

# The Great Swamp Watershed Association **ACROSS THE WATERSHED**

Fall 2008

*Sally Rubin, Executive Director  
and the Board of Trustees  
of the Great Swamp Watershed Association*

Invite you to the  
**2008 Green Acres Gala**

**Wednesday, October 22**  
6:00 p.m.

Basking Ridge Country Club  
185 Madisonville Road

Attire: "Country" or "City"  
Blue Jeans and Boas encouraged!

Sponsored by  
**Wachovia**

Music provided by **MamaLuke**




The Great Swamp Watershed Association will hold its 2008 Gala on Wednesday, October 22, 2008 at the Basking Ridge Country Club. Guests at our "Green Acres" Gala will enjoy a cocktail reception featuring sumptuous hors d'oeuvres and silent auction bidding, followed by a seated dinner, dancing and keynote address by Michael Catania, founder and president of Conservation Resources, Inc.

*(continued on the next page)*

## **Local Area Schools to Participate in GSWA's "One River One Community" Pilot Program**

*by Hazel England, GSWA Director of Education and Outreach*

GSWA is excited to announce the kick-off of the One River One Community educational program which will partner students from two watershed area schools — Madison High School and Mendham Borough elementary school, with two Newark-based schools — Broad Street School and St Vincent's Academy, for a year of shared learning about the river that they all share, the Passaic. Through shared field trip experiences,

online collaboration and high school to elementary school teaching, the students will learn about the environmental, ecological and cultural history of their shared resource. The project will take place during the full academic year, and culminate in a presentation at PSEG's Newark headquarters. We are all very excited about this new pilot program and will share our experiences as the year unfolds. 

## **Breakfast Briefings Resume**

Rise and shine! As we continue our Breakfast Briefings series, this is your opportunity to learn more from guest speakers and environmental specialists. Each of these events is from 8 - 9:30 a.m. at GSWA Headquarters, 568 Tempe Wick Road, Harding Township (next to Jockey Hollow).

**Tuesday, September 9, 2008**  
**Rain Gardens: Soup to Nuts**  
Hazel England, GSWA Staff

Learn more about the benefits of storing the water from your roof and driveways in a water-quality-improving rain garden. We will demonstrate using our very own rain garden, installed this summer using native plants and water diverted from a third of the GSWA building's roofline. Program will be outside in the garden weather permitting!

**Tuesday, October 14, 2008**  
**How to Get Rid of Hazardous Wastes  
Safely, Efficiently and Legally!**

Penny Jones, Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority

Improper disposal of hazardous waste poses a huge risk to human, animal and ecosystem health. So what should you do with those used batteries, the half empty paint cans or the mercury light bulbs that currently clutter the garage floor? Penny Jones, Educator with the Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority, will share how to dispose of (almost) everything to keep regional landfills and water courses healthy.

*(More Breakfast Briefings on page 10)*



*Printed on recycled paper.  
Please recycle again.*

## World Water Monitoring Day Coming This Fall

The Great Swamp Watershed Association has recently become a partner in World Water Monitoring Day. This means that you can do your own water monitoring at any stream or body of water in the watershed anytime between September 18 and October 18, 2008. Use one of the test kits provided, post your results on-line and look at the test results of others who are doing the same water monitoring tests all over the world.

Anyone can participate. All you need to do is register the monitoring site of your choice (any part of any stream or body of water within the Great Swamp watershed) at [www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org), and contact GSWA for an official World Water Monitoring test kit. The kit provides instructions on how to monitor for pH, turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen. After you've completed your testing, which should take about 10-15 minutes, and posted your results on-line, GSWA will be able to view the results of everyone in the watershed who participated. Not only will you have fun learning what's in your water, you'll also be directly supporting GSWA's water monitoring efforts!

You can head out on your own any time between September 18 and October 18, or join GSWA's Stream Team on **Thursday, October 2**, around 10 a.m. as they take their kits out to a few local sites.

*(continued on page 10)*

## More Visual Stream Assessment Training Is Offered by GSWA

*by Kelley Curran, GSWA Director of Water Quality Programs*

You might be surprised to learn that a great deal of useful monitoring can be done by merely observing streams and waterways and taking detailed notes on what you see.

The main reason for a visual stream assessment program is to increase the number of trained eyes observing what is going on in our streams and rivers. Even simple information, such as stream depth and width as well as the location of pools and riffles can be helpful. What wildlife is observable? What plants? Is the water surface covered with algae or a film? What condition are the stream banks in? Are there trees overhanging the water? And, of course, visual assessment team members can be the first to discover pollutants or man-made hazards in our waterways.


