

# Friends of Huntley Meadows Park



Summer 2019

Website: [www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org](http://www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark)

## Natural Spaces and Climate Change

By Cathy Ledec, President of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

Wow! We had some very hot and very wet days this summer! With temperatures close to, and over, 100 degrees, that seems hotter than usual to me. We also experienced flooding and high water in neighborhoods and on the streets, water rescues, and more. The scientific evidence is clear; we are currently experiencing climate change. Green spaces and natural areas like Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) are showing us their importance - protecting us from the impacts of these increasingly frequent and intense weather events and other climate change impacts. When we have heavy rains, the streams entering HMP direct the stormwater flows from the surrounding neighborhoods and other paved areas into the central wetland, reducing the flooding impacts in our neighborhoods. During very heavy rains, observing these water flows from a safe distance is quite a sight to behold. A video of this phenomenon was posted June 3, 2018 on the HMP Photography Facebook page, a site managed by people enthusiastic about HMP. See the video here: <https://www.facebook.com/chris.duncan.3388/videos/10156458492679740/>. Within just a day, this stormwater had been absorbed, filtered, and moved through the Park's natural resources to points downstream. I visited the Park the day after one of these heavy rain events - the trails were not flooded; the water had already been absorbed or passed through the Park. Think about HMP as a big water filter. Its natural resources work hard for us filtering, absorbing, and protecting us from floods, and this all happens without human intervention. So, from a flood prevention standpoint, HMP protects us from this climate change impact. The trees at HMP and on your property are also working hard to protect us. They filter pollutants from the air, breathe out oxygen, cool the air and soil on intensely hot days through shade, shield us from heavy wind events, hold onto the soil stopping erosion, slow down the rain with their leaves, and more.

The power of our natural resources to protect us from the impacts of climate change should never be taken for granted. I encourage all readers to tell our elected officials that we want more parks, open spaces, and green spaces with native trees and shrubs. We need these natural areas and green spaces to protect us from various adverse impacts of climate change. The more of us who engage with our local leaders, the more voices in the mix, the stronger our influence, and the higher the likelihood this will happen.

'Climate Change' Cont'd on Page 4

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Friends of Huntley Meadows Park hosts a weekly bird walk on Monday mornings, which all are invited to join. The Monday Morning Bird Walk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows Park since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7AM (8AM November-March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to birders of all interest and identification levels. Birders meet in the parking lot at 3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria, VA. Questions should be directed to Park staff during normal business hours at (703) 768-2525.

## Park Manager's Message

By Karen Sheffield

Wildlife in your neighborhood can be a welcome guest or an uninvited pest. Some wildlife can help control those pests and improve your neighborhood and yard by reducing:

- tick populations,
- mouse and rat populations, especially in and around your home, and
- garden pests, like slugs, snails, and insects.

What species can help reduce these pests? You may be surprised to find the answer is snakes. You may be even more surprised that Fairfax County is home to 18 species of harmless (non-venomous) snakes and only one venomous snake, the northern copperhead.

Many snake species like the eastern rat snake (formerly named the black rat snake) eat rodents that can carry the Lyme disease carrying tick. Many of our small snake species, like the Dekay's browsnake eat slugs, snails, and insects. This snake will, at best, grow to be 13 inches long.

Of the County's 19 snake species, none chase people. However, like most wildlife, snakes will most likely defend themselves if threatened. As for the venomous northern copperhead, human fatalities from a bite are extremely rare. Copperheads are not aggressive but will defend themselves if threatened or stepped on.

There are no water moccasins or cottonmouths in Fairfax County. The similar looking water snake you'll commonly see is the northern watersnake, a non-venomous snake that eats mostly fish and amphibians.

If you see a snake, how can you tell what species it is? The pattern on the snake is diagnostic. Colors on snakes can be highly variable, so this method is not reliable. A reliable source for identification is [www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com](http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com). The two most confused snakes are young eastern rat snakes and copperheads. Note the difference in pattern in the photographs: the eastern rat snake has rectangular or squarish shapes, whereas the copperhead has a triangle pattern down each side.



