the wings of the adults dried, Sparky Sparks recorded data about the adults and tagged them with a tiny paper dot, much as a bird is banded, before their first flight. Kids watched in wonder as the adult monarchs took their first flight to join the remarkable multi-generation migration that spans up to 3,000 miles.

The third annual Friends of Patuxent Pollinator Festival will take place on Saturday, September 22, 2018 at the



[North Tract](#), Wildlife Viewing Area, 10:00am-2:00pm. Please join us—you can volunteer to help with the activities, help distribute free common milkweed plants and seeds, and join in the nature walks and tagging demonstrations. If you can't volunteer that day, bring your friends and family, children, and grandchildren. It is truly an interesting, interactive and free event that educates kids and adults alike about monarchs and other pollinators and the national conservation effort to preserve them. 🦋

**2018 Friends of Patuxent  
Pollinator Festival  
Saturday, September 22,  
10:00am - 2:00pm  
Patuxent Research Refuge  
[North Tract](#)  
230 Bald Eagle Drive  
Laurel, MD 20724**



## Patuxent Goes Wild

*Continued from page 1*

2015 to make the business community, other civic and community leaders, and area politicians more aware of the Refuge and all that it offers the community. The Board also hoped to attract new members to the Friends of Patuxent and generate local goodwill and support.

This year's *Wild* night was another great success! We wanted to raise awareness of the Refuge and Research Center among those who may not realize what a local treasure and unique national resource we have in our own "backyard." We wanted to show local leaders what the Refuge has to offer, and among the attendees this year were Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford, former governor Parris Glendening, MD Secretary of the Environment Ben Grumbles, MD Secretary of Appointments Chris Cavey, MD Special Secretary of Smart Growth Wendi Peters, Anne Arundel County Executive Steve Schuh, Prince George's County Councilwoman Mary Lehman, and Mayor of Laurel Craig Moe. Raising the Wildlife Refuge's profile among these state and county leaders will be invaluable. May they be inspired to take advantage of the opportunities it offers, as well as to invite their associates, friends and families to experience the Refuge!

All of our guests enjoyed a broad range of experiences that highlighted what Patuxent has to offer. The conservation tram rides are still a guest favorite. Inside the Visitors Center, Rodney Stotts and his raptors were another hit. Who can resist a chance to see a hawk or observe a screech owl "up close and personal!" Weeks later, an attendee told me how happy she is to now know that the pretty bird in her yard is a male Rose-breasted grosbeak! Another person told me he was surprised at how great a time he had that night. (I think they call that a back-handed compliment!) He is into birds, too, and is excited to now have a chart that shows him the names of his



**Guests enjoyed catered food from 7 different restaurants**



**An American Kestrel kept a close eye on the event.**

feathery visitors. Friends Board Member Dale Mangum provided a special treat for attendees again this year. As each guest left, he or she received a six-pack of seedlings native to Maryland to plant at home. All of us went away with a renewed awareness that we need to "unplug" and get out and enjoy the Great Outdoors more! We gained some new Friends and donors that night, too.

New this year was the band, "Chuggalug," who provided great music on the patio. They also were a hit!

Delicious refreshments were provided by Absolutely Perfect in Elkridge;

Bayside Bull in Edgewater; Green Plate Catering in Wheaton; Langways All American Sports Bar and Grill in Gambrills; LaPrima in College Park and Columbia; Maggiano's Little Italy in Columbia; and Three Brothers in Bladensburg. Please patronize these restaurants and thank them for their support of our wildlife research refuge!

Night on the Wild Side committee member Ross Feldner designed a new tee shirt to commemorate this year's event. It is available for sale in the Wildlife Images bookstore. Check it out! As always, Friends' members will receive a 10% discount on their purchases.

We couldn't have pulled this off without a lot of hands! Volunteers maintained lists of invited guests and those who RSVP'd that they would be attending; made name tags, welcomed our guests and staffed the registration table; coordinated logistics; designed the program booklet and a new tee shirt; and stuffed and distributed goodie bags. They staffed the exhibits and tables and, most importantly, made our guests feel at home and encouraged them to join the Friends of Patuxent.

Event Chairman Charlie Deegan thanks **EVERYONE** for making this such a special and rewarding evening. 🦅

## Friends of Patuxent Wildlife Holiday Bazaar

The 2018 Holiday Bazaar will be held **Saturday, November 3 from 9 AM to 3 PM** at the National Wildlife Visitor Center.

The Bazaar committee needs your help as we get closer to the event.

How to help:

- Join the committee - we need volunteers to:
  - Work on advertising the Bazaar. A resource list is available and most of the work could be done online from home.
  - Manage the Friends of Patuxent Holiday Bazaar Facebook page
- Bring in donations for Baldy's Bargains - it's not too early.

When you drop donations at the Visitor Center, PLEASE remember to fill out a donation form and make a copy for yourself. Best sellers: books, CDs, DVDs, gift items, small housewares, and holiday items. We will NOT be accepting bed linens, posters, flat art, or large frames.

The deadline for donations is **October 22**.

- LIKE and SHARE us on FACEBOOK at Friends of Patuxent Holiday Bazaar.
- Post the Bazaar on your local **Nextdoor** site.
- Mark your calendar and come to help
  - Friday, November 2 - set up, vendor set up, and decorate
  - drop off baked goods and other goodies for the Bake Sale
  - drop off house plant donations for the plant corner
  - Saturday, November 3 - THE BIG DAY - volunteers needed.