People with a desire to get out, explore the natural beauties of the Great Swamp Watershed and aid in a good cause may be interested in volunteering to help conduct Visual Assessments of Stream Reaches in the Great Swamp Watershed. You don't need to be a trained scientist or have a Ph.D. All you need is a sharp eye and the ability to collect data.

The primary purpose of this program is to help GSWA gather data on water bodies that are currently not being assessed by the staff of the NJDEP. This important data can be used in several ways. At the local level, it provides valuable information to municipalities. At the greater watershed level, it helps to identify or follow-up on

areas in need of attention or remediation. At the state level it serves to identify impaired waterways and provide baseline information for further studies.

Interested volunteers must attend a training session with an Americorps member or GSWA's Director of Water Quality Programs. The training session lasts about four hours and includes both a classroom session and a field demonstration. Volunteers must agree to conduct visual assessments of their assigned/chosen stream section in the Great Swamp Watershed two times per calendar year using the NJDEP Visual Assessment protocol. One assessment needs to be conducted in May or June and one must be conducted in November or December on each section, so the minimum time commitment is one year.

The Great Swamp Watershed Association will provide the necessary equipment. All assessments will be conducted by at least two people for safety reasons. The time needed to complete one assessment is estimated to be 2-3 hours, including, driving time from GSWA's office to and from the site.

The next training session will be held on **Sunday, November 2, 2008**, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at GSWA headquarters, 568 Tempe Wick Rd., Harding, NJ. If you're interested, contact Kelley Curran, Director of Water Quality Programs at 973-538- 3500 x16 or [kcurran@greatswamp.org](mailto:kcurran@greatswamp.org). 

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### "Green Acres" Gala *(continued from the previous page)*


An exciting addition to this year's event is entertainment provided by MamaLuke, a popular area rock-n-roll band. The 2008 Gala is sponsored by Wachovia. Additional corporate sponsors to date include Wyeth, Peapack-Gladstone Bank and Pfizer.

"Our intention is to have a fun event that captures the essence of the organization's mission", says Sally

Rubin, Executive Director. "The 'Green Acres' theme certainly conveys a double meaning, allowing the Great Swamp Watershed Association to promote open space and other environmental issues, with a whimsical reference to the popular 1960s sitcom."

2008 Gala Committee members include Diana Blankman, Susan Budd, Roger Edwards, Anne Essner, Cathy

Hackett, Pam Harding, Edward G. Kirby, Nancy Miller-Rich, Pat Moody, Dot Stillinger and Linda Wilson.

Tickets are \$150 per person, and are available now by calling the Development Department at 973-538-3500, extension 18. Net proceeds from the Gala support the ongoing programs and activities of the Great Swamp Watershed Association. We hope to see you there! 

## ACROSS THE WATERSHED

is a publication of the Great Swamp Watershed Association. GSWA is a membership supported non-profit organization that protects the water you drink and the places you love. We preserve the natural beauty and promote the health of the local environment now and for the future.

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## ACROSS THE WATERSHED

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## From the Desk of the Executive Director

by Sally Rubin



Wow, summer is nearly over. Usually summer is a time for resting and relaxing. Let me assure you, that has not been the case at GSWA! We have been hard at work.

We were so fortunate to have had three college interns with us this summer. Kristen Vanderbilt came to us from Marist College and Jack Ackerman and Jane Zhao came through Princeton University's Class of '69 internship program. All three were a wonderful addition and we kept them busy all summer! They worked hard helping to plant over 600 native species shrubs for stream bank restoration at the Conservation Management Area. They also spent their summer with us researching various topics and attending many meetings, including a day of lobbying in Trenton. We hope they enjoyed their time with us and we wish them all the best.

The Millington Quarry in Bernards Township has become an issue of regional significance this summer. As always, Great Swamp Watershed Association is concerned with water quality and quantity. To that end, we are taking an active position on this issue in order to protect the water of the Passaic River. We'll keep you posted.

Also this summer, we were the lucky beneficiaries of six corporate workdays with Goldman Sachs' Community TeamWorks volunteers – that's double the number of workdays we were fortunate to receive from Goldman Sachs last year! This year's corporate volunteers helped to clear invasive species, plant native species plants, build boardwalks, and repair deer fencing at the CMA. They also built the wonderful demonstration rain garden and walkways at our office. We are so grateful for the support of these volunteers and all they accomplish.

On the "water front," our Director of Water Quality Monitoring took her volunteers out on August 5 to continue our stream monitoring program. We also held a stream clean up at Loantaka Park in June. And coming this fall, everyone who lives, works or plays in the watershed will have an opportunity to participate with us in World Water Monitoring Day.

