

WATERSHED

A Newsletter of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association

Volume 34-2

Late Spring 2017

Please forward this edition of WATERSHED to a friend!



Welcome....Welcome Center Staff!

WPWA is excited to introduce all our members to your weekend Welcome Center staffers, Bonnie Turek and Emma Saccoccio. Both are proud graduates of The Prout School in Wakefield, RI and are wrapping up their freshman year in college. They are eager to come home and start their summer jobs assisting you from 9 am - 2 pm on Saturday's and Sunday's through the end of August. Be sure to come in and give them a warm hello and let them help you get out on the rivers this summer. [Read more...](#)



Explore Your Watershed Through Membership

June marks the start of WPWA's membership year and each year we strive to bring you benefits beyond the good feeling you get... [Read more...](#)

Last year's membership expires May 31, so please renew today!

JOIN/RENEW

Renewing your membership will ensure that our programs and advocacy continue for this year, and beyond.

Thank you!



Brace Yourselves--Gypsy Moths are Coming Back

Unfortunately, as reported in a recent ecoRI article by Todd McLeish, this year will likely be another bad year for gypsy moths... [Read more...](#)

Thank you to our
"WATERSHED"
Sponsors



River Trek: The Next Generation

April and early May saw the return of the first river herring born in Worden's Pond in over two hundred years.... [Read more...](#)



Jennifer @greysailbrewing.com

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401 - 212 - 7592



Wood-Pawcatuck Wild & Scenic Rivers Photo Contest

Twelve local communities are joining WPWA to host the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Photo Contest... [Read more...](#)



Here We Go Again...

Because you've insisted that WPWA continue to improve public river access, we have once again done just that... [Read more...](#)



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Check out the new Wild and Scenic Website

So what is this Wild and Scenic Rivers Study all about? We've developed a website that will answer this question for you... [Read more...](#)



401 - 247 - GUNS

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401 - 364 - 3500



Bonnie Turek

Bonnie is no stranger to WPWA--her family are long standing WPWA members and neighbors of your beautiful Wood River campus. She, like many of you, loves to paddleboard. We were fortunate to add five new stand-up paddleboards (SUPs) to our fleet of boats this year. Some of our members haven't mustered the courage to try paddle boarding yet, so we are hopeful that Bonnie will offer a few beginner classes this summer to help you get your feet wet. Bonnie and her father Jim enjoy paddle boarding together and we expect they will offer one or more guided tours for you

on the river this summer.

Emma loves to swim, travel and meet new people. She is the founder of PressPause, a non-profit devoted to ending cyber bullying and digital abuse. As a student at Northern Arizona University she is studying Hotel & Restaurant Management. And don't be surprised if you bump into Emma at Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI) this summer. She's one of their superstar customer service representatives and knows outdoor gear inside and out.



Emma Saccoccio

Where can you and your family get unlimited access to an entire fleet of watercraft for just \$175 per year? Right here at WPWA! Be sure to get the most out of your membership by borrowing one or more of WPWA's single, tandem and angler kayaks, canoes or paddleboards this summer. Bonnie and Emma are here to serve you, our loyal members. [Return to Top](#)



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401 - 348 - 9155



www.patspower.com
401 - 364 - 6114

Explore Your Watershed Through Membership

Every year your membership money helps to support educating and engaging people of all ages in the responsible use of our precious water resources. June marks the start of WPWA's membership year and each year we strive to bring you benefits beyond the good feeling you get from supporting one of the watershed's oldest conservation organizations. So what's new for you this year?



hopevalleybait.com
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Trade "Screen Time" for "Stream Time" in Our Angler Kayaks

More ways to get out on the water! We purchased many new kayaks, stand up paddleboards, angler kayaks, and women's and infant lifejackets. If you or your household are a Trout level member, you and a guest can borrow any of these watercraft for a day and take them to your favorite place to paddle at no extra cost! Where else can you, your family and a guest have access to such a variety of gear anytime for just \$175 per year? Nowhere that we are aware of!

How can you help protect our valuable water resources?

By helping to spread the word about all that WPWA membership has to offer to your family, friends and co-workers. You'd be surprised how many people have never heard of WPWA, or only know us by the many community-based projects that we have implemented over the last 10 years.

