



Friends of the
Rockefeller State Park
PRESERVE

Celebrating 20 Years

The Preserve Observer

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve Magazine
Vol. XXXV Spring 2016

Photo: Herbert Hadad



Raneri training on the Preserve

Olympic Marathon Hopeful Aims for 2020 Navigating The Preserve's Terrains

By Herbert and Evelyn Hadad

John Raneri of Fairfield, Connecticut, was one of 200 runners invited to this year's Olympic Marathon Trials. He finished 50th in 2:27.26, in the Los Angeles heat. Some did not finish at all. Raneri, 24, and sponsored by the Brooks sports outfitters, is already aiming for the Tokyo Games in 2020. "I love what I do," he said, "and this past result is only an affirmation of what I am extremely passionate about." He gave The Preserve Observer this interview:

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Beyond The Preserve: The Rest of the Pocantico Watershed

By Prof. Nicholas A. Robinson

Washington Irving first conjured up the mythical majesty of the Pocantico River in 1854. In *Wolfert's Roost*, Irving imagined the legends of the Pocantico, "rising among woody hills, winds in many a wizard maze, through the sequestered haunts of Sleepy Hollow." His readers loved the imagery. It became a badge of honor to be associated with the Pocantico.

Most of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve is within the Pocantico River Watershed, but both the hamlet of Pocantico Hills and Greenburg's Pocantico Park lie outside its boundaries. The River rises from within the 126 acres of Gedney Parks in New Castle. Its waters are fed by tributaries from Echo Lake State Park, Campfire Lake and from rivulets in the Town of Ossining,

continued on page 11



Photo: Herbert Hadad

Volunteer gardener Keith Austin among the peonies

8th Annual Peony Celebration is Set for Thursday, May 12, 2016 at the Preserve Entrance

By Herbert Hadad

On Thursday, May 12, from 6 to 9 p.m., one of the highlight events of the preserve spring season will be hosted by the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. It is the Eighth Annual Peony Celebration – a fund-raising event that will celebrate the blooming at the entrance to the preserve of the famous Japanese tree peonies. There

continued on page 2

Peony, *continued from page 1*

will be a cocktail and light cuisine reception, flower arrangements from local garden clubs and an exhibit of fine art. The exhibit, "Pastoral of the Peonies & Primary Florals", features watercolors by Susan Lanzano, Ashley Krohmal and Valery Schaffer, oil paintings by Peggie Blizard and Edward Walsh's wall relief. The reception will take place in the Visitor Center Courtyard under what is hoped will be clear blue skies and warm weather.

Preparation of the peonies began months before the event. One of the enthusiastic volunteer gardeners is Keith Austin, the former mayor of the Village of Briarcliff Manor and chairman of its planning board. He has been interested in peonies for years, starting when his work for IBM and Pitney Bowes often took him to Asia. "When I heard of peonies at the preserve, I went over to try and learn more about them," he said.

"Right now, there are three master gardeners in the program," he said. "I'm only a master enthusiast." Austin said the trees require the pruning of dead wood, two doses of fertilizer and the removal of dead foliage to prevent a disease called fungus botrytis. "Otherwise, the trees are highly tolerant, the deer don't eat them, and they can outlive you and me. Austin's colleagues in this noble effort include Chris Davies, Joann Stern, Mattie Varvaro and Ann Perkowski.

This celebration is a much anticipated one by members of the surrounding communities. It commemorates receiving the gift of 500 peonies from the town of Yatsuka Cho in Shimane Prefecture, Japan, in memory of the victims of September 11th. (Another 500 peonies were donated to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden.) It was meant to express a gesture of healing and solidarity towards the United States. The peony is the signature flower from this area and is considered Japan's "most noble of flowers." The placing of Japanese flowers on American soil symbolizes the blending of two cultures and two peoples. Friends board member Evelyn Hadad, at the time the director of external affairs for the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in New York, arranged for this generous gift, and the Friends organization then created a landscaping project around the gateway to the preserve. George Gumina, founding board president of the Friends at the time, spearheaded a \$100,000 fund-raising effort for the costs of the ambitious plan. The remainder of the design called for American wildflowers and native trees. Please come and enjoy your friends and the magnificent flowers! For information, please consult our web site, www.friend-srock.org. Ticket price begins at \$125.

