

BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE
INCORPORATED
P.O. BOX 389
Hamburg, PA 19526

BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

I N C O R P O R A T E D

Fall 2007

www.bluemountainwildlife.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A KERNY EAGLE SCOUT LEAVES HIS MARK

WEASELS, WEASELS, WEASELS!

SPECIAL OPEN SPACE PLAN SURVEY INSERT

YOUR INVITATION TO THE 4TH ANNUAL BANQUET

THOUGHTS FROM THE RIDGE

OUR MISSION

THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE WILDLIFE AND WETLANDS ALONG THE SCENIC SCHUYLKILL RIVER IN NORTHERN BERKS AND SOUTHERN SCHUYLKILL COUNTY.



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READY FOR WINTER? BMW IS!

The leaves are turning and there's frost in the morning. Fall's arrived and winter can't be far behind. For Blue Mountain Wildlife, it's time to take a breather and do some planning for the year ahead.

BMW's fundraising efforts this year bore some fruit. The 2007 Northern Berks QUAD Games raised over \$400 for Blue Mountain Wildlife. The Sprint Biathlon on August 25th drew 63 entrants to run, bike and run again on what seemed to be the hottest day of the year. The Frosty Kerny 10K Race through downtown Hamburg on October 21st drew 45 en-

trants and the 2-Mile Family Run drew a further twelve. Our Race Committee has made some changes to the Games that we hope will make them easier to present and will increase participation. Look for more details in the Winter newsletter and check our website in 2008 for details.

Back at the Kerny, BMW's been busy with repairs to the Kernsville Dam Road and the Therman Madeira Switchback Trail. Of course, Pat Adams and her dedicated volunteers have been working hard to keep the Butterfly Garden watered, weeded and well tended. Austin Hartman has completed his Eagle

Scout project—the beautiful new sign welcoming visitors to the Kerny. Check out the story on page 2. Junior Girl Scout Troop 114 from Hamburg further beautified the Kerny in November, planting native plants at the Monument.

Finally, BMW will be drafting the updated Open Space Plan for the Kerny in December and January. Please help out by completing and returning the survey inside. You can also attend our December 13th regular meeting at the Hamburg Community Library and give your suggestions in person. We need to hear from you, the people who use and appreciate the area.

PLAN TO ATTEND THE FOURTH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BANQUET

To celebrate our fourth year of stewardship of the Kernsville Dam area, Blue Mountain Wildlife Incorporated will be holding its January 10th meeting at Azar's Family Restaurant on PA Route 61 just south of Hamburg and the Officers and Directors cordially invite you to attend. The meeting gets underway at 6:30 p.m. with introduc-

tions, presentations and election of officers, followed by a delightful buffet dinner and capped with the unveiling of the new Blue Mountain Wildlife Open Space Plan for the Kernsville Recreation Area followed by a fun and educational show for all ages. Reserve your seats by January 5th, as tickets will not be sold at the door.

Tickets are \$15.00 for each adult and \$7.50 for each child 12 and under and include the meal and the show. Coffee, tea or soda is included in the price of the ticket. In case of inclement weather, the Banquet will be postponed to February 14th. Enjoy an evening of good food and entertainment while supporting a worthy cause.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—WINTER 2007

Thursday December 13th, 2007...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library
Thursday January 10th, 2008...Fourth Annual Membership Banquet 6:30 pm Azar's Restaurant
Thursday February 14th, 2007...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library
Thursday March 13th, 2007...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library

KERNY EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

Austin Hartman of Tilden recently coordinated the placement of a new sign near the entrance of the Kernville Dam Recreation Area. The placement of the sign was Austin's Eagle Scout Project. Austin is a member of Scout Troop 120 in Hamburg.

The soon-to-be Eagle Scout indicated that he wanted his project to reflect his love of the outdoors. Austin, along with his brother and father, spend many hours outdoors, hunting, fishing, hiking, camping and kayaking. Austin and his twin brother Alex have helped BMW in the past during the annual Earth Day clean up projects. They both will soon be receiving their Eagle Scout Awards.

The materials for the sign were provided by Bright Signs. They also produced the beautiful and detailed cedar sign which now welcomes all visitors to the Kernville Dam Recreation



Area. This is a welcome new addition as the newly-opened Bartram Trail is attracting visitors in ever-increasing numbers. Two Eastern Hemlocks were also donated to BMW to be planted alongside the sign.

A crew of volunteers, including members of troop 120, many of Austin's family and a couple of Blue Mountain Wildlife members, aided Austin in the placement of the sign and the tree planting and landscaping around the sign.

Austin spent many hours planning his project. He worked with Tilden Township officials, had to submit plans to the state and spent a good part of a day at Bright Signs, all in an effort to bring his project to a successful conclusion.

All the members of Blue Mountain Wildlife would like to thank Austin for choosing our site and our group for his project.

JEFF HARTMAN

WEASELS, WEASELS, WEASELS!

Penn's woods are home to three species of Weasels. The Least Weasel, the Long Tailed Weasel and the Ermine can all be found in Pennsylvania's forests. Their ranges often overlap but even those of us who spend many hours in the woods are surprised to catch sight of one of these elusive little creatures. Many residents condemn and demonize weasels, making note of their secretive habits and their predatory ways. As with most predators these feelings seem to parallel the same old notions aimed at any and all predators.

