

# BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

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

Summer 2017

[www.bluemountainwildlife.com](http://www.bluemountainwildlife.com)

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## OUR MISSION

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



## CONTACT US

Don Waldron (President): 610.562.3199

Gregg Adams (Secretary/Membership)  
610.562-1428

Sue Fisher (Treasurer): 610.562.0720  
P.O. Box 389 Hamburg, PA 19526  
[www.bluemountainwildlife.com](http://www.bluemountainwildlife.com)  
[info@BlueMountainWildlife.com](mailto:info@BlueMountainWildlife.com)

## THE SMALL SUMMER

The summer of 2017 was a very different summer from every other in recent memory at the Kerny. Visitors were no longer welcome at the Kernsville Dam. People were not permitted to fish from it's banks, explore it's trails or swim from it's shores. True, the basin and it's trails remained open and welcome to visitors; and also true, a few people did risk (and some of those did receive) citations and fines to swim in the reservoir's waters or dive from The Rock. But the summer was, for better or worse, a quiet one.

For Blue Mountain Wildlife, the summer's programs at the Kerny ended with the Run To The Rock Trail Races, only three days into the summer. BMW did host the annual Dragonfly Walk in the basin in August, and participated in the Taste of Hamburg-er Festival on Labor Day Saturday. Joe Swider did maintain his one-man trash collection efforts throughout the summer months, collecting trash left by those who ignored the "No Trespassing" signs. But the traditional summer efforts of Blue Mountain Wildlife were not to be seen.

Instead, BMW busied itself with planning and coordinating. The I-78 widening project provided BMW

with some interesting opportunities to improve the basin and Monument Parking Lot. Much work during many meetings with many groups over many months have gone into the plans for the basin. And the process is still not complete. We hope to present the final plans at our Annual Membership Meeting and Banquet in January.

Mckenzie Greenawalt's Girl Scout project also provides BMW a wonderful opportunity to both create a second butterfly garden to temporarily replace the one near the Kernsville Dam and to improve the area around the Information Kiosk and DS Trail. BMW is combining this project with donations of three concrete benches and a concrete picnic table. We're all looking forward to seeing this project come to fruition next year.

With all of this good work in process, Blue Mountain Wildlife could use some volunteers to step up and dedicate time to helping out the Kerny. There are a few openings on the Board of Directors that need to be filled in January. If you care about the Kerny and can dedicate one evening a month, please consider joining the Board and helping us make the big decisions.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS—WINTER 2018

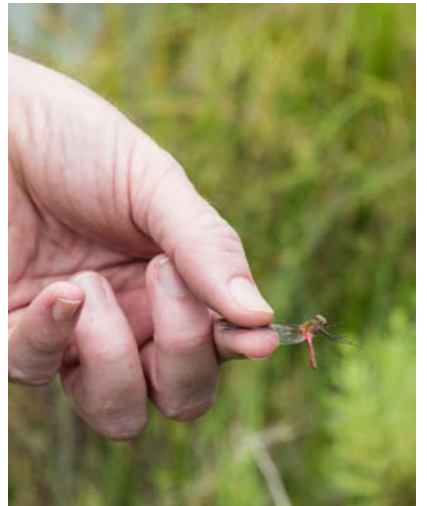
Thursday December 14, 2017...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library  
Thursday January 11, 2018...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library  
Friday January 26, 2018...Annual Membership Banquet and Meeting 6:00 p.m. Location TBD

# WALKING WITH DRAGONFLIES

NEVEN DRIES

A Dragonfly and Damselfly walk was held by the Mengel Natural History Society and Baird Ornithological Club on Saturday August 12th. About twenty-four people were present at this year's walk. It was a bit cool and overcast but we

found at least thirteen different species. Ken Lebo and Mike Slater did a great job explaining the many varieties and showing everyone there examples of them, both hiding and caught.





**A SECOND DRAGONFLY WALK**

After overcast weather the previous week, a second Dragonfly and Damselfly walk was again held by the Mengel Natural History Society and Baird Ornithological Club on Sunday August 20th. About fifteen people were present at this week's walk. There was great weather for this walk and the participants found at least fifteen different species. Tony "Doc" Schoch, Ken Lebo

**NEVEN DRIES**

and Mike Slater led the walk and provided a wealth of interesting information about the species that were caught or observed, as well as others that frequent the area. In addition to all the Dragonflies and Damselflies we saw, a baby snapping turtle and a painted turtle were found along the walking path.

