

# Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

Fall 2020

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



## Dear Friends

By: Cathy Ledec, President of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

It's time for all of us to show support for our parks at the ballot box (or ballot mailbox)!

### **Support Fairfax County Parks!**

**However you choose to vote, please consider a "YES" vote for the Park Bond.**

**Early voting in Fairfax County is already underway.**

**Vote early in person, early by mail, or in person on Election Day!**

**Election Day: November 3, 2020**

Earlier this year the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized four Bond Issues for voters to decide on the General Election ballot. General obligation bonds, which require voter approval, are the primary way capital improvement costs are funded for the renovation of existing FCPA facilities and the development of new facilities.

One of these Bond Issues is a proposed allocation of \$112 million for parks. If voters approve this measure, funds raised through selling these general obligation bonds will pay for park improvements. The Park Bond includes funds for the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA).

The FCPA would use \$100 million to finance (1) land acquisition to expand parks, (2) natural and cultural resource stewardship, and (3) new park development.

The remaining \$12 million would fund the County's share of the capital program for the [Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority](#) that includes: (1) expanding public open space and trails, (2) protecting natural, cultural and historic resources, (3) improving existing facilities, and (4) providing additional recreational opportunities.

"Vote" continued on page 4

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## **What's Been Happening at Huntley Lately? Lots!**

By: Karen Sheffield, Huntley Meadows Park Manager

Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) is offering in-person socially distanced programs by keeping participation numbers low, and people are loving them! Some programs are adult only, like the popular art programs, and some are family programs. We are also offering private couples or private family tours of Historic Huntley, making it the perfect time to visit. Now you can buy your private tour ticket(s) online (use this link: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour>).



A screen capture of the new HMP created series “Ask Malcolm!” Posted on YouTube, the first episode features Interpreters Malcolm McNeil (on left) and Cheryl Repetti.

New programs are being added weekly, and we may be able to schedule a program on request. Check out our website (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/classes-camps>), and please remember to view the COVID-19 safety requests before you arrive. Please contact Kylie Starck, Program Manager ([kylie.starck@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kylie.starck@fairfaxcounty.gov)) or Tami Enabi, Customer Service Specialist ([tami.entabi@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:tami.entabi@fairfaxcounty.gov)) for private program possibilities. Thank you to everyone who has attended HMP programs. We thank you for working together with us to keep safe and have fun during this time.

For those of you who would rather remain at home, we offer virtual programs that connect you to HMP. For example, we'll be offering virtual winter camp! If you don't see what you're looking for, please contact Kylie or Tami. If you're looking for virtual options online, type in “Virtual FCPA” in the Place box on this website: [https://fairfax.usedirect.com/FairfaxFCPAWeb/ACTIVITIES/Search.aspx?place\\_id=7891](https://fairfax.usedirect.com/FairfaxFCPAWeb/ACTIVITIES/Search.aspx?place_id=7891). Our apologies, this is the best we could do with the system on short notice.

Check out these recent virtual offerings:

- Feel Good Fridays from Visit Fairfax <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7zXH8NNNWO>
- Ask Malcolm <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wndwK-TsbF0>

HMP's Norma Hoffman Visitor Center remains closed at this time. However, Park visitation remains high, including many first time visitors to the Park. We've recently completed several outreach projects to prepare for their visits and help all visitors to understand the rules we have in place. Visit this link from our homepage to learn more about the reasons behind the rules at Huntley <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/care-for-park>



Feel Good Fridays: Huntley Meadows Park

A screen capture of Visitor Services Manager Casey Pitrizzi speaking during the Huntley Meadows episode of “Feel Good Fridays”.