Pictured on the left a young eastern rat snake. On the right a copperhead.

If you're still a little uneasy about snakes or just don't like rodents in your yard, there are several things you can do to make the yard less attractive to wildlife:

- Remove their favored habitats from your home (wood piles, high grass, old junk piles, English Ivy, or thick mulch). English Ivy is a particularly popular habitat for snakes and rodents to live in!
- Remove favored food sources that attract rodents (a preferred food source for snakes), such as outdoor pet food dishes, bird seed, and trash bins.

'Manager's Message' Cont'd on Page 7

## **Volunteers of Huntley Meadows Park**

By Halley Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteers are the heart of Huntley Meadows Park. I know that sounds entirely too sentimental, but I really mean it! Huntley volunteers have given approximately 10,000 hours of their time each year for the past two years. Those figures are the kind of thing we break out in our annual reports, or to talk up the Park's programs. Numbers alone can't possibly capture the collaborative, joyful, and creative culture that exists because of Huntley's volunteers.

If you've ever been welcomed into the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center, you've spoken to a volunteer. Volunteers lead and support school programs, provide assistance for summer camps, events, and evening programs, weed and plant our Visitor Center garden, lead tours of Historic Huntley, and are integral members of several ongoing, independent citizen science programs. Huntley's volunteer staff devote not only their time, but the cumulative efforts of their career skills and personal passions for nature and history.

Huntley's 100+ volunteers contribute truly above and beyond efforts in support of the Park's mission and goals. This amazing place and unique culture can't continue without new volunteers! If you love Huntley as much as we do, please check out our current volunteer opportunities at [https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/organization\\_details/71671](https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/organization_details/71671) or email me at [ajoh46@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:ajoh46@fairfaxcounty.gov) with any questions.

## **Local Photographer Wins Audubon Photography Contest**

Congratulations to Kathrin Swoboda for her first place win in the 2019 Audubon Photography Contest with her dynamic shot of a Red-Winged Blackbird. Kathrin lives near Huntley Meadows Park and captured this winning image in the central wetlands! View other contest entries and learn more about Kathrin's image at <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2019/the-2019-audubon-photography-awards-winners?lwAR2Yew9XUfDFyUWzNu0CM2DnOsPQsJlt7AY9l6lUCYy5gRoNyqjIZgUsU0>

Amazing capture Kathrin! Congratulations!

Huntley Meadows Park is featured in another photo from this year's contest. Gary Robinette's photo of a Northern Flicker throwing debris from a nest placed in the top 100 photos entries ([https://](https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2019/the-2019-audubon-photography-awards-top-100)

Kathrin Swoboda's photograph of a Red-Winged Blackbird taken at HMP placed first in the 2019 Audubon Photography Contest.

[www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2019/the-2019-audubon-photography-awards-top-100](https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2019/the-2019-audubon-photography-awards-top-100)).

Both Kathrin and Gary contribute to the Huntley Meadows Park Photography Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HuntleyMeadowsPark/?ref=bookmarks>, created and administered by admirers of the Park's flora and fauna.

It is exciting to see talented photographers and the wildlife of Huntley Meadows Park featured in this well known contest.





Section of the berm native plant garden awaiting more plants.

## Updating the Native Plant Garden

By Judy Dority, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Board Member

If you've passed by the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center recently, you may have noticed an increase in gardening activity on the berm surrounding the building. We are in the planning phase of an exciting new project to rehabilitate and revitalize Huntley Meadows Park's native plant gardens, and are preparing them for new life. The "new and improved" berm will contain all locally native plants, most of which can be found flourishing in the Park itself. Native plants are crucial to the local ecosystem as they provide food and shelter to birds, insects, pollinators, and other wildlife. Native plants are naturally adapted to the environment so they require nothing but their natural habitat to thrive. Upon completion, the berm gardens will serve not only as an example of native plantings, but as an environmental learning experience.

So as they say - "Please pardon our dust" as we trim, weed, pull, thin and plant over the next several months!