Olympic Hopeful, *continued from page 1***When did you first realize you wanted to be a serious runner?**

Entering my sophomore year of high school, I became more focused and dedicated to the sport and began to enjoy it. I knew that I had potential, but hard work is always the prerequisite.

Did you have a school coach or a family member to guide you?

I had two high school coaches who guided me in the right direction. Both were New Fairfield High School alumni and went on to run in college. Tim Murphy ran at Texas Christian University while Geoff Nelson ran at Syracuse University. Both were extremely helpful in guiding me towards running in college. They were and still are great mentors to me. I wouldn't be where I am today without them.

My family members always motivate me every step of the way and still are very supportive of the process. I am very lucky to have such an incredible crew who, day in and day out, continue to show me the same love and support. I also have to thank Coach John Warrington, Jim Keller, and Janet Simons for setting the spark in middle school. These people are invaluable to me and they played a huge role in who I am today.



John with dad Jim (l) in Charles Department Store

Photo: Herbert Hadad

Was long distance always your favorite form of running?

It's quite funny when I think about it. Sometimes! I preferred the shorter distances (400m and 55m dash) as a freshman. That being said, I was getting blown out of the water! Once I competed in a couple of mile and 2-mile races, I found myself hooked. I can tell you a very wild story from my first high school meet.--I show up to my first developmental meet in December 2006. This is my freshman year of high school. I have no racing shorts, singlets, spikes, or trainers. I hop on the bus after school wearing some basketball shoes and shorts without an inkling of what to expect. At this time my Coach Tim Murphy proceeds to tell me that we have entered a 4 x 800m relay team. Being the first indoor track meet of my entire life, I was jacked up!

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Preserve To Get NYS Grant

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve will received \$35,000 to hire fundraising and social media specialists to raise the funds needed to refurbish the roads around Swan Lake (Brothers' Path.) Twenty grants in all were announced.

"These grants will help preserve New York's Natural Green spaces while also boosting tourism and strengthening local economies," Governor Andrew M. Cuomo said. "Our parks, trails and historic sites are some of the best outdoor destinations in the nation, and this funding will help ensure they remain in peak condition for years to come."

Friends President Clare M. Pierson expressed gratitude for the grant, saying, "It's encouraging to be recognized by the state; this grant will provide support for our projects and enhance our visibility."



Photo: Herberit Hadad

Sunlit view of Swan Lake



Saturday, May 7, 2016

This state-wide event is a celebration of New York State Parks and a great opportunity to show your support by volunteering for a few hours. At Rockefeller State Park Preserve, volunteers can lend a hand this year by doing some Spring clean-up within the Preserve from 9 am to 2 pm.

As part of this ever popular event, we will continue the habitat restoration project that we began two years ago. We're gradually replacing non-native multiflora rose and privet with native flowering dogwood, buttonbush, witch hazel, winterberry, sweet pepperbush, ostrich fern, and wetland wildflowers along the path to Swan Lake. All ages are welcome. Last spring, four generations of a local family participated.

REGISTER NOW

Contact event coordinator Jessika Creedon for more information: jcreedon@friendsrock.org.

Registration: Required

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring Peony Celebration
Thursday, May 12, 2016

Rockwood Ramble 10K
Saturday, June 4, 2016

Annual Equestrian Event
Sunday, October 16, 2016

Rocky's 5k
Saturday, October 29, 2016

Friends 20th Anniversary Gala
Honoring Phelps Memorial Hospital
Saturday, December 10, 2016



Olympic Hopeful, *continued from page 2*

You use the Rockefeller Preserve for running. What are its special values – quality of the trails, the terrain, location, etc.?

Whenever I can get onto soft surfaces, it is a great mechanism to recover and prep for the next hard session. Rockefeller provides extremely manicured and smooth trails with fantastic soft surfaces (any runner's dream). I like the varying terrain and the peaceful environment. The inclines in and around the park definitely make you strong. Rockefeller Preserve reminds why I run and is a conducive environment in which to train.