“Happenings” continued on page 5

## In Memoriam - Gary Roisum

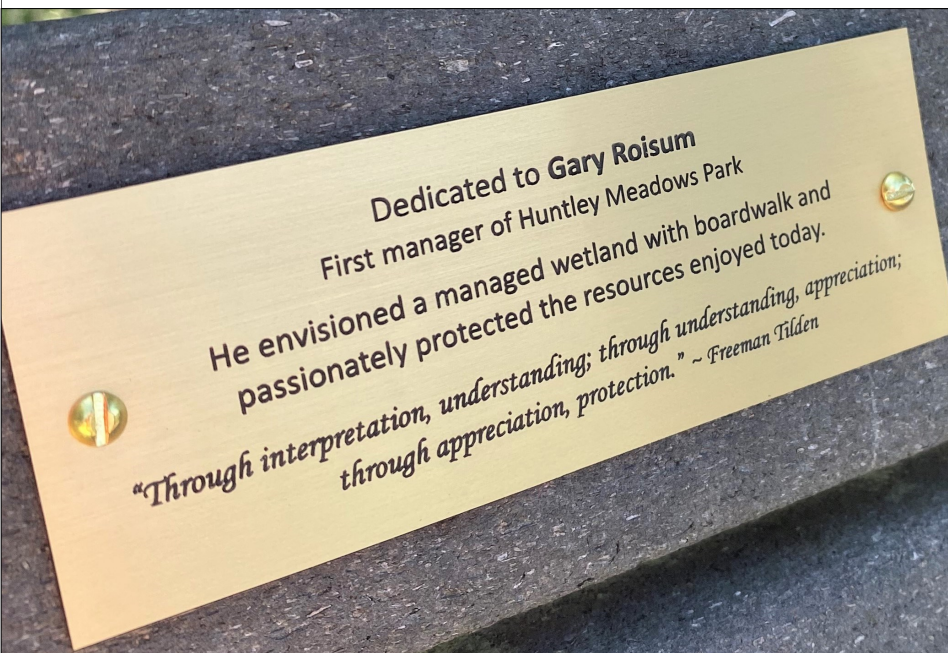
By: Carolyn Gamble, Huntley Meadows Park Volunteer, Friends of Historic Huntley Board Member, and Former Huntley Meadows Park Site Manager

Gary Roisum, first Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) employee and Park Manager for the Park's first 30 years, died this year on July 25, aged 70. In August, a few staff members and volunteers gathered atop the observation platform in the central wetlands to dedicate the bench there to Gary. We shared remembrances and appreciation for his legacy. I would like to share some of mine.

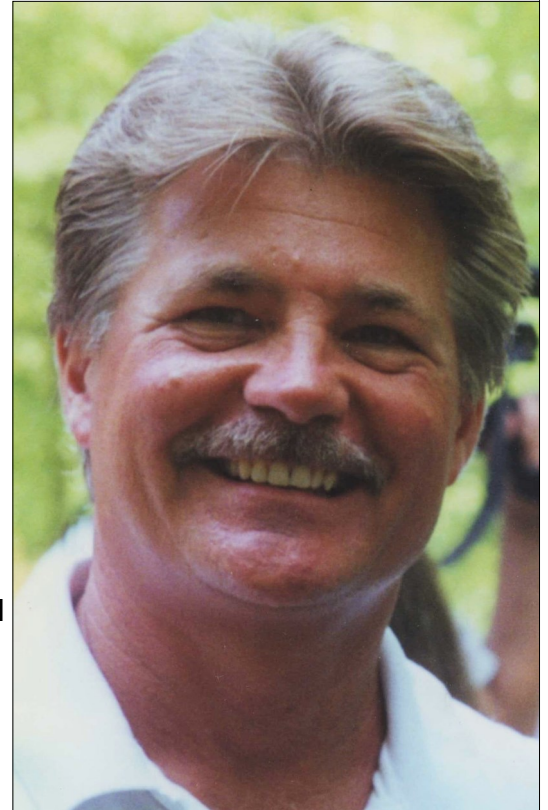
I met Gary during the fall of 1981 when I stopped by the Park to check out the place where I had just applied to work. The S. Kings Highway entrance was the only entrance at that time. There was a bustling bird seed sale and fundraiser going on that day. Running the operation was a young park ranger. Though busy, he noticed this curious bystander, and came over to greet me and tell me about the Park. Little did I know, this energetic person would be my boss for the next 25 years.

Gary had a driving ambition to make this large chunk of undeveloped real estate into a park of national significance. He dreamed big and threw himself into the task – successfully getting grants for the construction of a wetland boardwalk of his own design. That was an auspicious start, and he never lost his vision of what HMP could become.

