

Wissahickon Nature Club

SPEAKER

ON DECEMBER 4, THURSDAY, 7:30 P.M. **AMANDA HANEY**, WILL PRESENT **SOUTHEAST UTAH: A SLIDE TOUR OF NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS**. HIGHLIGHTED WILL BE SPECTACULAR ROCK FORMATIONS OF ARCHES, CAPITOL REEF, AND CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARKS. SCENERY OF THE COLORADO RIVER, GLEN CANYON, NATURAL BRIDGES AND MONUMENT VALLEY WILL BE INCLUDED. SHE WILL ALSO PRESENT INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL BIRDS, PLANTS AND ANIMALS AS WELL AS HISTORIC RESIDENTS OF THE AREA.



DELICATE ARCH IN ARCHES NATIONAL PARK BY AMANDA HANEY

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT PROGRAM. ON **DECEMBER 18**, THURSDAY, **MEG SCANLON** WILL PRESENT **NATURE IS ALL AROUND US**. EXPLORE LATODAMI NATURE CENTER IN NORTH PARK WITH **MEG SCANLON**, **INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST**. LATODAMI NATURE CENTER IS A SANCTUARY TO MORE THAN 500 SPECIES OF BIRDS, MAMMALS, REPTILES, AMPHIBIANS, AND INSECTS. THROUGH HER STUNNING PHOTOGRAPHY, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE MEG WILL EDIFY US ABOUT SOME OF THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS COMMONLY FOUND AROUND THE NATURE CENTER.

THIS WILL BE OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PARTY AND COOKIE EXCHANGE. THERE IS NO REQUIRED MINIMUM OR MAXIMUM DOZENS OF COOKIES FOR YOU TO BRING. TAKE HOME AS MANY COOKIES AS YOU BRING. BRING YOUR FRIENDS. THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO INTRODUCE NEW FOLKS TO OUR CLUB.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TREASURER'S REPORT

ACCORDING TO TREASURER **DIANNE MACHESNEY**:

PREVIOUS BALANCE \$751.72

NO ACTIVITY.

CURRENT BALANCE \$751.72

FOR CURRENT AND PAST NEWSLETTERS AND MUCH MORE, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.WISSAHICKONNATURECLUB.COM

INPUT

WE LIKE TO SEE WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE DISCOVERING. IF YOU HAVE A PHOTO OR A NATURE ANECDOTE TO SHARE, PLS. EMAIL IT TO MYWINTERMOON@VERIZON.NET

WORTH REPEATING

IF YOU, TOO, CAN COME TO LOVE THIS LAND AS OUR ANCESTORS DID, ALL THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD WILL FALL AWAY LIKE AUTUMN LEAVES IN THE WIND.

TONY TEN FINGERS
WANBII NATA'U
OGLALA LAKOTA

Bloggers

Chuck Tague Read the Nature Observer blog at
<http://ctague.pairserver.com/Natureobserver/Welcome.html>

Kate St. John <http://www.wqed.org/birdblog/>
Tom Pawlesh www.blurb.com/bookstore/search?search=pawlesh&commit=Search

Steve Gosser <http://home.comcast.net/~sgosser/>

Amanda Haney <https://www.flickr.com/photos/61181150@N00/sets/>



Lilac-breasted Roller by Amanda Haney

**Botanical Society of Western
Pennsylvania**

Loree Speedy 724.518.6022
mousemapper@verizon.net
<http://www.botsocwpa.org/>

Meeting

December 8, Monday, 7:15 p.m. Holiday Party. Members are to bring up to 12 slides to share. Meetings will be held in the Ford-Mateer Classroom of Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland).

Environmental Book Club

Kim Metheny

kmetheny@hotmail.com

Chriss O'Lare colare@comcast.net

Meet at the Panera on McKnight Road.

Upcoming Book

December 15, Monday, 7:15 p.m. Spillover, by **David Quammen**, a timely book about pandemics.

Fern Hollow Nature Center

Sam McClain-Capezzuto, Director

412.741.6136

April Claus, Naturalist

412.741.7536

<http://www.fhnc.org/>

December 6, Saturday, 7:00 p.m. Full Moon Owl Prowl by **April Claus**. Learn about nocturnal animals and visit different habitats while searching for owls. \$4/ \$8. Call April at 412.741.7536 to register. She will tell you where to meet. Wear hiking boots and bring a flashlight.

Three Rivers Birding Club

Bob VanNewkirk, President

412.366.1694

www.3rbc.org

Meeting

December 10, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Annual Slide Slam, the old-fashioned name for the extravaganza of our photographers' favorite pictures. Nowadays, of course, we see them not on slides but in dazzling digital format. Phipps Garden Center, 1059 Shady Avenue in Shadyside.

from the Nature Observer News archives

A Bird in the Hand is worth . . .

By Chuck Tague

Boyce Mayview Regional Park, October 20, 2001 I am very blessed. I have the great privilege of regularly holding birds in my hand. The United States Fish & Wildlife Service and the Pennsylvania Game Commission permit me to keep unreleasable birds of prey for "educational purposes." An Eastern Screech Owl with a damaged wing lives in my basement. He is very comfortable sitting on my finger. Together we visit schools, nature centers, assisted living facilities or anywhere else where we can find people who want to learn about birds.

Occasionally I assist the dedicated rehabilitators at the Pennsylvania Wildlife Center. Their responsibility is to treat injured and orphaned animals and return them to the wild. In spring they are overwhelmed with songbirds, mostly recently hatched or fledged birds that need a great deal of care. The staff and volunteers work from sunrise to sundown hand feeding the hungry nestlings and refilling feed trays for the youngsters in the flight cages. Many of the birds don't survive. The reward for all this hard work and heartache is returning a few healthy young songbirds to the wild.

The number of songbirds at the Wildlife Center decreases as summer progresses. This year, by the end of October only a Cedar Waxing and a cardinal remained.

Betty Miranda, the center's director, asked if I would release the two birds in a suitable place. I was scheduled to lead a nature walk at the Boyce-Mayview Regional Park that weekend. Children always come on these walks so I suggested the kids help me with the release. Betty agreed. The most important lesson in wildlife education is that animals should never be disturbed. However, under the right circumstances a bird in the hand is worth two Bush campaign funds.

We walked along the trail until we came to a thicket far from the road. I gently took the waxwing out of the carrying case and gave it to Paul. The bird didn't look afraid, just puzzled. Paul swung the waxwing up and it flew off. The bird's flight was wobbly at first but soon it got control, circled up and landed on the spire of a sumac fruit head. It looked around then called out to other waxwings that might be in the area.

Next I handed Jenica the cardinal. He was a ragged young male. She held the bird firmly. I could imagine how she felt. The bird's heart must have been beating rapidly enough for her to feel. The bird's eyes were bright and curious. So were the girl's. There was an obvious bond between the two.

She didn't push the cardinal. She simply opened her hand. The cardinal flew downward and landed on the trail. He stood looking back at us. We watched for several minutes. He didn't move so I approached him. He flew up to a branch just out of reach. I turned and we walked away.

Two hours later the group passed by the thicket. The Cedar Waxwing was gone. The cardinal scolded us from the brush. His future was now out of our hands. However, he and his waxwing companion had touched the lives of the two children who touched them.