Also this fall, our Breakfast Briefings are back! Our spring meetings were a huge success, and we have four exciting new topics scheduled, beginning on September 9. Also in September is something new. We are working with the Somerset Hills YMCA to host a Ten Towns Bike Tour on September 27. There will be routes for families as well as more serious bikers. The routes will lead through many of the towns in our watershed and will point out areas of interest along the way. We are so pleased to be collaborating with the Y on this wonderful event and hope to see you there!

This year's Gala will be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2008, at the Basking Ridge Country Club. It's going to include a silent auction with great items, a seated dinner and dancing to a fun rock-n-roll band, MamaLuke. The theme is Green Acres and the attire is city chic or country casual. We guarantee a good time!

Also on the horizon is our first golf outing. Save the date, April 27, 2009, for an opportunity to play the Trump National Golf Course in Bedminster. This club has been designed to be extremely environmentally friendly. It has grassland habitat for endangered bobolinks, and a committee exists to monitor water quality on an ongoing basis.

Rounding out our busy summer is the completion of our strategic plan, and I think it's safe to say that we are working hard to fulfill our mission: "The Great Swamp Watershed Association is dedicated to protecting and improving water resources in the region by monitoring local streams, advocating for intelligent land use, and educating our communities about water quality and quantity and their effect on the health and natural beauty of the local environment." 🌿



## Watershed Watch – Environmental Hot Spots

As part of our mission to protect the water you drink and the places you love, GSWA advocates for responsible development practices and promotes intelligent land use. We work to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and legislation at all levels of the government. Here are some areas we are currently focusing on:

### Morris Township

On July 23, 2008, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) announced that it has reached an agreement to purchase 188 acres of land from the Order of St. Benedict of New Jersey that owns and manages Delbarton School and St. Mary's Abbey in Morris Township. The expected sale price is \$13,750,000. GSWA will apply for a Green Acres grant for \$500,000 to assist in this purchase. Once conveyed, Morris County Park Commission plans to include the property in Lewis Morris County Park. GSWA is pleased to participate in the amicable resolution of this recently contentious issue and we look forward to participating in the preservation of this property.

### Bernards Township

Millington Quarry, Inc. and the quarry operator, Tilcon NY Inc., are in litigation with Bernards Township regarding the most recent reclamation plan submitted by the quarry in anticipation of the cessation of quarrying activities in the next eight years. The primary issue at stake is the importation of fill — both its quality and quantity. GSWA intends to file a motion to intervene in the court action based on the regional significance of the project and our mission of protecting water. 🌿

## GSWA Experts Available to Speak to Area Groups

Do you wonder, "What is in my water?" or "What Can I Do to Ensure Clean Water for My Children?" These questions and dozens more about water quality, land preservation and local efforts to protect the environment can be answered by GSWA's Speakers' Bureau. Experts from the Great Swamp Watershed Association will present interesting, hands-on presentations that will educate and inspire members of your local club or group. Call today for more details: (973) 538-3500.

The **Annual Meeting** of the members of the Association will be held at 5:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, October 22, 2008**, at the Basking Ridge Country Club, followed by the Annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.

## Volunteers Help Clean Up Loantaka Brook

On June 7, 2008, GSWA volunteers battled the heat to remove debris from Loantaka Brook in celebration of National River Cleanup Week. For several hours, volunteers and staff, starting around the Kitchell Pond area, moved up and down stream to fill 10 trash bags.

Much of the debris collected at this year's event were balls of all shapes and sizes, along with the usual suspects — aluminum cans, Styrofoam packaging items and plastic straw wrappers that come from children's juice boxes. According to Kelley Curran, Director of Water Quality Programs, "We didn't have any tires this year, and that was surprising. We did find some tires last year."



*Pitching in to help clean up Loantaka Brook in Morris Township on June 7 as part of Great Swamp Watershed Association's participation in National River Cleanup Week are GSWA summer interns Jack Ackerman of Randolph and Jane Zhao of Holmdel, along with Kelley Curran, GSWA's Director of Water Quality Programs, and volunteers Brian Bowmaster of Morristown, Frank Stilling of Chatham, and Nicole Hedinger, Lisa Stevens and Wes Boyce of Bernardsville.*

"It really shows that our clean-up last year had some staying power, and that people are just being more aware to clean up their trash," Curran said.

The plan for next year's stream cleanup is to coordinate the event around Earth Week in April. "If we do it in April, there won't be as much vegetation, like plants and weeds and grass. Poison Ivy was another issue we had to caution the volunteers about, and those are all things you probably won't have to deal with in April," she said. GSWA is also considering a fall cleanup for next year.