Along the way, Gary learned how to work smarter. Long range planning resulted in Park Bond projects to replace the boardwalk, complete two Visitor Center construction projects and develop wetland management. He learned to better protect the Park's natural resources by working in concert with citizens – facilitating the foundation of the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park.



Plaque on bench dedicated to Gary Roisum.



Gary Roisum, HMP Park Manager from 1978 to 2007.

Gary's standards were high. He wanted HMP to be the best, so staff was expected to work hard and get things right. It's true, I sometimes clashed with him, but we worked through it. He had no fear of confrontation.

I am grateful for all Gary did to shape this Park we all love so well. I am grateful he was my boss.

Thanks Gary.

“Vote” continued from page 1

It is important for all of us who are users and fans of Fairfax County Parks to show our support for them. One way to do this is to read up on the Park Bond before voting and, if you agree with it, vote “YES” in support on Election Day, November 3rd.

There is an informative video posted by the FCPA on YouTube that does a great job describing the activities that would be supported by the Park Bond. To view the video, click here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-n1L\\_zXGpTc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-n1L_zXGpTc&feature=youtu.be)

It is important that Fairfax County residents fully understand the Park Bond and the park system enhancements that this funding will cover if approved by voters on November 3, 2020. Further details on this Bond Issue can be found here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/2020-bond>

Thank goodness for our parks, especially during this extremely challenging period with COVID-19. Our

parks have helped me enormously by giving me time outdoors and reminding me how I fit into the whole of our natural world. Watching birds and other wildlife gives me great joy and has helped me stay grounded throughout this crazy period. I hope that you have found peace in this manner too. If you haven't been to a park lately, I recommend that you come to Huntley Meadows Park for a walk on the trails through the forest. See you on the trails with six or more feet of physical distancing!

Enjoy the beautiful autumn season, and please remember to vote!



## **A New Collections Facility for Historic Huntley Artifacts?**

By: Todi Carnes, President of Friends of Historic Huntley

In recent months, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) has been designing a new collections facility to house and safeguard the many historic documents and other cultural artifacts it owns – including items related to Historic Huntley. Not surprisingly, given the richness of our area's history, the FCPA's artifact collection has far outgrown its current facility, and a new facility is urgently needed. The FCPA has recognized this need with its recent design activities, but requires voter approval of the Park Bond to secure funding for actual construction. (Click here for more information on the bond: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/2020-bond>)

Find out more about the FCPA Archeology and Collections department here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/archaeology-collections>

Don't overlook the bond referendum when casting your ballot on November 3rd!

“Happenings” continued from page 2

Some more good news...

- Washington Post Labor Day Weekend section featuring HMP, Historic Huntley and other area parks [https://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/as-summer-winds-down-these-parks-are-the-perfect-escape/2020/09/02/1468d7de-e316-11ea-8dd2-d07812bf00f7\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/as-summer-winds-down-these-parks-are-the-perfect-escape/2020/09/02/1468d7de-e316-11ea-8dd2-d07812bf00f7_story.html)
- Thanks to the efforts by HMP’s natural resource staff and volunteers, no invasive water chestnut was found this season in the central wetland. This new wetland invader was first found in the Huntley wetland three years ago, and staff and volunteers removed the plants. The few plants that were found again last year were also removed. The team will continue monitoring and removing in the coming years. Quick response helps to keep Huntley’s wetland healthy.
- The November 3, 2020 general election ballot includes a Park Bond Referendum. If approved, the bond monies will finance land acquisition to expand parks, natural and cultural resource stewardship and new park development. For more information and a short video visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/2020-bond>.

Hope to see you in person or virtually this fall!

## **POP UP Fundraiser**

Hear ye Hear ye....

On Sunday, October 18 from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm outside the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) will be taking donations and offering the heron logo t-shirt, sweatshirt, and ballcap at a premium\*. The fundraiser will be cancelled in case of rain and rescheduled within two weeks. Please check our Facebook page for rescheduling information [www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofhuntleymeadowspark).