### 'Climate Change' Cont'd from Page 1

Some local climate change mitigation actions are already occurring, including a Fairfax County effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, numerous energy-saving actions, and pursuit of solar photovoltaic panels on government buildings, including schools. Climate change adaptation actions are also needed. These should include a review of business risk related to the County's revenue streams. Each County agency, including the FCPA, needs to review its revenue streams, assess how a climate event could negatively impact them, and set forth a plan that is implemented to protect these revenue streams. HMP offers numerous outdoor programs that depend on good weather. HMP staff have already prepared alternative plans for most outdoor programs. Even during 2018, the rainiest year on record, HMP's program revenue exceeded budgeted expectations, demonstrating the success of their adaptation plan. This HMP strategy serves as a best practice model that can help guide climate change adaptation planning throughout the FCPA and other County agencies to minimize adverse impacts to their revenues.

I urge FOHMP Members to actively engage in climate change mitigation and adaptation to ensure that our natural resources are given the high priority attention they deserve, and the FCPA revenue streams are protected from adverse climate events. I look forward to contributing to this important effort and hope you will participate too.

Enjoy the summer outdoors, and I hope to see you on the trails!



Water level at the beginning of the boardwalk after the July 8, 2019 rain event.

## Give Us Your Best Shot!

It is time to begin thinking about your submissions to the 2019 Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) Photo Show. Preparations for the 2019 show are under way. Submissions will be accepted at the front desk of the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center (3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria, VA 22306) from Saturday, October 12th through Sunday, December 1st.

As in years past, all photographs must have been taken at Huntley Meadows Park; however, the photo does not have to have been taken in the last year. Photos may contain images of people, but the subject matter should focus on the plants, animals, and landscape of Huntley Meadows Park. Submissions must be matted or mounted (but not framed). Matted photos should be a standard size and cannot exceed 18 inches x 24 inches.



*Egret Moon* by Paul Lebras, 2018  
FOHMP Photo Contest first place  
winner.



Every Friends of Huntley Meadows Park Photo Contest is celebrated with an opening reception held in the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center.

Due to the popularity of the photo show, individuals are limited to a maximum of three photographs. For all individuals over 18, there will be a fee of \$5.00 per entry. The high school and children's categories do not require a submission fee. All proceeds earned by the FOHMP will be used to directly support the Park.

A full set of rules and submission information will be posted on our website, <http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/>, in September.

We look forward to seeing your entries, so get out there and take your best shot!

## Thank You for Your Service

One of our longtime Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) Board members is retiring from his business and from the FOHMP Board to move to Pennsylvania in September. We will certainly miss **Charles Studholme's** dedication and expertise. Charles, owner of One Good Tern in Alexandria, has supported Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) for more than 15 years. He has made donations to the Park, including six sets of binoculars to be used as loaners for visitors and staff, a truckload of nature books from his father's library, a discount on the spotting scope purchased by FOHMP and used for Park programs, etc. Charles has posted petitions against the proposed transportation corridor through the Park and obtained dozens of signatures from customers at One Good Tern.

Thank you to Charles for his insight and contributions to both FOHMP and HMP. We wish Charles all the best - his kindness and humor will be greatly missed!



From left to right - FOHMP Board members Annie Stat, Charles Studholme, Harry Glasgow, and Suzanne Lepple

## Huntley Meadows Park Nature and History Programs

Find the full list of programs with detailed descriptions, locations, costs, and registration codes at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/classes-camps>; or call **703-222-4664** to register.

### AUGUST

- 10 Saturday** - Boardwalk Astronomy  
(12-Adult) \$9, 8 - 10 pm, Code: DC4.B43B
- 17 Saturday** - Twilight Boardwalk Stroll  
(6-Adult) \$9, 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Code: 343.CAAA
- 18 Sunday** - Dragonflies  
(Adults) \$10, 9 am - 12 pm, Code: 9F7.DC17  
- How to Draw Your Dragon(fly)  
(12-Adult) \$15, 1 - 3 pm, Code: 707.E07E
- 24 Saturday** - Ice Cream at Historic Huntley  
(2-Adult) \$8, 11 am - 12 pm, Code:633.AE21
- 31 Saturday** - Twilight Hilltop Tour of Historic Huntley  
(Adults) \$8, 7:30 - 8:30, Code: D3E.00A6

