



## Pompeston Creek Watershed Association

P.O. Box 2883 Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

Phone 856-235-9204 fax 856-235-1949 [www.pompestoncreek.org](http://www.pompestoncreek.org)

*Our Mission is to promote the restoration and conservation of the natural resources of the Pompeston Creek watershed; to protect and conserve animal life, forests and other plant life, water sources and soils through education, scientific investigations and research.*

Spring 2008

# WATERSHED NEWS

Volume 56

### Upcoming Events:

- April 19 - Pompeston Woods Park Restoration, 10 to Noon
- April 20 - Delran Earth Day (Amico Island) PCWA Stormwater Education Program, 1 to 3 pm
- April 22 – Baker School Restoration, 3:30 pm
- April 23 - Teaberry Run Basin and Streambank Restoration, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm
- April 24 - Burlington Co. Stormwater Forum, 8:30 am to 4:00 pm, NJ Eco-Complex
- April 26 - Riverton Rd. Basin Restoration - Preparation, 9:00 am, with MFS
- April 26 - Palmyra Cove Earth Day, 10 am to 2 pm
- April 27 - Pompeston Woods Park Restoration, 1 to 3 pm
- April 28 - Cinnaminson High School Woods and Creek Cleanup, 9am to 2pm
- May 3 - Riverton Rd. Basin planting, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, with MFS
- May 17 - Bird Walk with Tom Bailey Taylor's Farm, Cinnaminson
- May 18 - Maple Dawson Restoration, 1 - 3 pm
- May 28 and 29 - PCWA's "Wetland Wonders" at Moorestown Upper Elementary School, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm
- June 5 - **DOUG TALLAMY PRESENTATION "GARDENING FOR LIFE,"** 7:00 pm, Moorestown Friends Meeting-house **Please see page 4 for more information about Dr. Tallamy**
- June 7 - Pompeston Woods Park Restoration, 10 to Noon
- June 8 Burlington County Earth Fair
- June 21 Palmyra Cover Summerfest

### Wildlife Wonders in the Watershed

Ahhh...Spring has come, and with it, a myriad of miracles! New life is all around us, from the Spring Peepers in the Pompeston headwater areas to Great Horned owlets in the teeming tidal marsh—the watershed is ALIVE!!! The sights, sounds, and smells of Spring are so welcome after the grayness of winter.

The first signs of Spring I notice up here in the headwaters are the peeps and trills of Spring Peepers and NJ Chorus frogs in the vernal pools near my house. Music to my ears, these began on warm days in February this year. If you'd like to hear or see them, please call (856-235-9204) and come visit one evening. They are amazing.

And this year, we are proud stewards of a pair of Bald Eagles!!! Imagine, the little Pompeston Creek chosen as home by our spectacular national bird. What a sight to see!!!

This burst of life again reminds me that we must be vigilant and dedicated in our stewardship of this watershed and this Earth. It is our home, and we are so lucky to share it with so many incredible creatures.

**Debbie Lord, Moorestown**



The View from our Room... I wonder how many different ways the Pompeston Creek is thought of; to many people it may be just a stream behind their homes. To others it is our watershed, to me it provides constant comfort. I get lost in its view and the world it provides us. Spring time is wonderful because the leaves and grasses haven't obstructed our view, so it is a wide open wonderland. Let me try and describe what we see.....

Inside the comforts of our home on the edge of the Pompeston Creek across from Hunters Farm and behind Cinnaminson High School, our view opens up to reveal the wonders in this tidal marsh. On any given day I can easily get "side tracked," that's how I explain to my boss when I am 15 minutes later than expected. "Today was special," I say, "Wood Ducks, March 12th, first sighting". The wood ducks make an appearance every year this time as well as the Mergansers. We mark it on our calendars so we will be on the look out for them next year. One day as I patiently watched and saw woodpeckers, hawks, mallards, blue herons, falcons and what is it? ....looks like a muskrat but I know it is not (may be a nutria?), wandering along the waters edge.

Today is the last day of March and we saw for the first time six pairs of green winged teal and a yellow shafted flicker. A slow moving canoe cruised by also. Tidal waters bring different species, some like high tide, some low tide.

As darkness falls, things settle down and it seems the birds disappear...wait, I hear the "hoot, hoot, hoot" of the great horned owls, keeping watch over the night.

Not bad for just a creek. I can't wait to see what passes us by next. As we strive to protect this great creek, only time will tell what else will be passing by. NEWS FLASH -- April 4!!! I'm the proud new "mom" of three precious Great Horned Owl fluffballs!