**ONLY EXACT CASH OR CHECK ACCEPTED**

\$20 donation\* - Ball Caps

\$25 donation\* - Adult short sleeve tee (S - XL)

\$35 donation\* - Adult long sleeve tee (S - XL)

\$45 donation\* - Adult sweatshirt

*\*This offer is valid only at this in-person event and while supplies last.*



Zip up hoodie sweatshirt.



FOHMP logo ball caps.



Short and long sleeve shirts.

## **The 2020 FOHMP Photo Contest Fundraiser Is Going Virtual!**

Due to the pandemic-forced closure of the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center, we have decided to use Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/fohmp/>, to host the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) 2020 Photo Contest online. Photo submissions will open on November 1 and close January 10.

This year, we are challenging our photographers to submit more landscape and flora submissions. If we receive enough entries of these types, we'll judge a separate category.

Judging will take place in early December, culminating with a Zoom event on Saturday, January 17, where the judges will explain what they looked for in the entries, and winners will discuss the stories and details behind their winning photographs.

Photo submissions will be \$10 per entry with a maximum of three entries. Photos should have been taken at Huntley Meadows Park over the last two years and focus on the landscape, plants, and animals of the Park. Entrants will need to have a Flickr account to submit, which is free to create.

The photo show is an important fundraiser for FOHMP, and this year is no different. Funds raised through the Photo Contest will be used to purchase supplies the HMP staff needs to make high quality virtual interactive content. See Karen Sheffield's article on page 2 for more information.

Full details about the 2020 Photo Contest will be available on our website <http://fohmp.org> by November 1. While taking photos, remember to stay physically distant from other Park visitors, and follow any rules regarding trail use and mask wearing posted at the Park. We look forward to seeing your submissions in November!

### **Calling All Children & Young Adults – Share Your Huntley Photos**

We want to see the Park from the viewpoint of our youngest photographers. There is no entry fee, and photographers of *all* skill levels who are 18 or under are encouraged to submit their photos. Depending on the child's age, an adult may need to create the account to share the photograph(s) for the 2020 Photo Contest. This gallery will be hosted as a group on our Flickr page, will be available November 1, and will be judged separately from the adult submissions.



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

## **Renew Memberships and Donate Using PayPal**

As we continue to navigate the effects of the pandemic, one consistent challenge has remained, access to our mail. As you may know, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) mail is delivered to the Norma Hoffman Visitor Center, which is currently closed to the general public and to FOHMP volunteers. This creates challenges to timely processing of your membership and donation checks.

Instead of sending checks, please consider using PayPal to renew your membership or send a donation. You don't have to have a PayPal account to use their service! We have created the account for FOHMP and provide the link at the end of every newsletter. All you need is a credit or debit card.

You can also find the PayPal links on our Membership Page: <http://fohmp.org/membership.html>.

## Newsletter Going Electronic

As an organization, we truly enjoy putting together the newsletter every quarter. It is a team effort that produces what we think is a fun and informative publication. Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) also looks to be environmentally friendly in all that we do. To that end, we will be delivering the quarterly newsletter exclusively via email starting with our next issue, Winter 2021.

In addition to being more environmentally friendly, this move to electronic delivery will help your FOHMP - membership dollars go farther as we will be spending less on printing and postage costs. In FY 2019-2020 \$0.10 of every dollar donated went to produce and mail the newsletter. This amount equaled the FOHMP budget line item for Education, Equipment, and Program Support. That line item includes funding for the Norma Hoffman Financial Assistance Program, which helped over 3,000 school children attend a field trip to Huntley Meadows Park for the 2019-2020 school year. For more about last fiscal year’s spending, please see our summer 2020 newsletter found here: <http://friendsofhuntleymeadows.org/newsletter%20archives.html>.

If you have already asked to “go green” with your newsletter, we thank you for your support in refocusing these funds toward important Park projects and initiatives.

**NOTE: If you are receiving this newsletter in the mail via USPS, we do not have your email address, and we will be unable to send you the electronic quarterly version. If you wish to receive future electronic issues of the newsletter, please send your email address to [friendsofhmp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhmp@gmail.com).**

We understand there might be members without consistent access to email. If you fall into this category, please call 703-768-2525, and leave a message to let us know so that we may get the newsletter to you by other means.

