



Photo: Jessika Creedon

Canter Alley

The Friends Get Social

By Kelly Leonard

In early 2016, the Friends launched a social media and digital marketing strategy with the goal to grow awareness, engagement, and sponsorship of its annual events throughout the year from the Spring Peony Celebration to the December Gala, while also growing membership. Our target audiences are current members, existing donors and supporters, preserve visitors, birders, runners, riders, and walkers who may not be familiar with the Friends, potential sponsors, corporate donors, and Gala supporters. Of particular interest is to reach potential new members

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The Friends Rock On!

The Friends have had the good fortune over the past dozen years to employ two outstanding Administrative Directors. The Preserve Observer asked both to reflect on their work. Jessika Creedon began this year. Liz Meszaros bid us farewell in the spring. Here are their stories.

By Jessika Creedon

Little did I know, when I first visited the Rockefeller Preserve in 2009, that one day I would be part of the team advocating for its care. At the time I was living in Brooklyn and training for the 2010 NYC marathon, and one can only do so many laps in Prospect Park before you begin looking elsewhere to log your miles. A chance mention of the Old Croton Aqueduct (OCA) led to a day trip to explore both the OCA and Rockwood Hall. The first of what quickly became a regular weekend occurrence for my husband and me, a long run and lunch in town before returning to Brooklyn.

During this time I managed an architectural photography studio, while the focus was primarily on buildings

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Gala site will be the Rockefeller Playhouse

Phelps Memorial Hospital To Be Honored With Friends Award

By Evelyn Hadad

On December 10, 2016, Phelps Memorial Hospital will be honored by the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve for the hospital's dedicated and longtime support of the preserve and the community. The Award Gala will also celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Friends. Honorary Chairs are David Rockefeller, Ann Rockefeller Roberts and Bette Midler. Actor and comedian Robert Kline will be a Special Guest and will perform. The Gala will take place at the Rockefeller Family Playhouse in

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Gala, *continued from page 1*

Pocantico Hills at the start of the holiday season and will feature an evening of elegant music and foods. Funds raised will help conserve and protect the preserve, which has been of immeasurable value to our community.

The award was instituted for the purpose of celebrating the outstanding contributions of an organization or an individual to the Rockefeller Preserve. By highlighting the services of an organization or person, and expressing gratitude on behalf of visitors who use the preserve, it is believed that the award will inspire others to become actively committed to the cause of enhancing and conserving the land and carriage roads that are the Rockefeller Preserve.

The Rockefeller State Park Preserve includes 1,600 acres with panoramic views of the Hudson River and magnificent landscapes designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. Today, the preserve attracts more than 300,000 visitors annually including runners, walkers, equestrians, birders, and nature lovers and serves as a sanctuary for people seeking recreation and reflection in a tranquil setting.

Phelps Hospital, which is under the umbrella of the Northwell Health organization, is set on 69 rolling acres overlooking the Hudson River in Sleepy Hollow, New York, that were originally part of the Rockefeller Estate. This 238-bed, not-for-profit acute care hospital provides outstanding medical and mental healthcare to the residents of Westchester and surrounding communities. Since its beginnings in 1956, Phelps has strived to provide its community with the finest quality healthcare. The extent of services made available to those it serves ranges from emergency treatment to acute care inpatient services, as well as a host of outpatient services designed to address the needs of those who make up the Phelps service area (Westchester County and surrounding communities in Rockland, Putnam, and Dutchess Counties in New York and Fairfield County in Connecticut).

For 20 years, The Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve have helped to raise funds for the carriage roads as well as for educational programs, gallery exhibits and gallery improvements, and special occasions such as the 10th Anniversary of 9/11. The group's social media presence enables visitors to share their experiences internationally.

Please join us at this 20th Anniversary Gala and help protect and nurture our preserve for future generations. For more details please go to our web site www.friendsrock.org.

Clare Pierson, the Friends President, adds, "If you cannot attend, please consider giving a donation to support the preserve, for which we thank you in advance."

A New Equestrian Event Is Introduced

By Patricia Jones

Since 2002, the Rockefeller State Park Preserve has celebrated its carriage roads by holding an annual Autumn Hunter Pace fundraiser, an event to raise funds for trail and carriage road maintenance. Begun by the then Friends of Rockefeller State Park Preserve president, George Gumina, our Pace attracted 300-400 individual and team riders to a timed competition offering the beautiful roads and views in the preserve. Since 2008, participation has fallen to a little over half of the early years, a regional trend.

Running a Hunter Pace is costly in both time and money. As a fundraising event, the Friends felt that we had to do better. Working with two accomplished horsewomen, Lynn Lucas and Debbie Homer, who have helped run the Pace for a number of years, we put together a new event that we think was fun for riders and volunteers alike and which makes better use of volunteers: "Bridge to Bridge Amble and Gamble".

Yes, you read that right; it's GAMBLE as in 5-card stud and draw poker. Riders registered and were sent out at intervals with a number and a card. Every registered rider left with a 5-card stud potential. Along the marked course, five bridges were highlighted and manned by volunteers ready with a brief description of each bridge. Those who chose to stop and listen had their card punched. Each punch – the maximum is 5 – allowed the rider to draw an additional card. At the finish, near beautiful Rockwood Hall, hands were drawn with tie-breaker cards as needed. And there it was: THE BEST HANDS WON.