Thanks to all who participated in this year's cleanup, and to all who have endeavored to keep the park clean throughout the year! 🌿

## Fall Educational Programs

Join friends and members of GSWA for one or more of these educational programs to learn more about what's going on in and around the swamp! We ask that you please pre-register for these programs to learn meeting locations and other information. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a snack for the walks. Bring binoculars or wildlife guides if you have them.

These programs are free for members. For non-members, the fee is \$10 per adult, \$5 for each child five and over, and \$30 per family. Pre-registration is required. Visit [www.greatswamp.org](http://www.greatswamp.org) and click on our secure Event Registration page, or contact Hazel England, [hazele@greatswamp.org](mailto:hazele@greatswamp.org).

### **Hellgrammites and Scuds...The Macro Invertebrates of Silver Brook** **Saturday, September 20, 10 - 11:30 a.m.**

GSWA Conservation Management Area, Tiger Lily Lane, Harding Township.

If you don't know a crayfish from a hellgrammite, a pond strider from a scud, we have the solution! Macro invertebrates are the bugs and more that live in the sediment of streams and ponds. Come and find out who the creatures of the swamp are, and what lives in Silver Brook. We will use dip nets and seines to catch creatures, examine them and let them go. The macro invertebrates that we find can indicate how good the stream's water quality is. Join us at our 50-acre Conservation Management Area. Wear old clothes that can get wet.

### **Fall Colors Hike – Conservation Management Area**

**Saturday, October 25, 10 a.m. - noon**

Meet at the Friends of the Great Swamp Gift Store, Pleasant Plains Road, Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

Fall is a great time to observe animals as they go about their search for food and live their daily lives. It is often easier to look for signs of wildlife than to see the animals themselves. Celebrate the Fall by playing Nature Detective as we search for tracks and scats, and the dazzling array of fall colors. Event will take place rain or shine.

### **Moonlight Nature Hike** **Friday, December 12, 6 - 7:30 p.m.**

Jockey Hollow Visitor Center, Morristown National Historical Park.

While we don't guarantee the moonlight, there will be plenty of history and nature to learn about on this night hike around the trails of Morristown National Historical Park. We might hear some watershed inhabitants including owls, flying squirrels or other night noises, perhaps even coyotes calling! We'll play some games to learn more about night senses, and revel in being out after dark without a flashlight! 🦋

### **Watershed Fun Scout Night** **Friday, November 14, 6:30 - 8 p.m.**

GSWA Headquarters, Tempe Wick Rd., Harding Township

Join us at GSWA headquarters to learn some amazing stuff about the watershed you live in. Through hands-on activities and games we will learn what we can do to keep the water and land of Great Swamp safe for all its inhabitants. Make your very own water treatment set-up, and learn about the life of a drop of water from cloud to stream. \$10 per scout (adults free) includes refreshments. Best suited for ages 6-10 year old boy and girl scouts with an adult for every three scouts.

## Fall/Winter Workshops for Educators

Great Swamp Watershed Association is facilitating several interesting and useful workshops for K-12 formal and non-formal educators. Educators will experience activities they can use back in the classroom or Nature Center to teach across the educational curriculum. The workshops are hands-on, led by Hazel England, an experienced naturalist educator, and provide participants with activity guides for each workshop. The 6-hour workshops are offered at little or minimal cost, and often include breakfast. They confer six NJDOE professional development credits too! For more information call Hazel, Director of Education and Outreach, (973) 538-3500 ext 20, email her at [hazele@greatswamp.org](mailto:hazele@greatswamp.org) or contact workshop locations directly to register.

### **Project Wet Workshop** **Friday, October 17, 2008, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

GSWA Headquarters, 568 Tempe Wick Road, Morristown (973) 538-3500 ext. 11

This workshop is an interdisciplinary, supplemental water education program for formal and non-formal educators, K-12. It is hands-on, action-packed and informative! Educators will learn by doing, experiencing activities they can use to teach all kinds of water concepts from the water cycle, to water properties, aquatic ecosystems, and water pollution prevention. Participants will receive the curriculum and activity guide. The guide is a collection of innovative, water-related activities that are hands-on, easy to use and incorporate a variety of educational formats. Cost: \$25, including breakfast.

*(More Workshops on page 7)*



# Troubled Waters: Pharma Products in Our Water Supply

by Paul Hackett and the GSWA Science & Technology Committee

Many of us instantly recognize the headline hazards to clean drinking water such as lead, mercury, benzene, or PCBs that have been studied, tested for, regulated, and in the news for decades. Now a recent Associated Press (AP) article has highlighted a new area of concern in the gamut of drugs that are being discovered in our water supplies. These un- or partially-metabolized drugs are being recycled back into the water environment after either passing through their human hosts or simply being flushed down the drain. The question is what harm these compounds introduce to the water systems and what the impact is to those of us who obtain our drinking water from them.

