



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

June 2021

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS WITH GUEST SPEAKERS/WORKSHOP LEADER

Meeting and Workshop

Meeting 6:30 p.m.

Workshop at 7:15 p.m.

Make-n-Take Stewardship Workshop: BOG GARDENS

Wednesday, July 14th, 2021

Join us at CU Maurice River's July member meeting to catch up on recent happenings and upcoming outdoor opportunities. Then stay on for a *make-n-take* bog garden workshop. The evening's activities will be held in-person and outdoors at Betsy and Michael Loyle's home, a CU Maurice River designated Wildlife-Friendly property on the Wild and Scenic Maurice River shoreline. Please bring a lawn chair to enjoy the river comfortably while learning about ways you can get more involved with CUMR's conservation work.



The picture above is not a bog garden: It is a rain garden. Patti Schmid attended a CU Maurice River Make-n-Take Workshop that was led in partnership with Rutgers Water Resources Program. She grew a variety of these plants from seed, received a design from Rutgers, and put it in the ground. Look how beautiful stewardship can be!

After the meeting, we will start the workshop with a tour of the Loyles' stewardship initiatives which include pollinator gardens, a bog/rain garden, a wildlife pond, and more. Then Karla Rossini and Joe Russell of Summersweet Native Plants will present on an assortment of native bog plants and the benefits of adding a bog garden to your green space at



Above, a picture of a container bog garden at the Philadelphia Flower Show 2021. Container gardening is a great way to start small. Maybe you are new to native plant gardening, or you have an impervious space that could use a little life like a porch or sidewalk, or maybe you live in an apartment with a balcony or terrace. A bog garden is a wonderful addition to anyone's stewardship practices at home. Check out this [NJ Audubon article](#) for more information.

home. Finally, workshop participants will construct their very own container garden to take home. CUMR staff will be working closely with Joe to select the best materials and native plants for your container bog garden. The meeting, garden tour, and workshop are all free and everyone is encouraged to attend. For workshop participants, there will be a relatively small cover for the raw cost of the materials. This cost will be announced closer to the date. Be on the lookout for an email with more details and a link for registration.

The event is part of CU Maurice River's [Watershed Stewards Designation Program](#). This workshop will not only provide you with the information and materials needed to implement or expand upon your best management practices at home but can also help you earn points towards either [Stream-Friendly](#) or [Wildlife-Friendly](#) status for your property.

In the case of inclement weather, the Bi-monthly Business Meeting will be held virtually as scheduled (07.14.2021), but the workshop will be rescheduled for Thursday, July 15th, 2021.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Employment Opportunities with CU Maurice River -

Program Manager Jamie Warner as well as Membership & Events Coordinator Rebecca Roberts will be leaving the CU Maurice River team. While both of these staff members were only with us for a short time, they will be missed. We look forward to getting to know them better as they join CUMR's community of volunteers and supporters. Good luck to both of you in your endeavors at home and school.

We would also like to use this opportunity to announce that CU Maurice River is searching for two individuals, one to serve as our Membership & Events Coordinator and another as the Program

Coordinator. These are both full-time positions. To view either job announcement, simply click the links or pictures below. Interested applicants can send their cover letter and resume to Doreen.Homan@CUMauriceRiver.org.

If you would kindly pass along the openings to prospects, that would be of great help! Referrals from our membership have proven most beneficial in previous hires. Also please share on social media platforms and anywhere you think may prove beneficial. Feel free to share the PDFs in the links below. We will be listing the openings in various venues as well.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

[Click here for the job announcement!](#)



MEMBERSHIP & EVENTS COORDINATOR

[Click here for the job announcement!](#)



New Member Orientation -

Are you a new member of CU Maurice River? Maybe you have been a member for some time, but you are looking for new ways to get involved. On *Thursday, June 17th at 6:00 p.m.* Events and Membership Coordinator Rebecca Roberts will be hosting CUMR's next New Member Orientation. You can join us either in person or virtually. The evening's agenda isn't all business! This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other members and to form friendships around your appreciation of the natural world and desire to make a difference. Please let us know you plan on attending by reaching out to Rebecca.Roberts@CUMauriceRiver.org