## THE DINE & DASH BEATS THE RAIN AT HAMBURG-ER FEST

GREGG ADAMS

At this year's Taste of Hamburg-er Festival, the sixth annual running of the Dine & Dash Burgers & Trail Race looked like it was going to be a washout. With predictions of cool temperatures and rain, prospects for a decent attendance for the event looked bleak. But it turned out that the weather was kind to Blue Mountain Wildlife. Cooler temps brought out the runners anxious to get their burger fix before the storm clouds parted.

Thirty-four people and three dogs lined up at the tables at 2nd and State Streets to challenge the two-burger/two-mile course. With Race Coordinator Elaine Cook (officiating her final race) reviewing the rules and the course, the hungry runners prepared their first burgers. With a blast of the air horn, the race was on. After consuming the first burger, the runners raced to the

Schuylkill River and turned north, running along the Etchberger Trail to the next burger, a mile away. There they downed the second burger under the watchful eye of Alan Cook. After collecting a string of beads, the runners races back to 2nd & State and the finish line.

Andrew Zeamer took Fastest Male Overall this year with a time of 16:46. Veronica Schrack took Fastest Female Overall with a time of 20:21. John Greely and Jeff Hammer took Fastest Males in the General and Masters categories, while Lizzie "Batman" Schwinger, Erica Wood and Jennifer Simpson took Fastest Females in the Junior, General and Masters categories. Tania Wargo won best costume, Ryan Witman and Fin won best dog and the Judges' Choice went to Costumed Honorable Mention John Kline and oldest finisher Ben Delp.





**Pictures:** Gregg Adams, Jayde Dries, Neven Dries, Kerry Grim



**SEPTEMBER STARWATCH**

**NEVEN DRIES**

On the evening of Friday September 29th, Berks County Parks & Recreation sponsored a star watch at the Kernsville Dam Recreation Area. People met in the parking lot about 7 p.m. Even with the cold weather, about thirty people were there.

There was a representative from the Berks Astrological Society present to show us a few sights in the night sky with her telescope. We were able to spot the space station as it made a pass overhead. Also visible were the planets Saturn, Neptune and Mars.

It was a bright, clear evening with a bright moon. I was able to get a few pictures with the moonlight lighting the attendees.

## IMPROVEMENTS AT THE MONUMENT PARKING LOT

GREGG ADAMS

On September 12th, work started on the long-planned improvements to the Monument Parking Lot area. The first phase of the improvements includes three benches to be installed along the DS Trail and a picnic table and native plant butterfly garden immediately north of the parking lot. The first pads were poured for a picnic table and portapotties, as was a pedestal for the plaque for the picnic table. Barry Shollenberger readied the site and Hartz Concrete poured the pads. Reading Pre-

cast then installed the concrete picnic table, which was donated by Lifetime Member Katherine Wells in honor of her parents, Gus and Caryl Wells.

As work continues through the winter and into the spring, three more pads will be poured for the three benches to be installed overlooking the basin along the DS Trail. Girl Scout Mckenzie Greenawalt will be working to install a native plant butterfly garden in the area around the picnic table.



## COMING THIS WINTER

GREGG ADAMS

With winter almost here, Blue Mountain Wildlife is looking to the future. The work at the Kerny is pretty much done for the year, although there may still be more done, if the weather cooperates. There are two Scout projects underway—Mckenzie Greenawalt's butterfly garden at the Monument Parking Lot and Ryan Kemp's restoration of the two Outdoor Classrooms at the north end of the basin. Both are expected to be complete early next year.

A much bigger project is getting underway that will have a large impact on the desilting basin. The I-78 Widening Project has been planned for the highway east of PA Route 61. The widening to six lanes will impact the basin in two ways: the I-78 bridge will see additional

spans to accommodate the two additional lanes on the south side of the bridge over the basin and the Schuylkill River; and the removal of wetlands in the Lenhartsville area to accommodate the widening there will result in the construction of an additional 2.5 acres of wetlands in the northern half of the basin. The plans for the wetlands work are being finalized now. The work is slated to occur in the fall of 2018 and will impact the trail system during construction. However, the work is planned to result in significant improvements to the trail system and Monument Parking Lot when it is complete. BMW has been involved with the planning and is looking forward to the approval and implementation of the final plans next year.



BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE P.O. BOX 389 HAMBURG, PA 19526



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