Pharmaceuticals and personal care products, or PPCPs (the acronym used by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection), that we ingest or apply to our bodies are showing up in our nation's waterways including poster-child compounds like estrogen, antibiotics, anti-depressants, testosterone, heart medications, anti-epilepsy drugs — even caffeine. If we pop it in, we inevitably excrete it out and the sum of the mix is defying standard wastewater treatment processes. PPCPs are a particular concern because these drugs are created for treating specific human conditions, unlike industrial toxins which have a much different genesis.

Government organizations are not far along with any standard tests, monitoring procedures or conclusions in this new area of drugs in the water. The EPA at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater) states that while there have been demonstrated effects in the water ecology, no evidence has proven similar effects on human health. Digging deeper in the FAQ section, however, they admit 'the risks are uncertain' and show particular interest in drugs that could affect pregnant woman and young children. Ironically, just below the topic of PPCPs, the EPA reviews its Contaminant Candidate Lists of over one hundred

suspected dangerous chemicals and microbes not yet studied — but not one drug or other personal care product made their way onto this roster. Meanwhile, the NJDEP has seven areas of Surface Water Quality Standards including — pathogens, nutrients, pesticides, volatile organic compounds, inorganics, radionuclides and disinfection byproducts, but no program is currently monitoring recycled molecules like caffeine and pharmaceuticals like estrogen, which has already proven harmful to aquatic life in numerous studies across the entire water geography of the United States. Refer to <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bwqsa/> for additional information.

Our drug usage is also on the rise. A recent Star-Ledger article listed the top ten most widely prescribed drugs, with the leading anti-depressant prescriptions rising to 232 million last year; the other top nine prescriptions added to over 1 billion prescriptions in total. Prescriptions for cardiac, seizures and cholesterol rounded out the categories.

So, what can be done? The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/index.html>) tells us that proper PPCP disposal will help prevent pollution and to find Take-Back programs for our leftover drugs. Barring the availability of these programs in your community, they recommend contacting state and local authorities and provide links to NJDEP websites, such as <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dshw/rtrp/disposal.pdf> which offers guidelines for the proper disposal of household medication.

Regional water suppliers are also just coming into the age of PPCP concern. Of the 62 large water suppliers in the exhaustive AP research, many are not testing for these products. Though GWSA monitors sodium, chloride and total dissolved solids, more information is needed to understand and facilitate any broad scale PPCP screening program at the local level.

Just what short- or long-term effects extremely low doses of PPCPs have on humans is yet to be determined. Man-made compounds, including drugs, are in our water systems — the EPA officially found over 100 PPCPs in 2007 alone. Are the young and elderly more susceptible to health effects from drinking water contaminated with trace levels of PPCPs? What tests need to be developed to monitor concentrations in effluent? What will be the standard? It will take further study — more articles, research, awareness and grass roots action — to increase the knowledge base in this growing area of concern.

For now, let all of us do our part in properly disposing of our unused medications as instructed by the NJDEP. 🌱

*The full version of this paper is on our website at [www.greatswamp.org/TroubledWaters.pdf](http://www.greatswamp.org/TroubledWaters.pdf).*

## Guidelines for Proper Disposal of Household Medication

*From New Jersey Environmental Protection (NJDEP)*

1. Keep medicine in original container. Mark out personal information on prescription bottles.
2. Mix liquid medicine with undesirable substances like coffee grounds, cat litter or dirt. Dilute pills with water, then add coffee grounds, cat litter or dirt.
3. Place bottles in an opaque container, like a yogurt container, and secure lid; or wrap in a dark colored plastic bag.
4. Hide the container in the trash. Do NOT recycle.

**Do NOT dispose of medication down the drain or toilet.**



## Goldman Sachs Employee Volunteers Build Rain Garden at GSWA Headquarters

Eleven Goldman Sachs employees and two of their children planted a rain garden at GSWA Headquarters this summer as part of the company's Community Teamworks Program, through which employees can volunteer their time with non-profit organizations through pre-organized events.

GSWA's garden — designed to serve as a model for residents of the watershed interested in building one of their own — consists of 18 plant species, all of which are native to the area. Some also attract butterflies, and several birdhouses have been placed in the garden as well. It is watered by rain flowing from the building's rain gutters. Low-flow soaker hoses provide water during dry spells.