SPECIAL EVENTS



There are **four ways you can contribute and you don't have to paddle:**

1. Join us on the water for one paddle - or four of them! Click [here](#) to register for the paddle(s).
2. You can get active via text, email, or social media drumming up support for a non-profit whose work you believe in and you make possible. We promise to make it super easy on you! Reply to this email and we will send you a sample text to use in your communication. If you would like extra information, click [here](#) for some additional tools.
3. You may choose to sponsor one of our adventurous paddlers or the overall event. Click [here](#) to make your donation online in support of our paddlers and CU's stream conservation work.
4. Attend the corporate sponsors' reception! To become a business sponsor, simply click [here](#).

Our goal is high participation!

So, please know that no donation is too small.

\$1, \$5, \$50, \$100, or more; absolutely every donation is significant!

A token of gratitude for all supporters:

Donate \$50.00 - receive a *Raise the River* water bottle

Donate \$75.00 - receive a *Raise the River* baseball cap

Donate \$100.00 - receive a *Raise the River* water bottle and baseball cap

Please read below for more details, registration links, and all the tools you need to get started.



PURPLE MARTIN SPECTACULAR

August 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th at 6:15 p.m.





Enjoy a Sunset Cruise aboard the “Bonanza II.” Slowly cruise the Maurice River with local purple martin expert **Allen Jackson** and other naturalists. A selection of desserts, light snacks, and soft drinks are provided. Reservations are required. The cost is \$50 per person; pay in advance to reserve your place. The boat cruise is approximately 3 hours and we go rain or shine. Cruises depart AT 6:15 p.m. from the dock at 8749 Berry Avenue - Port Norris, NJ 08349. This is a new location from previous years.

Tours sell out well ahead of time so secure your spot now! Pay for your tickets by credit card at www.CUMauriceRiver.org. Or make a check out to “Citizens United” and mail it to PO Box 474, Millville, NJ 08332-0474. Be sure to let us know the names of the other people you may be paying for. If paying by check, also include the date of the trip you are booking. For reservations, contact our office (856-300-5331) or email CitizensUnited@CUMauriceRiver.org.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Online Calendar -

Considering the changing nature of the current health crisis, the staff is recommending that members, volunteers, and friends use CU Maurice River’s web calendar or follow our e-newsletter for the most up-to-date information on upcoming events. A new tool has also been created and sent via USPS to all members - This year we created a quarterly mailer, a simple card listing CUMR’s calendar offerings by season. Keep an eye on your mail! Your next card will be on its way in July.

EXPERIENCE DOWN JERSEY’S OUTSTANDING RESOURCES (Outings and Presentations):

June 5th 9:00 a.m. CU Saturday: Bluebirds with Allen Jackson. Sadly, due to recent weather conditions, there was a significant negative impact on young bluebirds in our area. It was decided that this event would be canceled for 2021. We hope to see you for a retake in 2022!

June 12th at 9:00 a.m. CU Saturday: Butterflies of the Swamp. CU Naturalist and NABA Contributing Member Steve Glynn leads an outing planned to highlight the butterflies that inhabit wetlands. If you take pleasure in viewing these winged beauties, this outing is for you. You will walk away with a list of species that you have never seen before or that you seldom glimpse. Steve skillfully shares his knowledge with others in order to bring awareness and inspire appreciation of these creatures.

June 19th at 9:00 a.m. Spring Paddle and Campfire: The Manumuskin Paddle, Campfire, and Original Songs about the Maurice River. Karla Rossini and Tom McKee will take you up the Manumuskin to some of the river's most pristine reaches on the morning paddle. We hope to view the biodiversity that is iconic of this Wild and Scenic stream. Tide permitting, we will travel under the trestle to see what can be found along the shoreline of the larger meadows. In the evening at 6:00 p.m., we'll head to the lawn area next to the Burcham Farm for refreshment, music, and camaraderie. Tom McKee and Steve Byrne, our musicians, cultivated some local talent who will be playing original music about life on the Maurice River. We'll also take a moment to remember a dear friend, Wally Birbeck, who was helping to organize this event when he passed away earlier this year. Click [here](#) to register.