Tell us about your very first race and at what age you ran it in?

I was a high school freshman. The gun went off. I was the lead off leg. I split a 2:18. I handed off successfully, thinking my job was done. However, our anchor leg never showed up! This poised me to position myself as anchor leg and run another 800 -- this time much slower at 2:24. This is by far the most memorable moment for me because there was no expectation, just a mind and body ready to compete without any distractions. Sometimes when you don't know what to expect, the task at hand comes with greater ease.

When did the dream of representing the U.S. in the Olympics take hold?

Representing the United States in the Olympic Games was certainly in the back of my mind! My coach, Randy Ashley, and I are now focused on the development process of becoming a more consistent runner and competitor every single day. Therefore, we're approaching the process one step at a time. No day is more important than the next and results certainly don't come overnight.

Were you a competitive runner in college? What college and with what results?

I graduated from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill last May. I was 3 x All-ACC and 2 x All Regional performer in cross country and scored 10 points in my college career on the track combined for Indoor and Outdoor. I always was keen to compete and was fortunate enough to get into competitive races with the backing of a supportive program. The entirety of my college career is nothing to write home about. I was in a very similar position to most 14:07-5k and 29:16 10k college runners.

You're a member of the family that operates the venerable Charles Department Store in Katonah. How

often do you work there and does it take a back seat to training? Where do you live?

My job at Charles actually dictates the amount of time I have set aside for recovery. I work 35-40 hours a week 5 days a week. Most of the time, my training (even though hours are flexible) does take a back seat to work to an extent. Many athletes in my position might have a pretty lucrative shoe contract, which really allows them to focus on rest and recovery, without seeking supplemental income. Even though there is some specificity being on your feet all day to the marathon, nothing can replace pure rest and recovery. However, it is very convenient to have flexible hours so that I can fit in my workouts and runs.

Tell us a little about the store – how old, what it specializes in, who in the family are involved in it?

We have an incredible run going at the store. Charles Department Store is 91 years old and has been under the helm of three generations of Raneris: my great grandfather, grandfather, and my Dad (Jim), and Uncle, David Raneri. My cousin Kelly is an integrated partner in the family businesses and does the buying for clothing and outerwear. Our store specializes in houseware products, BBQ Grills, clothing/shoes, housewares, and a myriad of random necessities that one might need.

Please give us a review of your biggest races and times, including the race that won you a berth in the Olympic trials?

On October 31st, I raced the Rock 'n' Roll Philadelphia Half Marathon. I was in good shape and coming off one of my highest weeks in volume. We were certain that Philadelphia would serve as a perfect venue to accomplish the Olympic Trials Qualifier (under 65 min). Another goal in mind was to compete and race in the later stages of competition. I came away with a pr of 1:04:26 and top 10 finish in a tough field. Three weeks later I received my second qualifier by placing 3rd at the Philadelphia Gortex Marathon-2:18:06. Both races were great indicators of my fitness and major confidence boosters.

Do you teach youngsters about running?

I have done some outreach work. However, it's certainly hard to find time with two full-time jobs. I would certainly like to work with the community more and do whatever is in my power to motivate young runners to become more active in their endeavors and goals.

How old are you? Do you have a wife, a girlfriend, etc.?

As of now, I'm on the market! If this article gets me any traction, then I've done my job!

From the Friends President



By Clare M. Pierson

Spring Greetings! It is so lovely to have the snow behind us, and to see the spring flowers coming up. The amazing Tree Peonies are probably up at the Visitor Center as you read this. Come see them, and have a glass of champagne at the Peony Reception on Thursday, May 12th.

This is a banner year for the Friends. It is our 20th anniversary!! As an organization, we have been through thick and thin with the RSPP. The Friends helped raise the money to create the beautiful garden that surrounds the visitor center. Evelyn Hadad, one of our long time board members, was a member of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce after 9/11. She was instrumental in the planting of the 500 tree peonies in the courtyard garden at the Visitor Center.

We matched State funds to build the equestrian access trail from Sleepy Hollow Road to David's Loop. We produced the original carriage road manual, the bible for carriage road construction and maintenance. George and Rachel Gumina refurbished the gallery, and put in the lighting that is used today to light the lovely shows that hang there.