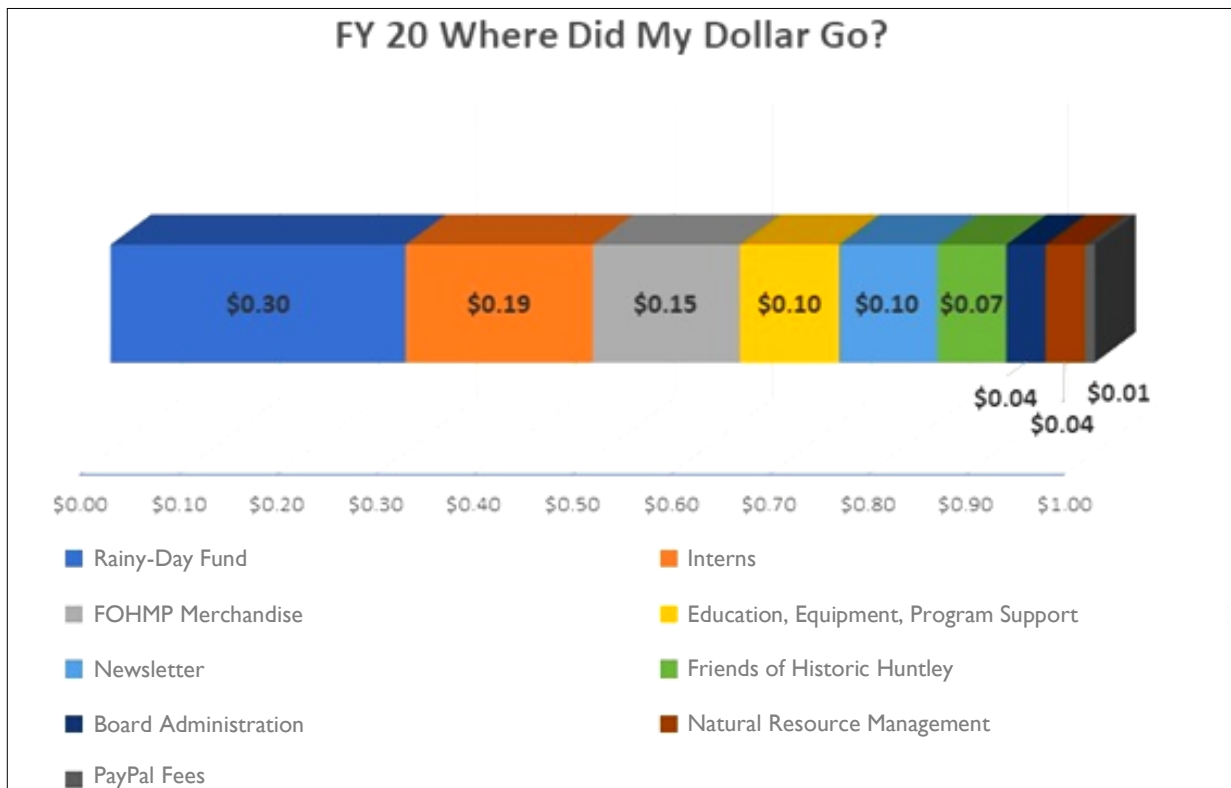


Chart showing where each part of every \$1 received by FOHMP is spent.

## 2020 Summer Interns

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the cancellation of Huntley summer camps, Naturalist Interns were unable to join Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) Staff this summer. However Dave Lawler, Naturalist Resource Manager, was able to welcome a Virginia Native Plant Society Intern and a Natural Resource Management Intern and provide them with opportunities to explore the natural habitats of a truly unique wildlife sanctuary. Every HMP intern brings their own talents and backgrounds to their summer positions with aspirations of improving their knowledge base. As they learn, these interns also give back to the Park in more ways than can be listed here. Below are the impressions of the two interns supervised by Dave this summer.