June 24th at 6:30 p.m. CU Social: Flora of the Manumuskin with Gerry Moore. Gerry Moore, of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, will expound upon the incredible diversity of plant life on the Manumuskin River, including its many rare species, including sensitive joint-vetch, and critical habitats, such as freshwater tidal marshes and Atlantic white cedar bogs. He will also review how early land use, such as the bog iron industry, shaped the landscape we see today in the watershed. This event will mark CU Maurice River's first in-person Social in a year, and what better place to host this momentous event than on the shorelines of the Manumuskin at Vicky and Rob Tomlin's home. Click [here](#) to register.

June 25th at 6:30 p.m. Family-Friendly Friday: Nature Aglow. What lights up in the night? Stars, bugs, fungi, plants, and more! We will meet at Belleplain State Forest where we will be illuminated by CU Naturalist Jim Blumenstein; Park Naturalist for Burlington County Parks, Jennifer Bulava; CU Member and Educator Peter Manzelmann; CUMR Executive Director Karla Rossini; and Belleplain State Forest Staff as they reveal the host of living and non-living entities which glow, reflect, or otherwise add light to the darkness. Click [here](#) to register.

June 26th at 9:30 a.m. 4th Saturday Walk. Join us for 4th Saturday in Waltman Park. Led by CU Naturalist Mary Watkins, this trek will explore the Maurice River Bicycle and Walking Trail as well as the nearby Eco-Leader Amcor Rigid Plastics' green infrastructure installation on the banks of the Maurice that is attracting birds and pollinators. Meet at the parking lot of the dam on Sharp Street. Click [here](#) to register.

July 6th at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday on the Fly: The Manumuskin Trail and Fries Mill Ruins. Carpool from the CU Maurice River office to the Manumuskin Trail, where CU Board President Jane Morton Galletto and Program Manager Jamie Warner will lead you on a nature walk that includes the interpretation of the Fries Mill Ruins. Click [here](#) to register.

July 24th at 9:30 a.m. 4th Saturday Walk. Join us for 4th Saturday in Waltman Park. Led by CU Naturalists, we'll explore the Maurice River Bicycle and Walking Trail as well as the nearby Eco-Leader Amcor Rigid Plastics' green infrastructure installation on the banks of the Maurice.

August 3rd at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday on the Fly: Northern End of the Bridgeton City Park.
Join us for a nature walk full of history at Sunset and Mary Elmer Lakes. Click [here](#) to register.

August 21st at 9:00 a.m. CU Saturday: Forgotten Grasses with Karen Williams. Join CU Naturalist Karen Williams and delve into the fascinating world of the grasses so often forgotten next to showier flowers, bushes, and trees. On this walk participants will explore the wildlife benefits of native grasses, from feeding granivorous birds, functioning as host plants for caterpillars, providing shelter for small mammals, and lots more. Click [here](#) to register.

August 27th at 6:30 p.m. Family-Friendly Friday: Nature Stream. CU Naturalists and Marine Biologists Karen Williams and Joseph Russell lead an evening of exploring stream habitats. This event is designed to provide a fun-filled opportunity for hands-on learning activities for the whole family. Put on your water shoes and shorts, don your life jackets, and join us in the stream. We've got some exciting creatures to share with you! Click [here](#) to register.

August 28th at 9:30 a.m. 4th Saturday Walk. Join us for 4th Saturday in Waltman Park. Led by CU Naturalists, we'll explore the Maurice River Bicycle and Walking Trail as well as the nearby Eco-Leader Amcor Rigid Plastics' green infrastructure installation on the banks of the Maurice. Click [here](#) to register.

VOLUNTEER TO PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES (workgroups):

June 1st, 5:30 p.m. / June 8th, 12:00 p.m. / June 15th, 4:30 p.m. reTurn the Favor CU guided walks – Help protect the horseshoe crab populations by returning distressed crabs to the safety of the water, and experience a globally significant natural phenomenon - the shorebird migration on the Delaware Bay.

June 6th A Day of Community Events: You can help CU Maurice River take its message to new audiences and families by volunteering as a CU Ambassador. On Sunday, June 6th CU staff will be hosting activities at both the Barn Studio of Art's **Barn Day** and Scotland Run Park's **Water Fest**.