We have had four Park Managers, each with their own strengths, who have added to the life and culture of the RSPP.

We stood by the preserve during hard times, both economic and weather related. The economic downturn was closely followed by several very difficult storms. We were able to help with funding for ordinary maintenance of the carriage roads.

This year we will be celebrating our anniversary at all of our events:

I Love My Park Day May 7th

The Peony Reception May 12th

The Rockwood Ramble June 4th

Our Annual Equestrian Event October 16th

The Rocky's 5K October 29th

Friends 20th Anniversary Gala December 10, 2016

(Honoring Phelps Memorial Hospital)

Please join us!

The Friends was founded in memory of Peggy Rockefeller, who was a great lover and champion of the carriage road system, and who taught George Gumina, our founder, everything he knew about them.

We continue her legacy, and honor her devotion to the care of this lovely place so that it can be enjoyed into the future by the general public as it has been since these roads were built in the 1920s. We feel privileged to do this work on behalf of Rockefeller State Park Preserve, and are grateful for all your help.



Board of Directors Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve

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A Walk Through the Forest



photo: Tom DeRentiis

Thirteen Bridges Trail follows Gory Brook, a slender stream which flows into the Pocantico River. Its pools and riffles are home to creek chubs, salamanders, and freshwater invertebrates.

When the Rockefellers built the carriage roads a century ago, they crisscrossed the brook with 13 bridges.

Today 13 Bridges Trail is a popular, rewarding hiking and riding trail.

The trail through forested valley feels timeless. Towering tulip poplar, immense oaks, and dark hemlocks form a forest of deep



photo: Heidi Fuhrman

serenity. In places, spring wild flowers dapple the forest floor amongst an abundance of ferns, such as evergreen Christmas fern. The tapping of woodpeckers punctuates the quiet.

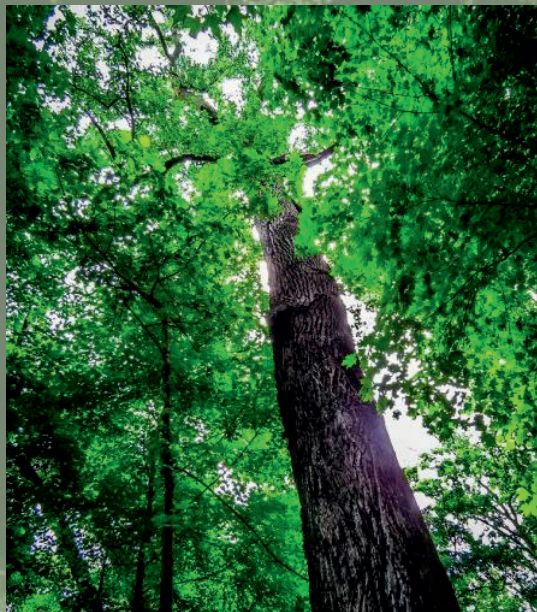


photo: Heidi Fuhrman

Surprisingly, there is evidence that this lovely, mature forest was once colonial farmland probably pastures given the topography and rockiness.

When farming ended, sun-loving red cedars grew in the abandoned fields, succeeded by the hardwoods.



Today, a few remaining silver trunks of the dead cedar and low rock walls cutting through the shady forest bear witness to change over time.

Dark evergreen hemlocks are a predominant forest tree in this sheltered valley. Their small cones attract birds

and perennial shade cools the brook and its denizens.

Unfortunately, many hemlocks have died here and in the Hudson Valley due to a non-native insect called the Hemlock woolly adelgid, one of several pests and pathogens that are killing and weakening mature trees in the Preserve; branches infested by the adelgid look coated by woolly snow.



on Thirteen Bridges Trail

Here and elsewhere in the Preserve large mature trees are succumbing to non-native insects, disease, and blowdowns. This coupled with inadequate tree



regeneration jeopardizes the forest of the future.