**Jill Croft, Riverton**

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Turtle Talk... Each year, from the end of May through the month of June, the female snapping turtles that live in the Pompeston Creek watershed begin their annual trek from the creek to find suitable nesting sites. They look for spots that are easy to dig in, and that are above the high water mark.

In the past, this was not much of a problem. However, with the increasing development of formerly open spaces, the turtles are finding it more and more difficult to find secluded spots for their nests. This puts them at risk from humans in various ways. People pick them up and try to keep them as pets. This is actually illegal, and the turtles often die because they are deprived of their natural habitat and are not fed the proper foods.

Domestic pets, cats and dogs, think the turtles are playthings, and often kill them. One of the most visible, and tragic, consequences of the turtles' contact with humans is the death of many turtles on the roadways each year, due to being struck by cars. Development has also pushed the turtles' natural predators into smaller and smaller areas, and fewer hatchlings are able to survive even their first trip from nest to water.

As a result of these problems, the snapping turtle population in our creek is dwindling. I'm asked all the time, "So what? Why should we be worried about snapping turtles? After all, they're ugly, they're nasty, and they eat little baby ducks! And what have they done for me lately?" To which I respond: First of all, ugly is in the eye of the beholder. Personally, I think snapping turtles are quite beautiful. Next, wouldn't you be nasty if you were napping and someone grabbed you by the tail (figuratively speaking) and dragged you away from your home? Snappers will eat a little baby duck; if it happens to stick its little baby duck feet near the turtle's mouth. These creatures are fat and lazy, and prefer to lie in the mud and wait for food to float by. This brings us to the last part of the question. If we set aside the fact that turtles have been on the planet for 65 million years (and who are we to chase them from the planet?), we still need them. Snapping turtles are the turkey vultures of the creeks. Without the vultures, we would be up to our knees in road kill; without snappers, we'd be up to our knees in half-eaten fish and rotten plants, since they eat all of the stuff the rest of the creek inhabitants leave behind. I don't know about you, but I don't want to live anywhere near the creek if there are no snappers to help keep it clean.

You can help in the effort to restore/preserve a healthy breeding population of snapping turtles in the watershed in the following ways:

- If you see a turtle on its way to or from a nesting site, leave it alone. It knows what it's doing. The exception, of course, is if the turtle is in danger of being hurt, or is already injured. If it is in the road, try to prevent it from being struck, and let it go off by itself, or, if necessary, gently push the turtle to the side of the road.
- DO NOT try to pick up a snapping turtle! They are even more aggressive when nesting, & can inflict a very serious bite (the big ones can even take off a finger or two!)
- If possible, follow the turtle and mark the location of its nest, so that the hatchlings can be tracked, or if the nest is in danger, the eggs can be pulled for the recovery program. Turtle eggs are very delicate; please don't try to move them yourself.
- Call the Turtle Lady if you need help moving a turtle, or if you know the location of a nest. Even if you find a dead turtle by the side of the road, please call so that any eggs still viable can be salvaged, & the location documented (and a "Turtle Crossing" sign placed if warranted). You can also call with any questions, or to schedule a turtle talk for your class or organization.

It is more important than ever that we continue to monitor the population and progress of the turtles in the creek. If you observe a turtle in the wild, please record the date, location, etc. and relay the information to the Turtle Lady.

*This year marks the beginning of my 9<sup>th</sup> year of research, observing the wildlife in the Pompeston Creek watershed, in particular the snapping turtle population. After the Athos I oil spill in the Delaware River in November of 2004, and its effect on the creek inhabitants, the devastating floods in 2004, 2006 and 2007, and the continuous development in Cinnaminson and Moorestown, this research has become even more critical.*

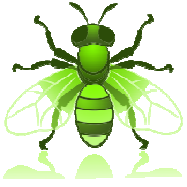
**Cindy Pierson, Cinnaminson, 609-760-3223**

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***PCWA efforts could not continue without the help of dedicated volunteers-PCWA is always looking for people who are ready to help! To volunteer, contact [PCWA\\_info@yahoo.com](mailto:PCWA_info@yahoo.com).***

**Education Committee:** This committee provides educational outreach for students and adults in the Pompeston Creek Watershed communities. It is exciting and rewarding to educate our communities on the preservation and protection of this watershed. PCWA participates in school festivals such as "Wetland Wonders" in Moorestown and Project Wet "Make a Splash" in Cinnaminson. You frequently can see members of this committee participating in community festivals, providing stormwater education for the communities.

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## **Gardening for Life**

On Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, PCWA will be hosting the presentation “**Gardening for Life**” at the Moorestown Friends Meeting House (cosponsored by Moorestown Friends School Science Dept. and STEM). We are fortunate to have as our guest speaker, **Dr. Doug Tallamy**, professor and chair of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware. Mr. Tallamy has a Ph.D. in Entomology, University of Maryland, M.S. in Entomology, Rutgers University, and B.S. in Biology, Allegheny College.