A rain garden is much like your typical household garden, but is designed to absorb runoff from impervious surfaces like roofs, pavement, and compacted grass. This prevents soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation of our streams and rivers by allowing rain to infiltrate into the groundwater system where it can replenish drinking water supplies



that feed private wells and public water systems.

"Rain gardens are a perfect example of how all of our members can incorporate environmentally friendly practices into their everyday lives. Everyone with a yard can plant a rain garden and lessen the environmental impact of runoff from their property," said Hazel England, Director of Education and Outreach. 🌱

If the company you work for would be interested in partnering with GSWA on a community "give-back" project, please contact Hazel England, Director of Education and Outreach, at [hazele@greatswamp.org](mailto:hazele@greatswamp.org).

## Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Many of our current and past volunteers and their families joined GSWA staff and trustees at this year's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held in June at GSWA headquarters in Harding Township.

Recognized for their outstanding support and dedication to GSWA's



mission were Lisa Stevens and Wes Boyce, who have worked tirelessly over the years at the Conservation Management Area to remove invasive species, install native plants, erect boardwalks and deer fencing...and are always up for whatever challenge we throw their way.

Also honored were Charles Straniero and Frances Call, who joined GSWA this year as much-needed administrative volunteers, helping to stuff envelopes, hang pictures, plant and water flowers, and so much more.

Again, our heartfelt thanks and deepest appreciation to the invaluable support from all of our volunteers. We couldn't do it without you! 🌱

## Fall/Winter Workshops for Educators

(continued from page 5)

### Wonders of Wetlands Workshop Wednesday, November 12, 2008, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Morris County Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center Chatham (973) 635-9391

WOW! is an instructional guide for educators that provides a resourceful and creative collection of wetland activities, information, and ideas. The WOW! Guide includes over 50 hands-on multidisciplinary activities in lesson plan format, extensive background information on wetlands, ideas for student action projects, and a wetlands resource guide. WOW! has been called "The most comprehensive introduction to wetland issues and definitions." This workshop is great for educators who have access to or are considering creating their own wetland site. Cost: \$15, including breakfast.

### Project WILD Workshop Wednesday, December 13, 2008, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Trailside Nature Center, Watchung Reservation (908) 789-3670.

Go WILD about learning, as you experience one of the leading supplemental environmental education curricula. The Project WILD activity guide contains hands-on activities that K-12 teachers across the curriculum can use to teach about wildlife and natural resources. The activities take students from awareness to action, and are designed to be incorporated into most major subject areas, strengthening basic skills while teaching existing curricula. Activities can be used to meet state standards for core course proficiencies. Best of all, the activities are enjoyable and educational. Cost: \$25, including breakfast. 🌱

## Spring Appeal Donors

GSWA would like to thank the following members who contributed so generously to our Spring 2008 appeal:

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## Welcome New Members

Special thanks to the following people who became members of GSWA between April 19 and August 12, 2008:

Mr. Scott Adams, Mendham  
Mr. Jason Andris, Far Hills  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Appel, Mendham  
Ms. Joanna Askey, Gillette  
Arun Bhattacharyya, Green Village  
Ms. Margaret Bowie, Morristown  
Mr. Douglas Brinkworth, Bernardsville  
Mrs. Kelly Browne, Chatham  
Ms. Geraldine Burden, Mendham  
Mr. Mark Byrne, Basking Ridge  
Mr. Jay Cogswell, Chatham  
Mr. Robert Courtemanche, New Vernon  
Ms. Alison Ann Deeb, Morristown  
Ms. Marian Desimone, Bernardsville  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Dolan, Bluffton, SC  
Mr. Hugh Donohue, Mendham  
Mr. John Early, Stirling  
Ms. Virginia Endres, Livingston  
Gabfer, Inc., Chatham  
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Ms. Barbara E. Gee, Morristown  
Mr. Jeff Gold, Robbinsville  
Ms. Melissa Goldman, Chatham  
Walter and Marie Higinbotham, Madison

Mr. Joseph Ireland, Chatham  
Mrs. Susan Kessel, Basking Ridge  
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Ms. Alice Koster, Brookside  
Mrs. Jeanne Manley, Indian River Shores, FL  
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Ms. Meredith Swenson, Stirling  
Mr. David Teiger, Bernardsville  
Mr. Leo M. Uva, East Hanover  
Ms. Mary Waeschle, Chatham  
Mr. Gerard Weir, Green Village

## Hats Off to Goldman Sachs!

*by Hazel England, GSWA Director of Education and Outreach*

Continuing our four-year association with Goldman Sachs, three Community TeamWorks volunteer programs with 65 volunteers donating 390 hours were originally planned for this year. Yet, as Goldman Sachs expanded its corporate volunteer program, three days became six — adding 45 extra volunteers who donated an additional 270 hours! We built boardwalks, mulched trails, fought with multiflora rose bushes to clear choked stream banks, and replanted many wildlife beneficial native shrubs. This year we also worked at GSWA's office to plant a rain garden and install a walkway.