Hemlock seedlings, for example, are

capable of growing in the forest's shade, but they don't survive intense browsing by deer. Next time you're out, look closely, and you'll find very few tree seedlings in the forest.



photo: Robert Uricchio

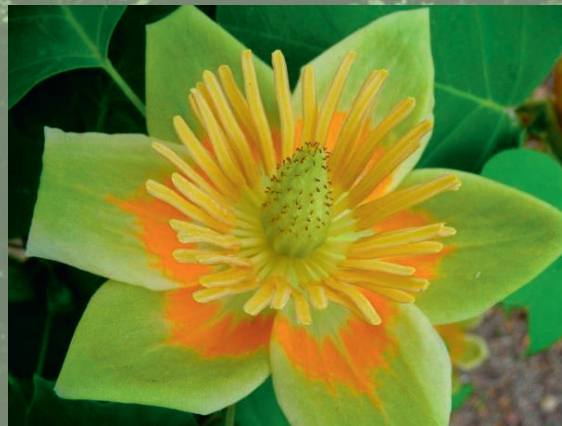
Most of the trail is shaded, but in the sunnier gaps, you'll notice clumps of Japanese barberry, a thorny invasive shrub that deer avoid. Imported in 1875

as an ornamental, this shrub is now problematic here and elsewhere in the Hudson Valley. Spread by birds, it has proliferated, contributing to the loss of



less hardy native wildflower and shrub species. Interestingly, research by University of Connecticut found that the multi-stemmed barberry creates a perfect, humid environment for ticks. The stems also shelter mice, one of the principle vectors for Lyme disease. Rates

of disease infected ticks correlate to barberry density. Barberry is one of several invasive species that the Preserve is removing and working to control.



The tulip poplar is the forest's tallest, straightest tree species. Some are 2-3 feet in diameter and over 110 feet tall, which makes it difficult to see their bright spring flowers of pale green with peachy-orange centers in the upper branches. The flowers attract hummingbirds, Eastern Swallowtail butterflies, and wild bees. Chipmunks, squirrels, and birds feed on their abundant seeds through the fall and winter. You'll certainly see chipmunks, except in deepest winter when they doze in tunnels and hollow trees. Most of the year they zip from log to rock and fill the woods with their chattering and bird-like calls. While they forage for seeds, fruits, nuts, mushrooms, insects, worms, and bird eggs, they are hunted by hawks, snakes, foxes, raccoons and other predators.

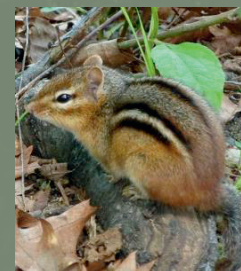


photo: Doris Wiese



For more information, visit the Preserve's blogspot: <http://rsppvunteers.com>

❖ Gallery Schedule at a Glance ❖

“Pastoral of the Peonies & Primary Florals”

May 1 - May 29, 2016

Peony Reception and Gallery Reception: Thursday, May 12 6PM - 9PM

Pastoral Peonies and Primary Florals are rich representative art subjects of some of the most beautiful plantings to be found blooming during the Spring. Within the exhibit are creations offering illusions of great depth, whether realistic or abstract, achieved by painting three dimensional, exquisitely detailed subjects. Diverse cultures create an added drama frequently shaping the presentation of the subjects such as Asian and Western influences. The chosen mediums and tools engaged by the artists may be equally unique. The exhibit is curated by Audrey Leeds.



R. Ashley Krohmal



Peggie Blizzard



Susan Lanzano

SNAP!

Community Photo Exhibit

August 14 - September 25, 2016

CRACKLE!

Community Art Exhibit

October 2 - November 6, 2016

To submit an application for community exhibits, please go to: rsppvunteers.blogspot.com

Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

Susan Antenen, Preserve Manager
 Laurence Gill, Director of Operations
 Steven Di Falco, Natural Resource Specialist
 Sean Liegey, Maintenance Supervisor
 Dominie Garcia, Maintenance Assistant
 Hipolito Guzman, Seasonal Maintenance Assistant
 Amy Zimmerman, Office Assistant
 Anthony Corda, Parking Lot and Visitor Service Assistant
 Mark Jones, Parking Lot and Visitor Service Assistant
 Dan Anderson, Sunday Visitor Service Assistant
 Mike Brereton, FORCES steward