Despite the techy world we currently live in, it is still word-of-mouth that is the single best way to



See Your Rivers by Stand Up Paddleboard this Summer

spread the word about all the great things that WPWA accomplishes thanks to your member support. You likely received a membership renewal letter this May. If you have not already responded by renewing, please take a moment to do so now by clicking this [JOIN](#) button. This year we humbly ask that you go one step further by telling someone you know about the benefits they will receive as a WPWA member. As our membership grows, so does our ability to protect and preserve the cool, clean, and abundant water of your Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed. [Return to Top](#)



Be Safe and Comfortable in Our Women's Lifejackets



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www .ecori. org
401 - 330 - 6276



jwilbur @wilcodevelopment. com
www .wilcodevelopment. com
401 - 463 - 6600

Watershed Happenings

Audubon of RI FREE Guided Bird Walk

June 1, 2017; 8:00 AM -10:00 AM
Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge,
Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston, RI
msolis@asri.org

Westerly Land Trust Thursday Hike at Breakheart Pond

June 1, 2017; 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Frosty Hollow Pond parking lot, Frosty Hollow Road, Exeter
www.westerlylandtrust.org

Native Plant Sale

June 3, 2017; 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
URI East Farm Rd. Kingston, RI
riwps.org

Westerly Land Trust Thursday Hike at Grills Preserve

June 8, 2017; 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Grills Preserve, Bowling Lane, Westerly, RI
www.westerlylandtrust.org

RI Scottish Highland Festival

June 10, 2017; 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Washington County Fair Grounds,
Richmond Townhouse Rd, Richmond, RI
www.riscot.org

All Ages Hike at Wahaneeta Preserve

June 18, 2017; 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM EDT
Wahaneeta Preserve, Moorehouse Rd,
Westerly
www.westerlylandtrust.org

2017 Rhode Island Butterfly Count

July 22, 2017; 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Audubon Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge,
Exeter
Ages: Teen to Adult

Brace Yourselves—Gypsy Moths are Coming Back



Last year's gypsy moth infestation was memorable in so many ways: huge numbers of caterpillars loudly chewing leaves and raining their waste on everyone and everything in late spring; January-bare trees in early summer; obnoxious clouds of moths a few weeks later; and beige, fuzzy egg masses all over trees in the aftermath. In addition, while gypsy moths are not generally harmful to humans, other recent news reports describe the severe rashes some folks experience when exposed to the hairs on the caterpillars. Unfortunately, as reported in a recent ecoRI article by Todd McLeish, this year will likely be another bad year for these invading pests, with the general nastiness of the infestation likely being joined

by negative impacts on forest health and water quality.

According to McLeish's article, forest and water quality impacts were, and will again be, multifaceted. He cites botanist Keith Killingbeck and URI scientist Kelly Addy, who describe these impacts:

- Lack of shade in the forests due to defoliation allows the spread of invasive plant species into the forest, exposes native animals to greater risk of predation, and dries out the forest floor too much for the well-being of amphibians such as frogs and salamanders
- Lack of shade from defoliation allows more sun to warm up streams, which depresses dissolved oxygen levels, which then can cause stress to aquatic animals
- Caterpillars, their waste, and bits of leaves falling into streams adds carbon to streams, which fuels growth of other organisms in the water, leading to more oxygen

depletion

- Repeated years of high gypsy moth numbers can compound the effects, as streams and forests don't get to recover fully after each infestation

McLeish quotes Heather Faubert, an entomologist from URI, who is unfortunately predicting another bad year for gypsy moths. She stated that even if spring rains give a boost to a fungus that kills gypsy moth caterpillars, they will still have had time to defoliate trees before they die. Defoliation between one and three years will kill most trees depending on the species, according to Faubert. McLeish also quotes a more optimistic press release from the Department of Environmental Management, which expects the resiliency of trees to allow the tree canopy to recover from this year's anticipated widespread defoliation.

So let's hope that the DEM's faith in the resiliency of trees is well-founded, for the sake of the watershed's forests and waters. [Return to Top](#)

River Trek: The Next Generation

April and early May saw the return of the first river herring born in Worden's Pond in over two hundred years. In 2013, as WPWA was removing the last of three fish passage obstructions on the upper Pawcatuck River, RIDEM was quietly capturing and trucking adult river herring to the Pawcatuck's headwaters at Worden Pond. Why?