Great Swamp Watershed Association is grateful for this corporate relationship that provides not only the volunteers but also a budget so that we can undertake the work they are scheduled to complete without a financial burden on a small

non profit such as ours. A total of almost \$8,000 has enabled repairs to the 23-acre deer enclosure, 350 feet of boardwalk, over 400 plants and the purchase of several durable tools.

These workdays are always a combination of a hard day's work by Goldman Sachs volunteers and their team leaders, along with team leaders and volunteers from GSWA to achieve the goal. We endeavor to have fun and share natural and watershed facts as we work, and a good time is had by all! 🌲

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### Water Monitoring Day *(continued from page 2)*

Contact Kelley Curran, GSWA Director of Water Quality Programs, if you have questions or are interested in participating: 973-538-3500 x16 or [kcurran@greatswamp.org](mailto:kcurran@greatswamp.org). 🌲

## Grants and Corporate Contributions

The following foundations and corporations have contributed generously to our mission thus far in 2008. Thank you all for your support!

F. M. Kirby Foundation  
Goldman Sachs  
Maersk Inc.  
Peapack-Gladstone Bank  
Pfizer Inc.  
Ralph M. Cestone Foundation  
Schering-Plough Corp.  
Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Assn.  
Wachovia  
Wyeth

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### Breakfast Briefings *(continued from page 1)*

#### **Tuesday, November 11, 2008** **Climate Change and You... Perfect Together?**

Michael Kennish, Rutgers University

What impacts will climate change have on New Jersey, and in particular Great Swamp Watershed? Though profound consequences of global warming will be felt along the NJ coast, inland areas will not be immune. With altered weather patterns, increases in flooding, altered aquatic and terrestrial communities and weather changes will just be some of the impacts felt.

#### **Tuesday, December 9, 2008** **The Rocky Story of Road Salt**

Ray Cywinski, Manager, Watershed & Environmental Resources, United Water New Jersey

As temperatures plummet and roads around the region ice, the ice melt and rock salt bags appear. Learn more about the major effects of rock salt on the area's water quality year round, and ways homeowners can ameliorate the effects of sodium chloride. What you learn might well lower your blood pressure too!!

A complimentary hot breakfast buffet is included. Seating is open to the public. Donations gratefully accepted. To pre-register, please call our Events Line at 973-538-3500 x22. Check our website for more information. 🌲

# Not Just Pretty Flowers

by Blaine Rothauser, CMA Biologist

During a recent workday at the Conservation Management Area (CMA), GSWA volunteer Lisa Stevens noticed something unusual growing from a stream bank. She had spotted a plant she'd never seen before. The scrap of green turned out to be mad-dog skullcap (*Scutellaria laterifolia*), a member of the mint family and a new plant for the CMA's floral database. This plant does not cure rabies as the common name alludes, but is known medicinally as

a sedative. Besides the interesting facts associated with plants we continue to find at the CMA is the fact that we keep finding new species at all!

Blaine Rothauser has been tracking the species that inhabit the CMA since GSWA took title of the first property in 1996. The total now stands at 213 species of plants (including mad-dog skullcap). Almost every time the property is walked, a new species notches up the species list. Lisa's latest discovery was not an exception but rather the rule. In July alone, five plants were added that had not been recorded at the site before — Canada St. Johnswort (*Hypericum canadense*), Hairy Willow Herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), Galinsoga (*Galinsoga ciliata*), Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*), and Water Plantain (*Alisma subcordatum*). Vegetation patterns have varied, and flora chanced upon one year has disappeared again in subsequent years. You just never know what you'll see along the trail. It's that element of surprise that keeps naturalists returning to the site.

Blaine remembers seeing ditch-stonecrop (*Penthorum sedoides*) many years back growing in, well, a ditch of course, and saying to himself, "now that I found it I'll see it every year." Ditch stonecrop has not been seen there since. The CMA is a mixed bag of floral tricks whose presentations are barely understood. The CMA is like a

small stage in the greater theater that is the biosphere that we all inhabit. The interaction between stage and lighting crew, make-up and costume designers is tantamount to hydrology, soil conditions,

changing climate patterns, human impact, and animal interaction, all tugging and pulling at what we see playing on the theater stage. Maybe during the year ditch-stonecrop was spotted, the chemistry of the bottom sediment matched the plant's growth requirements,

and subsequently human impacts to surface hydrology changed that condition to the detriment of the species. Maybe the plant just didn't have the right pollinators available for future propagation, or a fatal fungus was introduced through some biological process.