From the Preserve Manager

By Susan Antenen

Grackles did not leave the Preserve this winter. In December, I was surprised to see earthworms and slugs on the trails. Fall and winter let us off easily with a few bitter bursts of very cold temperatures and one major blizzard (as of mid-March), so we shouldn't be surprised that Preserve visitation in 2015 was up. Laurence Gill, who's worked here for 22 years, says he noticed an uptick last summer also. Even though "everyone" goes to the beach on the 4th of July and during the dog days of August, our summer trails are no longer just for the chipmunks. I guess the secret is out! Sorry. But from a societal perspective, it's great that more people than ever are enjoying the beauty and nature of the Preserve.

Science is catching up with what many of us already know – a walk in the woods makes us feel better. Researchers are documenting and quantifying the many ways nature benefits mental and emotional health. Interestingly, John D. Rockefeller Sr. and Jr. thought about this many decades ago. They believed that all people, especially city dwellers, needed access to the wonders and beauty of nature. They designed the carriage road network to lead walkers and riders through the landscape and to encourage observation, contemplation, and surprise. I wish they could see how successful they were.

The Preserve provides even more benefits to you, your family and community, such as being habitat for pollinators essential for local food production. While honey bees from Europe are now part of the pollination story, for millennia native bees, butterflies, flies and even beetles evolved with wild and cultivated flowers, many which totally depend on insect pollination. If you enjoy eating squash, then you have the Hoary squash bee to thank. Tomatoes, tomatillos, apples, blackberries, strawberries, sunflowers and many more food plants grown by Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture are pollinated by some of the 80 species of wild bees and other native pollinators living in the forests and fields of the Preserve.

As we are becoming more aware, climate change is affecting us all. We urgently need to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide and methane released into the global atmosphere, but technological fixes are not all there is. Day after day the forest, soil, and natural habitats of Rockefeller Preserve, as well as natural lands worldwide, absorb and store tre-

mendous amounts of carbon. Trees convert sunlight and carbon dioxide (CO₂) into sugar, carbohydrates, and cellulose (wood). Every ring of growth in a tree is composed of carbon derived from CO₂. Next time you're on Big Tree Trail look up the tall, thick trunks of the largest oaks and tulip poplars. One half of the dry weight of each tree is carbon.

Although forests release some CO₂ through decay and respiration, a healthy forest generally absorbs and stores more carbon than it releases. The ecological stewardship we've begun in the Preserve to encourage native tree regeneration and foster a healthy forest system will increase its capacity to sequester carbon, because young trees have a high carbon absorption rate. Strong healthy trees are more resistant to pests and diseases, and may also be better able to adapt to the stresses of a changing climate.

The leafy maples, oaks, birch, and hickories of the Preserve and your community also scrub pollutants from the air and modulate the local temperature. They contribute to greenhouse gas reduction by providing shade and evaporative cooling, thereby reducing energy used for air conditioning.

Down on the ground, the soils and leaf litter of the forest floor and wetlands store and filter water. Imagine how much worse Pocantico River floods would be if we did not have the forest and wetlands functioning like sponges! For days, and even weeks after rainstorms, water is slowly released into nearby streams, such as Gory Brook.

This spring we begin another season of ecological stewardship to foster forest health and favor native wildflowers, shrubs and trees. Over time, we hope our land management will enhance these and additional ecosystem functions that benefit all of us. I personally enjoy viewing the forest on many levels and hope that the dynamic complexity of the landscape also enhances your appreciation of the Preserve.

Happy trails,
Susan



Migratory Birds That Stay All Summer

By William Golden

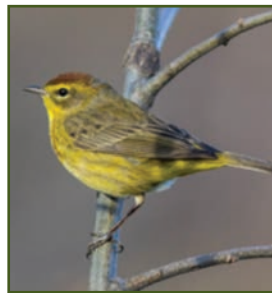
[Editor's Note: This article is part I of a two part series. Part II will appear in our Fall issue.]

Spring and summer are great seasons for observing birds in Rockefeller Preserve. We have our resident birds that are here all year long. The resident birds in the park include cardinals, chickadees, nuthatches, blue jays, titmice, red bellied woodpeckers, Downy woodpeckers and various types of sparrows. These are the same birds you will see at the birdfeeder spring, summer, fall and in the middle of winter. During spring and summer we also have migratory birds.