The Fish Ladder at Horseshoe Falls Makes Migration Possible

Fishway at Horseshoe Falls in the Village of Shannock. In early April the volunteers got word that cormorants were gathering on the lower Pawcatuck and beginning to gorge themselves on adult herring that were headed upriver to spawn. Two weeks and 20 or so miles later, there they were, gathering at the base of Horseshoe Falls.

So abundant were the schools of herring that village resident Sandy Neuschatz observed many fish being pushed above the surface of the water on the backs of their siblings. The enormous snapping turtle that was so carefully protected during construction of the fish ladder wasn't shy about swallowing the herring whole as they rested below the dam and ladder. The river banks were dotted with herring bones left by a myriad of mammals like mink and muskrat that catch and feed on the herring at night. And of course, there was an osprey or two circling overhead waiting to dive bomb the herring as they enter the deep and slow moving water above the dam.

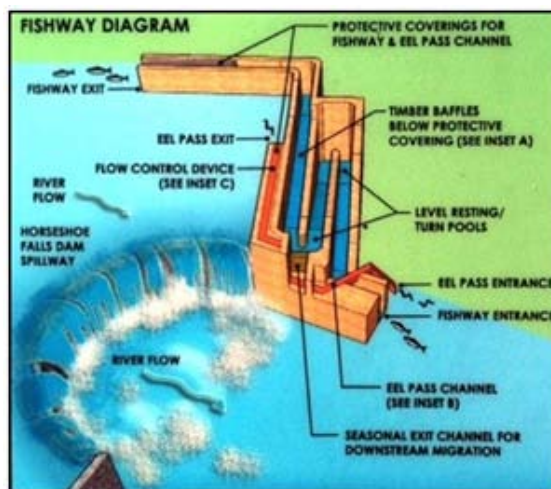


Diagram of How the Fish Ladder Works

Soon enough, the adult herring began to climb the 47 steps of the denil fish ladder. In bursts of three to ten fish at a time they exited the fish ladder bound for Worden Pond. Volunteer counters averaged around 75 fish per hour moving upstream. In total, thousands of fish made their way up and around Horseshoe Falls and up to Worden Pond to spawn for the first time since colonial settlers began damming the Pawcatuck to harness its water power for industry.

No Experience Necessary
\$10.00 Member; \$15.00 Non member
jscoones@asri.org
(401) 949-5454 ext. 3044

Bats at Eppley
August 4, 2017; 7:00-9:00 PM
Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge
Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston, RI
Ages: 10 and up.
\$10.00 Member; \$14.00 Non member
msolis@asri.org

Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction
August 6, 2017
South Kingstown Land Trust Barn,
Matunuck Beach Rd, Wakefield, RI
www.sklt.org

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March 20, 2017

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[DEM Weighing Options After Nature Center Hearing](#)

March 12, 2017

By TIM FAULKNER/ecoRI News staff



First Herring Hatched in Worden Pond in Over 200 Years (courtesy of RIDEM)

Today, manufacturing still exists on the Pawcatuck River at factories like Kenyon Industries who rely on the river's water. But now they, and the wildlife that also depend on the river, coexist and the balance between man and nature that once existed has been restored. This achievement is no less historic than the efforts to build these dams were centuries ago. WPWA is proud to have restored herring, and the balance of nature, to the upper Pawcatuck River. You, our members, should take immense pride in the historic work we achieved together and be forever grateful to all the

WPWA partners who made this first natural return of herring to Worden Pond possible.

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Opposition Emerges as Nature Center Prepares to Break Ground

February 25, 2017

By TIM FAULKNER/ecoRI News staff

WPWA Board and Staff

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Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Photo Contest

Twelve local communities are joining the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association to host the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Photo Contest. The Land Trusts, Conservation Commissions, and Historical Societies of Charlestown, Exeter, Hopkinton, North Kingstown, Richmond, South Kingstown, West Greenwich and Westerly, RI and North Stonington, Stonington, Sterling and Voluntown, CT all work hard to protect our watershed. We are taking this opportunity to gather photos that inspire beauty, fun, contemplation, wildlife and everything our rivers have to offer so we can encourage designation of these rivers under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.



