

Wissahickon Nature Club

GUEST SPEAKER

ON **DECEMBER 18, THURSDAY, 7:30 P.M.** **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.



By Debbie Sucato Bryant



Christmas Cactus by Susanne Varley

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT PROGRAM. ON **MARCH 5, 2015, THURSDAY, GLENN DAVIS & DONNA BILLINGS** WILL PRESENT **NATIONAL PARKS QUEST.** GLENN AND DONNA WILL TAKE US ON AN ARM CHAIR TOUR TO SOME OF THE LESSER-KNOWN PARKS. THEY WILL ENTERTAIN US WITH PICTURES FROM FOUR ALASKA PARKS, THE SOUTHWEST PARKS, CONGAREE, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, SEQUOIA, KINGS CANYON, AND A FEW OTHERS. IF WE TWIST HER ARM A LITTLE, MAYBE DONNA WILL TELL US ABOUT HER BOOK "RED AND PURPLE HIKING BOOTS".

Bloggers

Steve Gosser <http://home.comcast.net/~sgosser/>
Amanda Haney <https://www.flickr.com/photos/61181150@N00/sets/>

Tom Pawlesh [www.blurb.com/bookstore/search?](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/search?search=pawlesh&commit=Search)
[search=pawlesh&commit=Search](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/search?search=pawlesh&commit=Search)

Kate St. John <http://www.wqed.org/birdblog/>
Chuck Tague Read the Nature Observer blog at
<http://ctague.pairserver.com/Natureobserver/Welcome.html>

A special thank you to Joel for the Chanukah message, to Debbie for her Christmas Tree picture, Carol Thompson for submitting our games Monica for our favors, Dianne for the apple cider and everybody else who have worked so diligently to make our Club's Celebration totally awesome. God bless us, each and every one.

Worth Repeating

Submitted by Joel Platt

Chanukah, oh Chanukah,
come light the menorah
Chanukah, oh Chanukah,
come light the menorah
Gather 'round the table
and let's have a treat
Happy songs we'll sing,
and latkes we'll eat

And while we are singing
The candles are burning
bright
One for each night, they
shed a sweet light
And remind us of days
long ago

Oh Chanukah, oh Chanukah,
a festival of joy
A holiday, a jolly day,
for every girl and boy
Gather 'round the table
and let's have a treat
Happy songs we'll sing,
and latkes we'll eat

And while we are singing
We'll think of those days
long ago
And then we'll tell the
story of the miracles,
glory
And dance by the candles
burning low.

From the Nature Observer News Archives, by Chuck Tague

The National Audubon Society 103rd Christmas Bird Count

On December 25, 1900, ornithologist Frank Chapman, an officer of the National Audubon Society, suggested that people spend their holiday counting birds. Up until then, the popular holiday tradition called the Christmas "Side Hunt" resulted in an avian bloodbath. People would choose sides, go out into the woods and kill birds. The team who shot the most birds won the brutal contest. The turn of the century brought about a trend towards conservation. Naturalists became more aware of declines in bird populations. Rather than killing birds, 27 enthusiastic birders joined Frank Chapman in the first annual Christmas Bird Count. 25 Counts from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California yielded a total of 90 species and approximately 18,500 individual birds.

The original 27 birders are the inspiration for the more than 50,000 observers who now participate in the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts. Most Counts take place in North America with some extending into Central and South America. The results of these Counts are compiled into more than a century of information recording trends of the winter bird populations across America. Volunteers count all the birds they see or hear in their particular circles in a single day. Each circle is 15 miles in diameter that must not overlap with another. Each Count must take place within 2 weeks of Christmas. The dates of the Official Count period are December 14 through January 5.

115th Annual Christmas Bird Count 2014 - 2015

for more information visit: <http://www.aswp.org/birding/ChristmasBirdCount.html>

Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania hosts the Pittsburgh CBC. This year, the count is scheduled for **Saturday, December 27th** for the area surrounding Pittsburgh. Please contact the Pittsburgh CBC leader nearest you for details:

Fox Chapel	Brian Shema	412-963-6100	bshema@aswp.org
Franklin Park & Ohio Twp.	Stacy Widenhofer	412-991-3657	stacey.fhnc@gmail.com
Hampton Twp.	Al Werling	412-487-8581	Not available
Indiana Twp.	Steve Gosser	412-855-5220	sgosser@comcast.net
Kilbuck & Ohio Twp. (S)	Paul Brown	412-963-1979	pmbrown1944@gmail.com
North Park	Sheree Daugherty	412-322-5371	shereedaugherty@gmail.com
Oakmont & Harmar Twp.	David Yeany	814-221-4361	dyeany2@gmail.com
O'Hara Twp.	Steve Thomas	412-782-4696	thomassj@comcast.net
Penn Hills & Verona	Mike Smith	412-526-8360	skeetor72@yahoo.com
Frick & Highland Parks	Mark Vanderven	425-273-1786	nevrednav@gmail.com
Pittsburgh (rest of city)	Mike Fialkovich	412-731-3581	mpfial@verizon.net
McCandless and Ross Twp.	Bob Machesney	412-366-7869	remach@aol.com
Shaler	Joyce Hoffman	412-487-0921	ibird@juno.com

Many other CBC's occur in western Pennsylvania - we are looking for participation for each of them!

The compiler and date for each count circle are listed below.

Pittsburgh South Hills	December 20	Nancy Page	412-221-4795
Buffalo Creek (Butler)	December 20	George Reese	724-353-9649
Buffalo Creek (Washington)	December 14	Larry Helgerman	412-508-0321
Butler	December 20	Suzanne Butcher	330-759-1945
South Butler	January 3	Chris Kubiak	412-963-6100
Beaver	December 20	Rick Mason	724-847-0909
Bushy Run State Park	December 28	Dick Byers	724-593-3543
Clarksville	December 27	Terry Dayton	724-627-9665
Washington	December 20	Tom Contreras	724-223-6118
Ryerson	December 20	Marjorie Howard	724-852-3155