The migrating birds exhibit two different behavior patterns. There are those bird species that are just passing through. The second group of birds are those species that migrate here during spring and stay with us during the warm weather to mate and raise their young. Then they and their offspring head south for winter.

The Preserve has diverse habitats that attract many different types of birds. We have Swan Lake which attracts the waterfowl such as the ducks and herons. Then there are many forested areas that attract orioles and scarlet tanagers and meadows that attract eastern bluebirds and the indigo bunting.

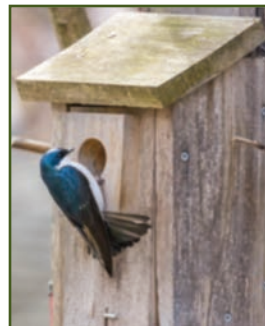
Warblers are a group of spring-summer migratory birds that are widespread in the park. The types of warblers that we are most likely to see are the yellow warbler, the yellow-rumped warbler and the palm warbler. The palm warbler has a brown crown, yellow throat and belly, whereas the yellow warbler is almost all yellow. Warblers can be found in the trees along the paths and especially the paths around the lake. Warblers are small, about 5 to 6 inches. Their songs are nice to hear, especially the sweet song of the yellow warbler.



Palm Warbler

Another migratory bird that we can find in the park throughout spring and summer is the Baltimore oriole. The female is yellowish orange with light brown and white wings, whereas the male is black and bright orange. They can be found in the trees along the trails, especially around Swan Lake. They build their nests on the underside of branches that overhang the lake or the path around the lake.

The way to locate nests is by observing birds and seeing where they consistently fly with nesting material or food in their mouths. When observing nesting birds, some bird etiquette is to be kept in mind. Keep your distance from nesting birds. Getting too close will stress out the birds. Don't startle or flush the birds. Disturbing a nest could result in the parents abandoning it or could scare the baby birds and cause premature fledging.



Tree Swallow at nest box

Tree swallows are very easy to observe in the park. You can see them rapidly flying over the surface of Swan Lake as they catch insects. They are blue green with white bellies. They nest in tree cavities and nest boxes. Last year, one of the nest boxes at the entrance of the parking lot was the home for a family of tree swallows.

Another bird that flies over the lake catching insects is the eastern kingbird. The kingbird is slightly larger than the tree swallow, 8 inches versus 5-6 inches and is brown with a white belly. Kingbirds can be observed perching on tree branches overhanging the lake. They fly out to the lake to catch insects and then return to the same branch. This insect-catching technique is called hawking.



Perched Kingbird

To see a list of recent bird sightings in Rockefeller Park, visit <https://ebird.org//ebird/hotspot/L299350>.

You can attend a free monthly walk at the Preserve, offered by the Saw Mill River Audubon, every 2nd Monday. The walk starts out at 7:30 from the main parking lot. For details visit www.sawmillriveraudubon.org.

William Golden has a new photo gallery devoted to Rockefeller State Park Preserve on his web site: <http://billgoldenphotography.com/rockefeller-state-park-preserve>



Pocantico, continued from page 1

Briarcliff Manor, and Mount Pleasant. The now mighty little river flows through Westchester County’s Pocantico Lake Park, before it reaches the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. Thence, its wooded course flows between Douglas Park and the historic Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, coursing past Philipseburg Manor Upper Mills and into the Hudson River at Kingsland Point Park.

After heavy rains, white water kayakers run the flood from the Pocantico Lake spillway to the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. In all seasons, equestrians, joggers, and hikers cross the Pocantico at the Old Croton Aqueduct State Park, and along Rockefeller’s celebrated carriage paths. Eels from the Sargasso Sea in the Atlantic migrate up the stream as far as Pocantico Lake.