The Photo Contest will be open to participants of all ages and youth is particularly encouraged. Judges will review photos and award winners in each of four categories – Scenic, Wildlife, Recreation, and Cultural. A special award will be given in the Under 18 category. The winners will have their photo's displayed on the Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers website, used on social media and outreach materials, and included in a report to congress.



The photo contest begins in June of 2017 and all photos must be submitted by December 2017. Each participant can submit up to 4 photos total, but they may be in any category. The winners will be announced in March 2018 and the rotating shows featuring the photos will be held in the various towns May through August 2018. Prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third place winners.

As a community we all share the mission to protect the valuable resources around us that make southern New England so special. With a focus on the Wild

and Scenic Rivers Study we will be helping our citizens protect the rivers for generations to come. By encouraging folks to find and get that special shot they will also have the opportunity to experience the rivers in all their beauty – the wildlife, the forests, the sparkling streams, the laughing kids in kayaks, the fly fishermen in contemplative reflection – scenes that surround us every day. That's why we are bringing together community organizations through a unique photo contest in order to share this amazing resource and provide many additional benefits:

- It will promote the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study
- It will raise awareness of the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed and our need to protect it.

Visit Us on FaceBook



Please consider supporting our mission securely online

DONATE

It allows us all to advocate for clean and fresh water for always

- It engages youth in exploring and enjoying all the different open spaces in our state
- It provides the opportunity to help people understand the value of the watershed
- And it links the environment and the arts in a creative and informative fashion



For more information or to submit a photo go to wpwildrivers.org/photo-contest. [Return to Top](#)

Here We Go Again...

Because you've insisted that WPWA continue to improve public river access, we have once again done just that. It has been a long time coming, but the rehabilitation of the John "Jay" Cronan Fishing and Boating Access Area is finally complete. This Pawcatuck River access area on Route 91 in Richmond, RI is popular with just about everyone. On any given day you'll find people fishing, launching kayaks, or just having their lunch at this high traffic access area.



WPWA Campus Universal Fish Pier

This site, like the WPWA campus, is unique in that the property is owned by WPWA. It was donated to you, our members, in 2007 by the Dubs family for the purpose of providing river access to the public. As the owners, you recognized that the site was a poor example of river stewardship. So WPWA was compelled to improve the site by managing stormwater runoff, stabilizing the river banks, adding songbird habitat and making the site handicapped accessible.

Folks who are physically challenged travel great distances to fish from the wheelchair friendly fishing pier at the WPWA campus. But the fish aren't always biting here and there was no other facility nearby for them to try their luck. That's why it was so important to include a universally accessible concrete fishing pier at the John "Jay" Cronan Access Area.

In 2013 a public park was built just upstream of the Cronan access in the Village of Shannock. It featured a handicapped friendly portage and boat launch. What it didn't feature was a place downstream for a challenged boater to take out. This left the launch underutilized and those with physical challenges stranded. But now they have a place to take out downstream at the Cronan Access Area.

We are pleased that the rehabilitated site is once again open for the use and enjoyment of all. And we are especially proud that no public funds were needed to make the improvements possible. Special thanks to the Kimball and Champlin Foundations for the funding they provided and to RIDEM and the Town of Richmond for their partnership with WPWA to make this great project a reality. We hope you visit the site this year and take a paddle downstream to visit the Nature Conservancy's new river access area on the Carter Preserve at King's Factory Road in Charlestown, RI. [Return to Top](#)



Cronan Universal Access Boat Launch (left) and Fishing Pier (right) during construction

Check out the new Wild and Scenic Website



So what is this Wild and Scenic Rivers Study all about? Because the answer is a little more complicated than a short article can explain, we've developed a website that we think will do the trick. Of course there's an explanation of what the Study is all about. But you will also find information about who is on the study committee, agendas and minutes from each meeting, details about each river understudy, news and events related to the study,

and a photo gallery. We are building up the website with more content every week, especially the photo gallery. Right now we are working on a photo contest to help capture the beauty and uniqueness of the rivers. Other events are also in the planning stage, such as source to sea paddle trips. So check out the website by clicking [here](#). [Return to Top](#)