June 18th at 9:00 a.m. Brunch in the Weeds. This activity has been designed as a volunteer opportunity as well as a garden experience. The group will start the morning off by weeding the Neighborhood Wildlife Garden on Third Street in Millville. Then we will pot up and transfer plants from the Neighborhood Garden to the First United Methodist Garden which is only a block away. By 11:00 a.m. we will back at the Neighborhood Garden to pause and enjoy the garden on Third Street. Join us to enjoy the company of other volunteers who are making a positive impact through gardening. A light brunch will be provided by CU staff. If you would like to add any item to the brunch, please let Karla know. Click [here](#) to register.

July 10th at 9:00 a.m. Volunteer Workgroup: Paddle Trail Maintenance. Maintaining access points to the river and open space is an integral part of empowering the public to enjoy the great out-of-doors. This workgroup will involve the cleaning up and clearing of paddle trails north of Union Lake Dam. Click [here](#) to register.

August 5th, All day. Elevate. Come help out! By volunteering to co-lead an outdoor education station at this longstanding program, you can share your appreciation for and knowledge of nature with the next generation of stewards. To volunteer email info@CUMauriceRiver.org.

August (12th), 13th, 14th (varying times) Dragonfly Mercury Project. CU Maurice River with the assistance of the National Park Service has been awarded funding to continue the study of mercury contamination in the Wild and Scenic Maurice River designated area. Over the three-day period, volunteer citizen scientists will sample at three different sites. As of right now, we are approved to sample at two sites. We hope to add on a third by the sampling dates. This year we will conduct project activities in the northernmost streams. If you know of a good access point or maybe are a landowner in the headwaters of the Menantico, Manumuskin, or Muskee, please contact us for further discussion at info@CUMauriceRiver.org.

PAST ACTIVITIES

PAST FUNDRAISERS:

March 5th Virtual Trivia Night. Meghan Thompson led this fundraiser from start to finish. A small group gathered on Zoom to participate in a trivia fundraiser. Attendees played music and made suggestions for future questions.



May 8th World Series of Birding. The World Series of Birding was a great success from a birding competition and a fundraiser perspective. In spite of some very unusual weather conditions - low 40s to a high of 57 degrees with even hail reported in places, the team still tallied 149 different species - a fantastic effort. And we beat last year's \$15K gross to collect in excess of **\$21K**: an all-time high! Thanks to everyone who made this possible. We had nearly 100% participation from prior years' donors. You're all amazing.



PAST PROGRAMMING:

March 2nd Tuesday on the Fly: Down Jersey's Pre-Colonial History. This outing highlighted the formation of South Jersey through hundreds of thousands of years, leading ultimately to the abundant paradise which brought human settlements here beginning 13,000+ years ago. guided by Kathy Probasco, the group walked through Sheppards Mill Pond in Greenwich, once regularly used as seasonal hunting and fishing grounds for the Lenni Lenape. The mountain laurel was in full bloom and a special treat. Cyndy Wilks of the Lenni Lenape tribe in Bridgeton joined us to talk about this culture's pre-history and current status. 26 people attended.

March 10th Bi-Monthly Meeting and Presentation. After members received a summary of recent goings-on and an overview of upcoming outdoor opportunities, Scott Quitel of the Landhealth Institute in Philadelphia gave a presentation on Urban Ecology. Urban greening projects like the rain gardens and *hügelkultur* beds that CUMR has built in Downtown Millville serve multiple purposes. The benefits to flora, fauna, and human populations are numerous and include helping to divert untreated liquids from waterways, restoring groundwater, providing access to ecologically vibrant outdoor spaces, and creating habitat for wildlife. These green spaces improve urban land management downtown, create recreational spaces for people, and protect the vitality and integrity of open spaces as well as our river.

March 20th CU Saturday: CU's Return to the Holly Farm. In celebration of the recently preserved Holly Farm, CUMR organized a series of walks led by Board President Jane Morton Galetto, Executive Director Karla Rossini, Trustee Kristin Meistrell, Naturalists Karen Williams and Paul Kosten, and Dan Fenton. Nearly 100 people went on 4 walks.