Tickets for the October 2 event included the ride, a hot lunch and a chance to win prizes with a poker hand. Lunch was catered by PJ Doyle's of Sleepy Hollow under a tent at Rockwood Hall. Advance registration was rewarded with the lowest cost, increasing as the date drew near.

While the style of the event was new, the same safety checks and ambulance support were unchanged, parking for trailers and cars was still free and the winning combination of a beautiful park, horses and a fall day spent outdoors remained. Non-riders were encouraged to come and enjoy the horses and lunch with a view. Participation as a rider or a spectator provided much needed funding for trail and carriage road maintenance.

Please go to our website, www.friendsrock.org, to see more about the event.

Social, *continued from page 1*

between the ages of 18-34. We believe a focused, ongoing social media presence can help us reach this demographic that typically spends two and a half hours per day online via their mobile phones and/or PCs (source: Nielsen).

Tactics included: launching an account and community-building on the photo and video sharing social media app, Instagram; reinvigorating the Friends Facebook Page and presence; engaging with New York State Parks official social media administrators; adding Google Analytics (the industry standard of tracking and reporting website traffic) to friendsrock.org to track visitors and their interactions on our website.

*Sunset**Photo: @olad_ny*

The Friends Instagram account launched on January 22, 2016 and as of end of September has 118 Posts, 264 Followers, and 3,419 total Likes on our posts. Our Instagram Followers include Hudson Valley Compass, Hudson Valley Explorer, Hudson Valley Happenings, VisitVortex, Westchester Road Runner, and River Town Runners. For context, the Friends Facebook Page had garnered an average of 140 Page Likes per year since its launch in 2010.

A key component to any digital marketing effort is discoverability – how will online visitors find our posts and website?

The Friends Facebook Page is benefiting from launch of the Instagram account as the two accounts are connected. Instagram posts are automatically posted to the Friends Facebook Page. This has stimulated the Friends Facebook community engagement and has grown overall Page Likes by 33.5% to 1.1K as of the end of September 2016.

A key component to any digital marketing effort is discoverability – how will online visitors find our posts and website? To increase discovery of the Friends social media posts, we use hashtags, geo-tagging, mention of preserve

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Rocky's 5K Race Set for October 29th at 9 a.m.

By Laureen Fitzgerald

I am the new race director of the Rocky's 5K and the race director of the Rockwood Ramble 10K. This year's Rocky's 5K will be held on Saturday, October 29th at 9 a.m. The course is a beautiful 5K measured loop on the carriage roads of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. This is our 7th annual race and my first as race director of the 5K after Stella Medina, vice president of the Friends of Rockefeller State Park Preserve and the creator of the Rocky's 5K, stepped down as race director.

Stella created this race as a fun way for people to contribute towards the maintenance of the preserve's historic carriage trails and enjoy the beautiful park at the same time. I have been a part of this race from its beginning as the coordinator of registration and part of the race committee. Out of Stella's vision, she had the idea of our spring 10K, also a fundraiser for trail maintenance. I have been the race director of the Rockwood Ramble 10K since its inception. Under Stella's leadership, I hope to organize the 5K to her standards and ideas and imitate her excellent organizational skills. Both races have helped raise some of the many funds needed to restore the carriage roads of the preserve to their original splendor.

Violent storms, including Sandy, have taken their toll on the trails. The money raised between these two races will contribute towards the restoration and repairs. Stella will remain involved in the races as a race committee member. And we appreciate and thank her for all her hard work and dedication. I hope you will come out on October 29th to run or walk the 5K with us and help give back towards the park by participating.

There will be awards for the top male and female overall winners, top three male and female age group winners, and top three teams! Registration and more details are available at Friendsrock.org.

*And they're off! Start of a recent Rocky's 5K.*

Friends Rock On, *continued from page 1*

in North America, I was able to travel to China twice for photography shoots. On the second trip, to Beijing, I was able to visit the Great Wall at Mutianyu. I arrived early, before the crowds of tourists and while a thick fog still hung over the mountains. The feeling of peaceful solitude, of being the lone person standing in such a breathtaking spot, is something I will never forget. That peaceful feeling is much like how it feels in the Rockefeller Preserve, at dawn, when the sun is just beginning to break through the mist hanging low over the fields surrounding Canter Alley. While rising early isn't for everyone, to truly know the magic of the preserve, it's something you must do.

*Jessika Creedon*

In 2015, with twin toddlers underfoot, the search began for a home outside the city. And as open minded as I was to all the towns, staying near the Preserve topped our wish list. While most people tell their realtor they want hardwood floors and an updated kitchen, we wanted "walkable to the train and trails." In the end, we settled in Sleepy Hollow. The house may be a fixer upper, but the location is perfect. My runs began to cover more and more miles, as I learned to link trails and only occasionally refer to the map at an unknown intersection. I was able to ditch the headphones that had accompanied every run for over six years and instead listen to the water in the brooks, the birds chirping and my own footsteps.