It is true that weasels are skilled predators. They hunt mostly at night; another habit frowned upon by old wives tales. They are not afraid to take some prey larger than their own diminutive size. An old cliché might fit well here; it's not the size of the weasel in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the weasel. Weasels are very quick; they dart about and will pounce on their prey, biting the prey on the back of the neck and head while holding on with their forelegs. Due to their rapid metabolism a weasel must often eat as much as one-third to one-half of its own body weight each day. Their prey often includes mice, voles, rats, chipmunks, shrews, birds, eggs, bats, small snakes, cottontail rabbits, insects, lizards and even earthworms. They will eat the flesh, fur feathers and even



Short-Tailed Weasel Image courtesy Betty Randall and eNature.com



Long-Tailed Weasel Image courtesy Robert E.. Barber and eNature.com



Least Weasel Image courtesy James F. Parnell and eNature.com

small bones of their prey and will sometime cache what they cannot immediately eat.

Most weasels are brown in color and may have white undersides. In some areas of northern and western Pennsylvania the coats may turn white over the winter. Those in milder climate areas of the states will, however, remain brown throughout the entire year. The underfur is soft and short; the guard hair is long and coarse.

Ermine can grow to about 15" in length, but will weigh less than 4 oz. The males will usually be slightly larger than the females. Long-Tailed Weasels can grow up to 24" in length and weigh up to 9 oz. Again the males are slightly larger than the females. The Least Weasel is the world's smallest carnivore and will only grow to a little over 8" in length. This little predator weighs in at just 1 – 2 ounces and may occasionally be prey for the larger weasels.

Chances are you may never see a weasel in the wild, but rest assured they are there! They exist in sizeable numbers but are so secretive and elusive that sightings are fleeting and far between. If you happen to catch a glimpse of one of these little denizens of the forest, take a mental picture. It may be a long time before you see one again.

YES, I will be attending the Blue Mountain Wildlife Incorporated Fourth Annual Membership Meeting and Banquet.

I would like to purchase _____ adult ticket(s) at \$15.00 each for a total of \$_____.

I would like to purchase _____ child (ages 12 and under) ticket(s)
at \$7.50 each for a total of \$_____.

I am enclosing a check or money order made out to
Blue Mountain Wildlife, Inc. for a total of \$_____.

Blue Mountain Wildlife Incorporated will mail your tickets to the address on the reverse.

If the name and address on the reverse is incorrect, please write the correct information below:

Name: _____

Cut out this coupon and mail with payment to:

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Blue Mountain Wildlife Incorporated

P.O. Box 389 Hamburg, PA 19526

THOUGHTS FROM THE RIDGE—OH, THAT'S WHERE I AM

JEFF HARTMAN

With today's marvels of electronics it has never been so hard to get lost! What, you ask, does that mean? Well, I need to poke fun at myself here for a few minutes. I have always been a map collector. I like maps of what is, what once was and even maps of what may one day become reality. I am sure there is a name for this, but I have no idea what name this obsession may be known as. Rest assured that I have been teased by many friends about my growing pile of maps. I have maps of places I have been, places I have never been to and places that friends and family have been to over the years. But topographical maps have always been my favorite—oh the detail! I could wander into the woods with a topo map and a compass and almost pick out the tree I was standing beside. Over the years I accumulated a fairly large number of topo maps of the surrounding area. I thought it was very "neat" to have all these detailed maps of my area. I had several folded and worn maps that often accompanied me as I entered the woods. These maps detailed every little nook and cranny of my surroundings. How

cool is this, I thought.

Then one day I heard a new term that instantly appealed to and appalled me. GPS. Yes, global positioning system. Once only available to the military, it would soon be available to me! But what about my maps, all of my maps, my exquisitely detailed maps. What would become of them? I tried to fight the purchase, but resistance was futile. I knew it would come to pass that a GPS unit would be mine. I drove for hours through the night on a snowy eve to make my first purchase of a GPS unit. I, of course, could have picked one up right down 61, but I would not have needed a map to do that, so off we went to Hughesville (it's on the map).

Now I admit that my compass still went with for a short while, but wow, this thing was too cool. Okay, it lacked the colors of my maps and, try as I might, I could not figure out how to fold the darn thing. I soon used that GPS to go to the mail box. The darn thing even could tell me that a McDonalds was 12.3 miles away and an Exxon station was across the street. Wow, this little

gadget could not only find me, it could find a burger and fries. What more could I ever ask for?

Along comes the internet, MapQuest driving directions, Terraserver, Google Earth and my topo software that allows me to interface with my GPS and check a route. I can now print out the mileage, elevation, average speed and a hundred other things about my trip. My new GPS unit even has a radio linked to the GPS software. Now I can link with other similar units and know where they are as they each appear on my little electronic map.

So, as I mentioned, it has become almost impossible to get lost. I sometimes feel like I have a giant red push pin above my head at all times. All I need to do is look up and the little tag will be there, hovering in mid air saying, "You Are Here." But it is said by old map collectors that if you try hard enough, you may still be able to get lost. Well maybe, but I'm not entirely sure about that. Anyway, see ya on the ridge. I'll be the guy with the "You Are Here" tag floating above me.



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