My name is **Hayley Barnes**, and I have been fortunate to be the 2020 Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS) - Potowmack Chapter intern at Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) for the Summer of 2020. I am a rising junior at Virginia Tech pursuing a degree in Environmental Science with a secondary major in Geography as well as minors in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Wetland Science. Dave Lawlor, Natural Resource Manager, presented the perfect opportunity for me to combine and practice my wide range of academic interests in a unique, positive environment.

The best part of my experience as the VNPS intern has been being able to apply both my education and passion for the environment to real-life situations at HMP. For example, it was my task to survey the 1600-acre park for Purple Milkweed, a rare native plant to Virginia. This task not only educated me about identification and the significance of native plants in Virginia but excited me to be part of a fulfilling conservation effort. It was humbling taking the time to do what many would deem as a simple task to aid in the remarkable efforts at HMP with the potential for long-lasting effects.

I have learned a variety of skills both physical and mental throughout the internship. These skills include plant and tree identification, creating shapefiles and mapping points on a GPS system, various methods to control invasive species, observing and reporting Canada Goose populations, maintaining park trails, and installing and fixing exclosures and enclosures to support native vegetative growth. In addition to these tasks, I had the pleasure of helping Sophia Chapin, Natural Resource Management Intern, with water quality sampling and the beginning stages of macroinvertebrate identification.

I cannot thank the VNPS enough for continuing to support an internship this summer despite the ongoing uncertainty that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought. Finally, I would like to give a huge thank you to Dave Lawlor, my mentor throughout the summer, for putting in an immense amount of time and effort to ensure that not only my internship at HMP happened, but that I was able to do it safely. While Dave made it seem effortless, balancing extreme protocols to ensure the health of everyone in the office, including myself, while giving me the most “normal” intern experience possible was an unprecedented, daunting task. Due to coronavirus restrictions, I was only permitted to work outside of the office area. This limited my on-site internship to outdoor work only; however, I was able to do some typical office work remotely such as data manipulation and research. Despite these limitations, knowing the great outdoors was my “office” this summer put a smile on my face each morning on my way to work.



Hayley using a GPS to mark the exact location of a plant for the HMP rare plants survey.



My name is **Sophia Chapin**, and I was a 2020 Natural Resource Management Intern. I am a rising senior at George Mason University studying Environmental Science with a concentration in Conservation. Upon graduation, I hope to work in wildlife ecology or environmental communication - roles needed in the critical fight against climate change and rapid biodiversity loss.

This summer I had the amazing opportunity to gain field experience as Huntley's Natural Resource Management Intern, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although the internship looked different than in previous years, I was able to both complete duties within the Park and work virtually from home thanks to coordinated efforts by the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) and Natural Resource Manager Dave Lawlor.

One of my primary tasks was to collect water quality data and analyze the health of Huntley Meadows Park's (HMP) wetland, which is necessary in determining the vibrancy of its ecosystem and the effects of urban development. Because HMP sits in the heart of a metropolitan area, it is highly susceptible to pollution that limits the presence of sensitive aquatic wildlife populations. Water quality touches every aspect of the wetland, including which plants grow and the types and number of animals taking refuge in its waters. I was also able to work alongside Virginia Native Plant Society Intern Hayley Barnes, who kept us upbeat while surveying Purple Milkweed populations, removing various invasive species, installing exclosures, counting Canada Geese, and mapping data points for research.

I had never been to HMP before learning about this internship, and having now surveyed all corners of the Park, can easily conclude that it is one of the best places for spotting wildlife in Northern Virginia. I learned to identify countless species of native birds and plants while hiking the forests, wading through the wetland, and speaking with enthusiastic Park visitors out birdwatching.

Working at HMP has reminded me of all the reasons I want to work in conservation. I am excited to apply the skills I learned during my time at HMP identifying species, collecting and analyzing data and composing reports into my studies at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Front Royal this fall. Thank you again to FOHMP and my supervisor Dave Lawlor for providing this valuable opportunity and supporting my journey in the environmental field. There is no doubt I will be back to visit soon.



Sophia using a GPS to mark the location of rare plants during one of her many survey missions.

## **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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