For recreation, Dr. Tallamy enjoys photography, hiking, backpacking, and canoeing. Another interest he enjoys is teaching young people about the importance of the life forms around them. Dr. Tallamy is the author of “*Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens*” which was published in November 2007.

A recent review in Booklist states, “Tallamy takes an obvious observation - wildlife is threatened when suburban development encroaches on once wild lands - and weds it to a novel one: that beneficial insects are being deprived of essential food resources when suburban gardeners exclusively utilize nonnative plant material. Such an imbalance, Tallamy declares, can lead to a weakened food chain that will no longer be able to support birds and other animal life. Once embraced only by members of the counterculture, the idea of gardening with native plants has been landscape design's poor stepchild, thought to involve weeds and other plants too unattractive for pristine suburban enclaves.” This book gives native plant enthusiasts the latest scientific research proving that gardening with native plants is not just for *fun* but necessary to save our wildlife populations from decreasing. When invasive plant species begin to make up a high percentage of the vegetation, insect populations will inevitably crash, causing havoc in the natural world.

Can suburban gardeners make a difference to save plant, insect and bird species? Dr. Tallamy is convinced that we CAN!! If interested, Dr. Tallamy will be available to autograph his book after his presentation. Join us on June 5<sup>th</sup> and discover how *YOU* and your home gardening choices can make a difference!!

## **Moorestown Friends School Partners with PCWA to “Wash the Water!”**

There is an African proverb that says that filthy water cannot be washed. Not quite true! When native plants are added to detention basins, lots of good things happen including the restoration of stream water quality. To that end, a team of students from Moorestown Friends School, in partnership with PCWA and the Township of Moorestown, will retrofit the Riverton Road detention basin (across from the Presbyterian Church) with native wetland plants and shrubs. Currently, this basin has some natural growth in parts of it, as well as trash and discarded potted plants, and could use a touch-up. On Saturday, April 26 (rain date April 27), Leslie Smalley will oversee the clearing of the basin by student volunteers. A week later, on Saturday, May 3, under the direction of Debbie Lord and Watershed Ambassador, Michael Yanchuk, more than 500 native shrubs, trees, and herbaceous plants will be planted, followed by mulching (mulch provided by Leonberg Nursery). Plants will be purchased with funds from a NJ DEP Watershed Stewards Program Grant to a Watershed Stewards Team comprised of Barb Kreider (teacher) and five students (Alison Barton, Monica Chelius, Jake Montgomery, Rob Rinaldi, and Jordan Zaid) at Moorestown Friends School. **Volunteers are welcome on both days.** Bring shovels and gloves, wear water-proof shoes, and help wash some water!  
**Barbara Kreider, MFS Science Teacher**



**PCWA Spring 2008 restoration sessions have been scheduled as follows:**

- Saturday, April 19: 10:00am-12:00pm Pompeston Woods Park, New Albany Rd, Moorestown
- Sunday, April 27: 1:00pm-3:00pm Pompeston Woods Park, New Albany Rd, Moorestown
- Sunday, May 18: 1:00pm-3:00pm Maple Dawson Park, Dawson Street, Moorestown
- Saturday, June 7: 10:00am-12:00pm Pompeston Woods Park, New Albany Road, Moorestown

I encourage members to help at one or two work sessions in order to continue our restoration efforts at our sites in the upper Pompeston Creek Watershed area. Remember to wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and waterproof boots or workshoes. Bring your favorite loppers/pruners and work gloves. We will have contractor bags and a small selection of loppers, shovels and saws. Cold beverages will be provided. If you wish further information or have any suggestions please contact, Leslie Smalley, 235-8131.



**Send your articles for the newsletter to Pam Crepps, Outreach Coordinator, at [pcwa\\_info@yahoo.com](mailto:pcwa_info@yahoo.com). We need and appreciate your input!**

PCWA enjoys sending you our newsletter; however, due to the cost of printing and postage we will not be able to continue this mailing unless your annual dues are paid up to date. Thank you for supporting PCWA! To see when your membership expires, check the date on your address label. Dues should be mailed to:

**Pompeston Creek Watershed Association  
PO Box 2883  
Cinnaminson NJ 08077**

**PCWA Board of Trustees and Staff 2008**

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**INCIDENT REPORTING-Post this form on your bulletin board**

In times of heavy rainfall, stormwater sometimes overflows from sanitary sewers due to infiltration and inflow (including sump pumps connected to sanitary sewers). To report overflows and/or flooding call:

**Moorestown 235-3520  
Delran 609-923-5052**

**Cinnaminson 829-2271  
Riverton 829-1792**

To report a water quality problem, hazardous waste spills, illegal dumping, odors, or wildlife problems, call the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection **Action Hotline, 1-877-927-6337**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To report a sediment pollution problem or improper soil erosion control measures, call the **Burlington County Soil Conservation District** at **609-267-7410**. Please also report the problem to **PCWA** at **856-235-9204**. Thanks for caring and taking **ACTION!**



Pictured above are PCWA member Pam Crepps with speaker, Dr. Alan Robock, at an annual joint meeting sponsored by STEM (Save the Environment of Moorestown), Pompeston Creek Watershed Association, Moorestown Garden Club, Moorestown Improvement Association, Moorestown High School Environmental Club, Moorestown Friends School Science Dept. Dr. Alan Robock is a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. Speaking before an audience of 140 people at Moorestown Friends Meeting House, Dr. Robock presented scientific evidence of global warming based on rising sea levels and changing weather patterns observed around the world. The threat to water resources and food supplies implied by his evidence invoke a need for us all to reduce our carbon footprint in order to protect ourselves and our planet.

### **Dr. Robock's Suggestions What We Can Do NOW:**

- Support legislation, in NJ and the US Congress that will help solve the problem.
- Vote for legislators and a President who will help solve the problem.
- Install solar cells, with New Jersey helping to pay the bill.
- Use less energy:
  - Drive less (telecommute, bike, train, bus)
  - Buy or lease a smaller car or hybrid
  - Insulate your house
  - Lower home temp. in winter, raise in summer
  - Buy local products
  - Use compact fluorescent bulbs
  - Eat less meat (energy, methane)
  - Recycle
  - Use biodiesel

For more information,  
[http://climatechange.rutgers.edu/  
resources/presentations](http://climatechange.rutgers.edu/resources/presentations)



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**Restoration/Stewardship Committee:** Committee members organize and participate in maintenance of restoration sites. Members assist in removal of invasive plants and replanting of native vegetation in the stream corridor. If you enjoy the outdoors, this committee is for YOU!!

**Advocacy/Preservation Committee:** This is the watershed's watchful eye for potential dangers. Speak up and speak out for the protection of the watershed. Members sometimes attend town meetings on issues of the Pompeston. Join this committee if advocating for a cleaner watershed is your passion.

**Clean-up Committee:** This committee strives to coordinate and perform one clean-up per township (Delran, Moorestown, Cinnaminson and Riverton) with the help of volunteers and townships. Dates will be advertised in the PCWA newsletter and local newspapers. It is a great way to spend a spring or summer afternoon with your family and PCWA volunteers.

**Water Quality Monitoring:** Committee members are involved in the approved collection of water samples and data (chemistry, bacteria, and macroinvertebrates) from Pompeston Creek at two sample locations: one in Moorestown and one in Cinnaminson. Stream habitat assessments are also performed periodically.

**Fundraising/Events:** The committee plans and coordinates special events, develops fundraising strategies, and solicits donations for PCWA.

**Membership Committee:** This committee maintains a database of members and their payment of dues. Volunteer email distribution lists are maintained and utilized for announcements and invitations to special events. This committee is also involved with volunteer surveys.

**Marketing /Publicity Committee:** This committee works to promote awareness and interest in our group. They accomplish this by publicizing speaking opportunities, writing press releases, etc. They also work to improve our website.

**Finance Committee:** The committee oversees PCWA's finances, budgets, and financial statements.

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### **Thank you to our 2008 Corporate Sponsors!**

**R. Craig Lord Construction Co. Inc.  
NJ American Water Company**

### **And Welcome to our New Member!**

**Moorestown Ecumenical Neighborhood  
Development (MEND)**

**Help Protect the Pompeston Creek Watershed - Become a Member**

**Membership Benefits:**

- o Invitations to special events, outdoor activities, and presentations
- o Receive our biannual newsletter, *Watershed News*
- o Supporting monitoring, restoration, and education programs for a cleaner stream
- o Corporate membership - acknowledged in newsletters and on website

**Basic Membership:**

- o Individual or Family \$ 15
  - o Supporting Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Corporate Membership:**

- Corporate \$ 100
  - Supporting Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I'm interested in volunteering for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please make checks payable to PCWA and mail to;  
Pompeston Creek Watershed Association  
P.O. Box 2883  
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

PCWA is a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions may be deducted as provided by law.



**Pompeston Creek Watershed Association**  
**P.O. Box 2883**  
**Cinnaminson, NJ 08077**

**"POMPESTON DROPLETS"**

Let's work extra hard to keep  
trash, pollutants, and all kinds of  
litter out of our waterways...

**WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM!**