### SEPTEMBER

- 6 Friday** - Twilight Hilltop Tour at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$8, 7 - 8 pm, Code: D3E.2BB5
- 8 Sunday** - Children's Tour at Historic Huntley  
(6-Adult) \$8, 2 - 3 pm, Code: 351.A6BF
- 14 Saturday** - House Detective Tea at Historic Huntley  
(Adults) \$35, 2 - 4 pm, Code: C87.EDE7  
- Wetland at Dusk Walk  
(Adult) \$9, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, Code: F3C.4869
- 15 Sunday** - Birding for Beginners  
(12-Adult) \$12, 8 - 11 am, Code: A4F.4E4A
- 21 Saturday** - Sketch Hike Fall Wildflowers ID  
(10-Adult) \$15, 10 am - 12 pm, Code: 736.C8AE
- 23 Monday** - Nature Drawing  
(Adult) \$82, 4 - 5:25 pm, Code: 205.1FB7  
- Autumn Equinox Evening Hike  
(Adult) \$9, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, Code: 6B8.3583
- 28 Saturday** - Delicious Dairy at Historic Huntley  
(2-Adult) \$8, 2:30 - 3:30 pm, Code: 66F.0E27  
- Galaxy Gazing-Jupiter & Saturn  
(8-Adult) \$12, 7:30 - 9:30 pm, Code: 50C.A550
- 29 Sunday** - Catch a Critter  
(4-Adult) \$9, 1 - 2:30 pm, Code: 413.EB0F

### OCTOBER

- 1 Tuesday** - Collage & Photography  
Class meets Tuesdays for four weeks from 10/1 to 10/22. (Adult) \$79, 10 - 11:30 am, Code: A88.620E

- 4 Friday** - Twilight Hilltop Tour at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$8, 6:30 - 7:30 pm, Code: D3E.9638
- 5 Saturday** - History Discussions at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$10, 2 - 5 pm, Code: B65.6135  
- Family Owl Outing  
(6-Adult) \$8, 6:15 - 7:45 pm, Code: A78.940E
- 8 Tuesday** - Mason Tea at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$28, 2 - 4 pm, Code: 87A.DF2A
- 12 Saturday** - Secrets, Spies, Sputnik, & Huntley at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$9, 2 - 3:30 pm, Code: F8B.5766  
- Wild Bat Night  
(5-Adult) \$12, 7 - 8 pm, Code: C80.FDDD
- 13 Sunday** - Fall Full Moon Hike  
(4-Adult) \$9, 8 - 10 pm, Code: 490.620A
- 19 Saturday** - Fall Tree Pastel Painting  
(16-Adult) \$36, 10 am - 12 pm, Code: 9AC.A6FE  
- Twilight Boardwalk Stroll  
(6-Adults) \$9, 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Code: 343.163D
- 30 Wednesday** - The Frightful Science of Mary Shelley at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$22, 7:00 - 8:30 pm, Code: CDF.1EA3

### NOVEMBER

- 2 Saturday** - Owl Outing  
(Adult) \$9, 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Code: 68B.609A  
- Sketch Hike Fall Color Snap  
(10-Adult) \$15, 10 am - 12 pm, Code: B68.0121
- 9 Saturday** - Women of Huntley Tea at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$35, 2 - 4 pm, Code: C12.8899
- 10 Sunday** - Corn Grinding & Clay Pottery  
(4-Adult) \$12, 2 - 4 pm, Code: 147.D08D
- 16 Saturday** - Enslaved Lives & the Legacy of Slavery at Historic Huntley  
(Adult) \$8, 1 - 2 pm, Code: BF1.0D78  
- Leonid Meteor Shower - ALL AGES  
(Family) \$9, 6 - 8 pm, Code: A70.0AF9  
- Leonid Meteor Shower - ADULTS  
(Adult) \$9, 8 - 10 pm, Code: 8FF.F6FF
- 17 Sunday** - The Art of the Book-Calligraphy at Historic Huntley  
(12-Adult) \$8, 2 - 3 pm, Code: 73C.014F