A good example of how local area ecology can change "on a dime" is happening right now in the CMA and probably your backyard. Multiflora rose, a thorny shrub and major component of any forest-edge habitat, is a noxious, alien species from Asia. Volunteers have been wrestling with it as part of our stewardship at the CMA and have recently gained the unsolicited support of a friendly ally — Rosa rosetta. This virus-borne disease is sweeping through the genus like a California wildfire. On the one hand it is welcome relief in the fight against an aggressive non-native plant, on the other hand the disease is indiscriminate to the genus and will inevitably wipe out our native swamp rose (*Rosa palustris*), also found onsite. Once this major invasive understory shrub is gone things could get very interesting ecologically.

At the end of the day it's all about the augmentation of biodiversity (plants and animals in total). The flora that abounds at the CMA is the support system for all

the "biostrings" to which they contribute. It's only when you expand the concept of biologic association out to all 213 species of onsite-identified flora that you begin to understand the ecological significance of biodiversity, and understand why we steward over the site like a bevy of mother hens.

Our intrepid volunteers are helping to even the playing field in favor of native vegetation. Success has blossomed from a multidimensional approach to conservation management. GSWA staff and volunteers, with the aid of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, erected a 23-acre deer enclosure in 2005. This has stopped deer from continuing to destroy precious herbaceous and understory habitat, resulting in a major up-tick to biodiversity.

It may appear to some as if we are playing god. This may in part be true, but as a "Conservation Management Area" the operative word is management. It's a race to the finish line between areas of

open space saved and area developed. Those areas fortunate enough to be set aside will result in the future sustainability of human and non-human life forms alike and will inevitably require sound stewardship and yes — management.

Think of GSWA's CMA as a prototype for this future inevitability.

During the past decade, management of the site has been a success as calculated by the increasing number of plant and animal species observed from the outset in 1996. This statement is both scientifically and anecdotally defensible. By safeguarding the ecological stability of the CMA through maximizing biodiversity, we aid in its protection. This same protection extends implicitly to the 55-square-mile Great Swamp Watershed that includes the CMA. 🌲



Golden digger wasp on horsemint.  
Photo by Blaine Rothauser.



Clouded sculpture on Canada goldenrod.  
Photo by Blaine Rothauser.



Natural History Photography Workshop

Have you ever wondered how wildlife photographers get those amazing pictures of birds, bugs and mammals that live the majority of their lives out of good camera range?

Join ace photographer **Blaine Rothaus** for a hands-on workshop to improve your wildlife photography skills. How do people in the wildlife photography trade get those images of animals that are rarely seen in the wild — like coyotes or great horned owls? All will be revealed during the first hour in an in-class presentation. Learn more about the use of photography blinds, infrared slaves, setup tanks and specialty field equipment.

Then venture out to see what the Great Swamp has to offer to photographers. Bring your own camera equipment and learn some tips and tricks to get those great shots! Event will take place rain or shine.

The cost is \$40 for non members, \$25 for members. Continental breakfast included. **Saturday, October 11, 2008, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Meet at GSWA Headquarters on Tempe Wick Rd. Call (973) 538-3500 x22 for more information.



Hummingbird nectaring on cardinal flower. Photo by Blaine Rothaus.


GSWA Partners with the Somerset Hills YMCA for a Ten Towns Bike Tour

The Somerset Hills YMCA and the Great Swamp Watershed Association are partnering to present the **Ten Towns Bike Tour**, (formerly known as BATS), on **September 27, 2008**, with 10, 15, 30 and 50 mile rides available, starting from the parking lot of the Somerset Hills YMCA, 140 Mount Airy Rd, Basking Ridge.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Strong Kids Annual Support Campaign, the Somerset Hills YMCA's Financial Assistance Program. Strong Kids funds free community programs and provides scholarships to community members unable to afford the cost associated with various Y programs and events.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. with the 50-mile ride beginning at 8:30 a.m. and all others at 9:30 a.m. Open to adults, children and families, this annual rain-or-shine event will guide riders of all levels through some or all of the ten towns in the Watershed, depending on the route you choose. All riders must wear an approved bicycle helmet.

Registration fees are \$5 per child, \$15 per adult and \$35 per family until September 23, after which rates increase \$5 for adults and families. The fee includes a t-shirt, route map, and refreshments at rest stops. To register, please visit [www.somersethillsymca.org](http://www.somersethillsymca.org) or contact Donna Dourney of the Somerset Hills YMCA at 908-766-7898.



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