CU Board President Jane Morton Galetto leads one of the first morning walks.



Dan Fenton Jr. shares his experiences as a boy growing up on the Holly Farm.

April 6th Tuesday on the Fly: Houses of Worship. This outing explored a selection of historic houses of worship and cemeteries in Down Jersey including Mauricetown United Methodist Church, the Old Stone Church in Cedarville, the Quaker Lower Meeting House in Greenwich, the Bethel AME church, and the Old Broad Street Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton. Representatives from each church met with the group and provided insight into the history of their congregation. 23 participants joined us on this outing.

April 17th CU Saturday: Springtime Dragonflies and Butterflies. CU Naturalist Steve Glynn led this adventure, which took participants to various hotspots for early

season dragonfly and butterfly spotting. The dragonflies included the robust baskettail, spring darners, and even the elusive Uhler's sundragon. Volunteers also saw butterfly species like spring azures, eastern-tailed blue, and Henry's elfin.

April 16th Weeds for Wildlife by Pat Sutton.

Sutton. As part of CU's partnership with WheatonArts and NFWF grant, Pat Sutton informed attendees at this virtual opportunity about what constitutes a "weed" versus a beneficial native plant. She implored folks to keep the native weeds and highlighted the wildlife that benefits from creating pockets of habitat in our backyards. 170 people were in attendance.



April 22nd CU Social: Down Jersey Architecture. Cumberland County Improvement Authority's Planning Director Matt Pisarski expounded on the evolution of architecture in southern New Jersey, highlighting jewels from the past and noteworthy contemporary buildings, as well as elaborating on ongoing historic preservation efforts. 70 people attended.

April 24th 4th Saturday: Maurice River Walking and Bicycle Trail and Campfire. Led by CU Naturalists Tony Klock and Mary Watkins, 18 participants enjoyed many wildlife sightings made possible by the coming of spring. The group also visited the Amcor wetlands restoration site that is providing additional habitat along the river and promoting the infiltration of water. In the evening 21 people gathered around the campfire at the Russells' riverside home for an evening of socializing in the great out-of-doors.

May 4th Tuesday on the Fly: Pattern Brick Homes with Penny Watson of Watson and Henry Associates, an architectural firm that has created many preservation plans for Cumberland County historic resources. Janet Sheridan helped guide the group. Various historic homesteads that display pattern brickwork were visited. Participants learned about their history and the preservation efforts involved in protecting them. We learned a whole lot of fun facts, for instance, that masons have separate names for each of the 6 sides of a brick, which vary depending on the way the brick is lying! 24 people attended.



May 5th and 12th Nothin' Fancy; Just Birdin'. CU Naturalist Bert Hixon led this two-part spring birding series looking for neotropical migrants passing through our area. The first outing was a driving tour of Belleplain State Park, and the second a nature walk at The Nature Conservancy's Garrett Property Preserve in Cape May.

May 12th Bi-Monthly Meeting and Presentation. This virtual bi-monthly meeting informed the membership and newcomers of the recent ongoing at CUMR. It also provided insight as to how people can get more involved in the conservation work being accomplished by the CUMR team of volunteers. Afterward, Dr. Michael Chiarrappa – a historian at Quinnipiac University - presented on the African American environmental experience throughout the Delaware Bay area.

May 15th CU's Big Day. The morning began with the Dawn Song, a nature walk to experience the spring migration of neotropical birds as they pass through southern New Jersey. Each member of the 2021 WSOB team showed up to help lead this affair. A large group of members attended. Afterward, 15 people explored the Bayshore back streams via kayak. It was a beautiful day with a slight breeze that kept the biting bugs at bay. There were many highlights on the paddle, but a special treat was an up-close look at two clapper rails as they popped out of the marsh.

May 21st Family-Friendly Friday:
The Frog Slog. This was the kick-off event of 2021's Family-Friendly Friday series that connects children - and their adults – with outdoor education opportunities. Six families along with other participants had fun slogging in the water in search of frogs. We were treated with a special view of a Pine Barrens treefrog that was tucked away on a branch. Kids learned about the various local frog and toad species, their life cycles, habits, and habitats. CU Naturalist



Tony Klock and Executive Director Karla Rossini were there to lead the group and interpret.