For more information contact Brenda Stone at [stonesoop@comcast.net](mailto:stonesoop@comcast.net) or 301-490-0384.



## Visitor Center Front Garden Gets A Makeover

Diana Ogilvie



**M**any thanks to the many staff and volunteers who helped with the overgrown shrub removal in front of the Visitor Center as the Friends prepared for their annual Night on the Wild Side event including: Adam Conger, Rick Kreitzer, Mike McConnell, Abe Lopez, Wendy Whittemore, Frances Kent, Ann Coren, Cathy Kuehne, Sue Priftis, Marie Delaney, Don Luery, Don Tannenbaum, Nathan Rios-Colon, Diego Ramirez and Ann Cottle. The front area will now be prepared for a lower maintenance native plant garden. 🐦

## Partnership Preserves Critical Data Set for the Bird Banding Laboratory

Continued from page 4

*gration. And a school system gets to successfully train students to enter the workforce.”*

In December, the partnership was nominated for the prestigious USGS Diversity Award. This past fall the USGS Headquarters rolled out a national version of the BBL’s program called the **S**econdary **T**ransition to **E**mployment **P**rogram – **U**SGS **P**artnership (STEP-UP) program. In January, they expanded to California where students will begin projects at USGS’s Menlo Park campus. USGS is also developing STEP-UP programs with the University of Cincinnati in Ohio and with partners in Denver, Colorado.

These programs make critical data available to our scientists and teach



**A returning STEP volunteer and his teacher demonstrate the Bird Banding Laboratory’s project for preserving historic data to the 2017-2018 new STEP students, October 2017**

fiscal responsibility, as volunteers achieve measurable work and build a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

*“I feel so fortunate to be able to work with birds, and historic banding data, as well as some amazing people. It’s my hope that these programs continue to serve as a national model for inclusion both inside and outside the USGS.”*

~Nancy McAllister, BBL Biologist 

### FRIENDS OF PATUXENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

- Richard Dolesh, *Chair*
- Jeanne Latham, *Vice-Chair*
- Clarence “Sparky” Sparks, *Secretary*
- Robert Schroeder, *Treasurer*
- Lowell Adams, *Director*
- Ken Cohen, *Director*
- Charles Deegan, *Director*
- Kenneth Lavish, *Director*
- Dale Mangum, *Director*
- Matthew Perry, *Director*
- Barbara Richman, *Director*
- Dave Zahren, *Director*

### LIAISONS

- Diana Ogilvie, Patuxent Research Refuge Liaison
- Shannon Believ, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Liaison
- Douglas Meister, Esq., General Counsel

### FRIEND OF PATUXENT BOARD MEETINGS

Friends Board meetings will be held at 5 PM at the Visitor Center on Jan. 16, 2018; Feb. 20, 2018; Mar. 20, 2018; Apr. 17, 2018; May 15, 2018; Jun. 19, 2018; Jul. 17, 2018; and Sep. 18, 2018. Dates, location and times are subject to change.

# JOIN TODAY!

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*(E-mail address will not be sold or shared. It will be used for Friends and Refuge announcements only.)*

Phone: (opt.) \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal

Individual (\$25/yr), gift: FOP bookmark (or other)  Family (\$35/yr), gift: FOP decal (or other)

Contributor (\$75/yr), gift: History of Patuxent DVD (or other)  Sponsor (\$250/yr), gift: FOP hat (or other)

Life (\$500), gift: FOP shirt (or other) Please  size:  S  M  L  XL  XXL  XXXL

Life-65+ (\$300), gift: FOP shirt (or other) Please  size:  S  M  L  XL  XXL  XXXL

Corporate \$1,000 Gift: 1/4 page ad in the Friends newsletter for one year. (4 Issues).

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Make check to “Friends of Patuxent” and mail to address on reverse side of this page.

Check here if you prefer not to have a gift, and instead have your entire dues support Friends of Patuxent.

Check here if you would like save a tree by reading our quarterly newsletter online.



**Friends of Patuxent**



## Friends of Patuxent

National Wildlife Visitor Center  
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop  
Laurel MD, 20708-4011

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## Friends of Patuxent

National Wildlife Visitor Center  
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop  
Laurel MD, 20708-4011

Phone: 301-497-5789  
[www.friendsofpatuxent.org](http://www.friendsofpatuxent.org)

# WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN!

**Friends of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and Patuxent Research Refuge, Inc.** is a designated Section 501(c)(3) public charity. It is a membership organization whose mission is to financially support the research of the PWRC and the environmental education, outreach and recreational missions at the PRR. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Maryland Charitable Organization Registration-2348.

***Your membership/contribution helps support the mission and programs at Patuxent. You also receive the following benefits:***

- Quarterly newsletter (mailed on request or go to [www.friendsofpatuxent.org](http://www.friendsofpatuxent.org))
- 10% discount in our Wildlife Images bookstore and other area refuge bookstores
- Attendance at member functions
- Participation in on-site educational programs
- Sense of accomplishment in providing many opportunities for wildlife-related recreation, education and research

*(Application on reverse side)*