**20 Wednesday** - *The View from Huntley at Historic Huntley*

(16-Adult) \$8, 1 - 2 pm, Code: B05.A0F6

**23 Saturday** - *Dutch Oven Brunch at Historic Huntley*

(6-Adult) \$8, 11 am - 12 pm, Code: 269.9E1E

**30 Saturday** - *Hot Cocoa Wetland Night Hike*

(6-Adult) \$9, 4:15 - 5:45 pm, Code: 756.A3C0

**DECEMBER**

**1 Sunday** - *Birding for Beginners*

(12-Adult) \$12, 8 - 11 am, Code: A4F.62BD

**7 Saturday** - *Intro to Pastel*

(16-Adult) \$36, 10 am - 12 pm, Code: E6C.164F

- *Ice Well Ice Cream at Historic Huntley*  
(Adult) \$8, 1 - 2 pm, Code: 129.7795

- *Owl Outing*  
(Adult) \$9, 6:15 - 8:15 pm, Code:68B.CE22

**14 Saturday** - *Christmas Tea at the Harrisons at Historic Huntley*

(Adult) \$28, 2 - 4 pm, Code: C33.9BE3  
- *Raptors of Virginia*

(Family) \$12, 11 am - 12 pm, Code: FE2.7573

**15 Sunday** - *A Very Mason Christmas at Historic Huntley*  
(12-Adult) \$10, 3:30 - 5:30 pm, Code: 861.240C

**28 Saturday** - *Hot Cocoa Wetland Night Hike*  
(6-Adult) \$9, 4:30 - 6:00 pm, Code: 756.B54F

**Merchandise**



FOHMP logo ball caps.

Get your summer swag! Summer stylish ball caps and t-shirts with a Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) logo are available in the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center gift shop.



From left to right FOHMP patch, pin, and magnet.

All FOHMP logo merchandise (pins, cinch bags, long and short sleeve t-shirts, ball caps, and a collection of used books) can be found at the gift shop, and proceeds are used by FOHMP to support Park activities. In addition, staff has cultivated a diverse collection of nature and history related books and other items for sale.

**'Manager's Message' Cont'd from Page 2**

- Look for small openings around your home and garage: water pipes, hoses, vents, doors, and windows. If appropriate, seal the openings with weather stripping, caulking, hardware cloth, sheet metal, etc. depending on the type of surface. Some snakes and rodents can enter through small holes around your home.
- Fill openings under sidewalks or porches.
- Do not leave ladders or other metal objects around the outside of your home. These items heat up quickly in the spring and fall when snakes are seeking warmth.

If you find wildlife in your home, please call Animal Protection Police at 703-691-2131.

**Earn Money for Huntley by Shopping!**

Did you know you can earn money for Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) while you shop? FOHMP is one of the non-profits that participates in the AmazonSmile program. It's a simple and automatic way for you to support FOHMP every time you shop at Amazon, at no cost to you.

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your designated charitable organization. To set or change your charity to FOHMP, use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/54-1338505>, and thank you for choosing FOHMP as your charity of choice through AmazonSmile.



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**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park**

3701 Lockheed Blvd  
Alexandria, VA 22306

*44 years of Huntley Meadows*  
1975-2019

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FRIENDS OF HUNTLEY  
MEADOWS PARK  
PERMIT NO. 8199

Membership **EXPIRATION DATES** expiring soon are printed to the right of your last name.

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park**  
**Membership and Renewal Form**

Please support Huntley Meadows Park by joining our Friends group. Dues contribute toward funding new initiatives and programs, and your membership support will help us to be stronger advocates for the Park.

Fill out this form and mail the application to:

**Dues information (Annual):**

- \$15 Individual
- \$20 Family
- \$10 Student/Senior
- \$150 Lifetime Membership
- Donation

**Friends of Huntley Meadows Park**  
**3701 Lockheed Blvd.**  
**Alexandria, VA 22306**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_



Alternatively you can use our PayPal feature on the Membership page of our website <http://www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/membership.html>.