May 31st Memorial Day Cruise. CU Maurice River partnered with the Bayshore Center at Bivalve to host the Memorial Day Cruise aboard NJ's tall ship the AJ Meerwald. CU Naturalist and BCB supporter Tony Klock led this outing. Fun was had by all, and over 50 species were spotted!

PAST VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

March 12th Volunteer Workgroup: Germination Workshop for the First United Methodist Church. Twenty youth volunteers gathered on the lawn of the future pollinator and serenity garden at First United Methodist Church. The participants learned about the benefits of rain and native pollinator gardens as well as permaculture techniques and then sowed seeds that they will foster until ready for planting on Saturday, May 22nd. The group was excited to transform this once vacant lot into a welcoming space for the congregation and wildlife. A special thank you to Susan McKenna for her dedication in sharing her enthusiasm for eco-friendly gardening with the next generation of stewards.

March 27th 4th Saturday on the Maurice River Walking and Bicycle Trail. As is traditional, this nature walk series was kicked off with the Annual Trash Hunt. CU Maurice River, in partnership with the Cumberland County Improvement Authority, was happy to clean up at Millville's downtown preserve. Together they removed debris from the woods, waterfront, and playground around Waltman Park and along the Maurice River. Volunteers got some of their first glimpses of plants, butterflies, snakes, and turtles all emerging from their winter slumber on this warm spring day. 25 people helped in this effort.

April 4th Impromptu Volunteer Workgroup. A determined crew of 6 people met up on a rainy weekday morning and pulled 29 trash bags of heavy glass and various bits of metal out of a recently acquired Natural Lands Trust property, where a new trail has been built.



April 7th Paddle Fundraiser Meeting. In this second meeting of the steering committee for the Paddle Fundraiser in July, participants decided on a name for the event, learned more about programming for the day, and helped us tackle a tangle of questions around logistics. Thanks to all who came out and participated. 12 people were in attendance.

April 8th Neighborhood Wildlife Garden: Spring Clean-up and Planting of Hügelkultur. Volunteers helped prepare and clean up the Neighborhood Wildlife Garden for the 2021 season. 12 volunteers removed debris, weeded, and cared for the walking path.

April 10th Annual reTurn the Favor Training. Karla Rossini led a demonstrative walk at CU Maurice River's adopted beaches at East Point Lighthouse. Then the new recruits gathered under

the wharves at the Bayshore Center at Bivalve for training with WSHRN's Laura Chamberlain and CUMR's Jamie Warner. Returning volunteers also joined in preparation for another season of this popular and growing initiative to rescue horseshoe crabs on the Delaware Bay. 37 people attended.

April 15th Garden Preparation at First United Methodist Church . 17 volunteers worked at the church to edge and weed the future garden beds in preparation for mulching. Sadly, the needed salt hay didn't arrive that day so mulching had to be postponed to another date. Volunteers did a stand-up job at getting the garden ready for the next workgroup.

April 24th Community Event: Earth Day Celebration. CU Maurice River partnered with the Barn Studio of Art to celebrate Earth Day by leading a host of outdoor education and art activities highlighting the synergy between nature and creativity. The first activity for the kids was to listen to a presentation on the history of nature journaling given by Karla. Then the children went on a walk where they practiced sketching items found in nature. Finally, they visited Doreen at the painting station where they transformed their sketches into paintings. 7 volunteers and staff members helped run this activity for 50 participants.



April 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, and May 1st Revitalization of the WheatonArts Entrance Circle. CU Maurice River and Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service's Water Resources Program partnered to improve the entrance circle at WheatonArts. Between Monday and Saturday, over 170 volunteers from CU and WheatonArts joined in this effort to install a system of four connected rain gardens and three upland pollinator spaces. This system will not only support wildlife and native plant communities but will also promote the infiltration and filtration of approximately 890,000 gallons of stormwater per year. Nearly 900 volunteer hours were dedicated to this transformation of the WheatonArts circle into an eco-friendly garden. We would like to extend a warm thank you to Stanker & Galetto and Northeast Precast for their donations of backhoes and materials to the successful completion of the project. Also, thank you to Bob & Carol Marceluk as well as Susan McKenna for the donation of plants. Another special thank you is offered to Dottie Dayton for her absolute dedication to this project, and for her moral support at all times!