More than 35% of the Pocantico Watershed is preserved as parklands. The Pocantico’s ribbon binds the wee 6 acre Chernick Audubon Sanctuary to Mt. Pleasant’s great 235 acre Hardscrabble Wilderness Town Park. The historic 19th century Camp Fire Reserve and Edith Macy Girl Scout forest and Center together conserve 655 acres. Here, as in many smaller local parks, live myriad species, including bob cats, deer, coyote, and red fox. Wildlife find refuge across the watershed within Consolidated Edison’s protected transmissions lines. Migratory birds abound.

Studies at Pace University’s Pleasantville campus have produced the first complete maps of the Pocantico and its tributaries. Students are examining how to link the many hiking trails that are found across 400 hectares. Citizen scientists of the Hudson Riverkeeper map 14 points of water contamination. The Village of Sleepy Hollow and Historic Hudson Valley are restoring the Pocantico estuary below the Philipsburg Manor colonial era dam.

In 2015 New York State’s legislature amended Section 911 of the Executive Law proclaiming the Pocantico to be an “inland waterway,” setting the stage for New York grants for inter-municipal planning to revitalize the entire Pocantico, reduce flooding along roads, and curb pollution. The next phase should be voluntary programs for habitat restoration on public and private properties.

Conservation along the eight miles upstream from the Rockefeller State Park Preserve are invaluable for safeguarding the waters and wildlife protected in the Park. The watershed is one symbiotic system of humans and nature.

*Nicholas Robinson is University Professor for the Environment at Pace University and Pocantico Watershed resident since 1972 (Sleepy Hollow). *This is the first publication of a map of the Pocantico River Watershed.*

Pocantico River Watershed

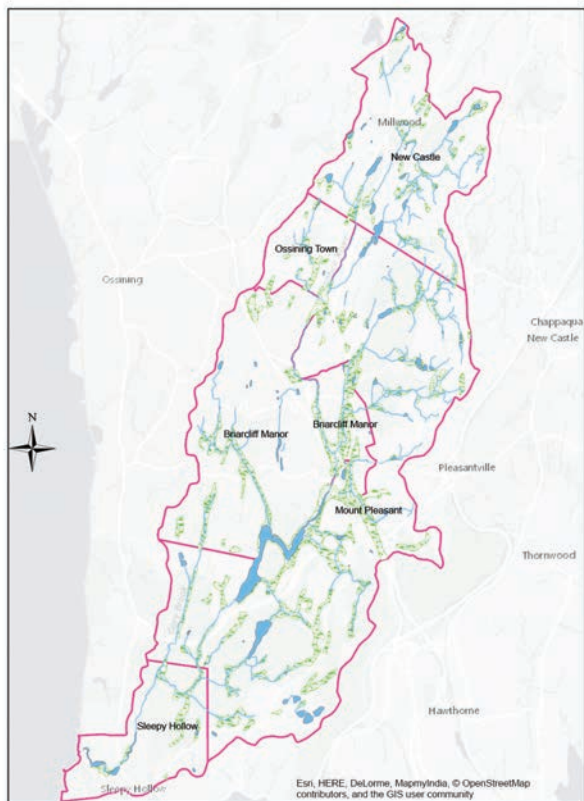



Image: Prof. Mary Margaret Minnis



Reaching the Friends

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve
P.O. Box 8444 • Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591
(914) 762-0209

The Preserve Observer

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Editors: Evelyn Hadad, Herbert Hadad
Letters and submissions are invited. Please contact us c/o the Friends.



Friends of the
Rockefeller State Park
PRESERVE

Celebrating 20 Years

The Preserve Observer

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Sleepy Hollow, New York 10591
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HERE TO ENJOY...OURS TO PRESERVE

ROCKWOOD RAMBLE 10K



Saturday June 4, 2016 - 9AM

10K Race on the Beautiful Groomed Carriage Roads of

Rockefeller State Park Preserve

1 Rockwood Road, Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591

All Proceeds for Trail Maintenance

Registration fee - \$35 through June 3rd • Registration fee day of race - \$40

Ample, Free Parking • Team Competition • Awards • T-Shirts • Refreshments

Register Online www.register.chronotrack.com/r/19695

Additional Race Info: www.friendsrock.org/preserve-events/rocks-races/rockwood-ramble-10k

Thank You to Our Sponsors Phelps Memorial Hospital and Central Park Track Club