Month of May Hosting the Shorebird Project Team. About 50 CU volunteers pooled efforts to make meals for the Shorebird Project Team. Over 20 main meals were made from which many lunches were also fashioned. After long, difficult days searching for shorebirds, capturing, tagging, counting, and endless data collection, the Shorebird Project Team truly welcomed the home-cooked meals provided by our members. This effort continues to be very rewarding for both the CU and

Shorebird Project Teams. Sadly, final reports from the study effort showed a 2/3 decrease in red knots from the prior year, a decline that will be very hard to reverse and that clearly leaves them at the brink of extinction. We will be writing about this in the coming weeks.

May 6th Neighborhood Wildlife Garden. Originally, the plan was to work at the garden on Third Street, but CU returned to the WheatonArts installation to tie up some loose ends from installation week.

May 18th and 25th reTURN the Favor Walks. CU has been holding guided reTURN the Favor walks for interested volunteers who don't hold a permit. On Tuesdays of each week during the spawning season, a team meets at the East Point Lighthouse at the designated time to help support the horseshoe crab and shorebird populations. One walk was led by one of CU's most dedicated team of horseshoe crab savers, Kathy Geiger, Wendy Walker, and Jan Dwyer-Lobiondo. This trio of dedicated "flippers" is super serious about saving crabs, while also being such a pleasant and welcoming group of friends.

May 20th First United Methodist Church Pollinator Garden Bed Preparation. Just two days before the scheduled planting, a team of 14 volunteers from the congregation and CU Maurice River finished preparing beds for planting by (in the absence of salt hay this year) spreading root mulch.

May 22nd Volunteer Work Group: Planting the Pollinator Space at First United Methodist Church in

Millville. Participants from the germination session held in February and March brought their now-mature flowers and grasses to the once-vacant lot for planting. Between the plants grown by volunteers, those purchased from Pinelands



Nursery, and those that were donated, some 2,000 native flowers and grasses were planted on this urban lot. About 460 hours were dedicated to fostering plants from seed. On planting day 28+ volunteers showed up to transform the empty beds into budding pollinator gardens. Thank you to Bob & Carol Marceluk and as well as Susan McKenna for donating plants to this project.

OFFICE AND STAFF HAPPENINGS/ PROGRAMS

New Hire – CU Maurice River was sad to announce that Assistant Office Manager Meghan Thompson would be resigning her position in order to pursue personal goals. In response to the vacancy, Doreen and Karla teamed up to find a replacement. In April, Rebecca Roberts was hired on to the team in a new position, the Membership & Events Coordinator.

Dragonfly Mercury Project – With the help of the Wild and Scenic Maurice River's River Manager Paul Kenny, CUMR was able to secure funding to continue the study of mercury contamination throughout the designated miles of the Maurice. In preparation for 2021's sampling activities, Jamie attended two training workshops. Karla looks forward to seeing you, CU's citizen scientist crew, in the field. Sampling is scheduled for August (see announcement above).

Bridgeton City Library – The library released another four virtual workshop videos that highlighted the installation at WheatonArts. The library interviewed the team of Rutgers engineers who were on-site to oversee the realization of their design, CUMR volunteers who made this project happen, the children who were present helping and learning about stewardship, and CU's Karla Rossini who organized the effort. These clips didn't only feature interviews but also a reading of a nature-themed book and a fun related craft.

Coalition for the Delaware River – Karla attended two priority-setting meetings, one on restoration funding and the other on watershed-wide planning which included a specific focus on

supporting Wild and Scenic Rivers and designating more river miles in the Delaware River Watershed.

Analyzing the Extent of the *Phragmites australis* Encroachment: Since October 2020 CU Volunteer and former NJDEP ArcGIS Specialist Tom McKee has been working with Karla to produce maps that illustrate the *phragmites australis* expansion within the Wild and Scenic Maurice River designated area. In partnership with Princeton Hydro and the partners listed below, CU Maurice River submitted a grant application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Delaware River Watershed Conservation Grant Program on April 1st. The aforementioned maps were an essential tool in garnering the sign-on support of the following partners: the National Park Service, Clay Sutton and Paul Kerlinger, Ducks Unlimited, Partners for the Delaware Estuary, Princeton Hydro, The Nature Conservancy, NJ Audubon, USDA, NJDEP, USFW Partnership Program, PSE&G, NPS Northeast Invasive Plant Management Team, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, NJ Conservation Foundation, and the western and eastern shoreline homeowners, among others. If awarded funding, CU Maurice River would continue a mapping study of the phragmites encroachment within the Wild and Scenic designated area, coordinate partner involvement and oversight, and assist in the realization of pilot phragmites controls. The project's goal will be to establish the most efficient and ecologically sound approach to phragmites control in a freshwater tidal system.

SNJ Today The Great Outdoors - CU Maurice River Trustee Jane Morton Galletto, with an occasional contribution by staff or volunteers, continues to write nature-themed articles for SNJToday. Some of the most recent publications include: Using Binoculars, Shorebird Migration Declines, Holly Farm Memories, Cicadas Brood X, Urban Eco-Landscape WheatonArts, and many, many more.

Centerton Dam – Beth Syler of The Nature Conservancy's statewide dam removal program reached out to CU Maurice River to see if we would be interested in leading the removal of an extant dam at Centerton Lake. Karla has attended a host of meetings with Beth, Edward Samanns of WSP environmental consultants, and the president of the homeowner's association. This project was also brought to our attention by Beth Freiday of USFW's Partnership program. After the removal of the defunct dam, there is a potential for the preservation of the 80 acres of land within the headwaters of the Maurice River.

Summer Nature Journaling Program – CUMR and Barn Studio have been working together to coordinate a summer program that would invite youths to participate in a nature journaling workshop. This will be a four-week program hosted in August. The students will attend two days of classes; one morning of sketching in the field followed by a morning in the studio.

Earth Day Presentations – CUMR and its NFWF grant partners presented on the recent green infrastructure projects that have been installed and are being installed. Amcor Rigid Plastics, Cumberland Family Medical, First United Methodist Church, and WheatonArts provided testimonials on their motivation to improve their land management as well as their experience with the project for both the Millville and Vineland Chambers of Commerce. CUMR and Rutgers presented on ecological benefits of green infrastructure for local and global resources.

Diesel Fuel Spill in Leesburg – CUMR received calls from the National Park Service and the United States Coast Guard about a diesel fuel spill on the Maurice River. The spill occurred during a slack tide with the wind blowing towards a developed shoreline contributing to an easier clean-up. All essential parties (spill responders as well as regulatory entities) were quick to react. A special thank-you to Rich and Cathy Daves for taking Karla on a boat ride to view the area.

Citizen-led Advocacy for Conservation – In the first six months of 2021, many concerned community members brought an array of development proposals to CUMR's attention. All of these located within the Maurice River Watershed and some in sensitive areas. Jane and Karla worked together to field inquiries, connect citizens with resources, and provide advice on possible paths forward.

Calendar - Remember to check our calendar online at www.cumauriceriver.org for any changes or updates to events and volunteer opportunities.

Social Media – CU Maurice River's Facebook page is more active than ever! You can view videos, see pictures from outings, read volunteer stories, and so much more. By following CUMR and liking our posts, you not only stay better connected but you also help us get more information to more people in the community.

Address Changes - Please keep us posted about any changes in your email or mailing address. Our communications contain a helpful stream of reminders and updates that you won't want to miss.

Membership and Renewals - Please help us by ensuring that your membership is up-to-date and/or invite a friend to join. Membership is set at \$20 for individuals and \$30 for families, although our average annual donation is approximately \$75. Mail your check to PO Box 474, Millville, NJ 08332, or join online at www.cumauriceriver.org. If you are interested in learning more about the monthly giving program, please reach out to CitizensUnited@CUMauriceRiver.org, (856) 300-5331.

*A special thanks to all those who give,
the equally important gift of your time.
We couldn't do this without you!*

CU ON THE RIVER!
www.CUMauriceRiver.org

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