I continued to commute into the city for a year, where I was the in-house photographer and design studio manager for a home products company. However, finding a position closer to home remained my goal. When I learned of the administrative director position at Friends, a position so perfectly suited to my management skills and passion for the preserve, I couldn't respond quickly enough.

The transition from photography and studio management to the nonprofit world has one I have embraced fully. From event planning to trail reports, when you are given the opportunity to work for an organization whose vision you support so completely, you want nothing more than to go above and beyond to see its success. I have gained a greater appreciation and understanding of the historic significance of the carriage roads to which we are so lucky to have access. I also understand the work, dedication and teamwork required to care for and maintain them. The preserve is a treasure, I am proud to work with the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve.

By *Liz Meszaros*

After 12 years of working with the Friends, I have returned to work in government as part of my long term plan toward a healthier retirement. Prior to joining the Friends, I spent 20 years working in various positions with the Town of Greenburgh, which prepared me for my many adventures with the Friends group, and there were quite a few.

*Liz Meszaros*

In 2004, I began working part-time with the Friends, while attending to my young children. The group was young back then and in many ways still finding itself. In addition to my administrative duties, I quickly learned that it was my job to help the Board bring the Friends group to the next level and support an important part of their mission to encourage greater community participation. In order to financially survive, there was a need to reach out not only to the locals, but also to attract a broader base to help support the park, its trails and programs. The demographics were there; it was our job to attract people by offering them a connection with our messaging.

I worked closely with the Friends Board and Preserve staff that came together and welcomed new ideas. This collaboration led to the development of many annual successful fundraising events from horse paces to road races, art gallery events, peony celebrations, Love My Park Days, and several Benefit Galas. The profits from these events continue to support trail maintenance and other important park programs. A new website was developed, a membership program was implemented and the Friends branded themselves with the appropriate tag line, "Here to enjoy...Ours to preserve". Membership has grown steadily through our website and social media efforts, and the message that we need support in order to maintain this beautiful preserve has also spread.

Rocky's continues to be a popular destination for equestrians, runners, birders, walkers and dog-walkers, photographers, artists, and families, just to name a few, and our volunteer base continues to grow. I fondly refer to these worker-bees as "Ambassadors" to the preserve, who have been instrumental to the growth of the group. The fundraising events that I helped to plan and organize over the years could not have been accomplished without these dedicated individuals. I hope to find herself in a position to join the Ambassadors in the future, but, for now, I will be following the Friends and their supporters, through social media and The Preserve Observer, enjoying their accomplishments and successes with much pleasure and satisfaction as the Friends Rock On!

From the Friends President

By Clare M. Pierson



Fall is upon us with all the sweet regret of harvest tumbling into the kitchen. Our newest event, the Bridge to Bridge Amble and Gamble took place at Rockwood Hall Oct. 2nd. It was so much fun, with delicious food from J. P. Doyles in Sleepy Hollow and coffee donated by Coffee Labs in Tarrytown. Plus the weather, despite all the predictions, co-operated! The riders loved it. The pressure of a Pace was lifted and the poker ride aspect was a blast. It was a great way to officially enter into the fall.

Next comes the very popular Rocky's 5K Oct 29th, uphill and down dale as all runs in the preserve are. Register soon if you haven't already! We sell out quickly. And -maybe a costume? Halloween is in the air!

Topping off our schedule this year is our 20th Anniversary Gala Dec. 10th. Can you believe we are 20? Time flies when you are having fun, and this organization is full of that along with our dedication to this jewel of a place.

Phelps Memorial Hospital is our honoree, great supporter and neighbor to the preserve. Phelps was built on lands donated by the "brothers" from the original Rockefeller Family estate like the preserve. Bette Midler is an honored guest, along with Mr. David Rockefeller. Neighbor Robert Klein is scheduled to make an appearance and perform! It is going to be a very fun evening and like the race, will probably sell out. Get your tickets early and let us know if you would like to sponsor part of this event.

As I look back on our 20 years, what comes into clarity for me is the direct line of knowledge and understanding of this land, and of the carriage road system that is held by members of our board. Our founder, George Gumina, learned everything he knows about the carriage roads from Peggy Rockefeller, David's late wife. She took him out on many rides in her carriages, and pointed out for him all the drains, the swales, the set back, and the incredible views. George learned what the road system should look like, and how it got that way. She and her husband David, in turn, learned from JDR Jr, who built the roads. Our board member Tommy Capossella of Greenrock Corporation spent 35 years working in and around these roads, and knows every nook and cranny of them by heart.

The rest of us walk there, many have for all of our lives, we run, we ride horses, sit by Swan Lake or on the edge of a field. It has been our personal refuge all these years as well.

This relationship is why we do what we do for the preserve. The many programs and projects we have funded over our 20 years are the result of the love and dedication we have to the place. We are all grateful every day to have access to such a lovely, peaceful, and restorative preserve.

And we are grateful for all of your support!

See you on the trails!

Board of Directors Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve

Clare M. Pierson, *President*

Stella Medina, *Vice President*

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Carol M. Lyden, *Treasurer*

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Herbert Hadad

M. Evelyn Hadad

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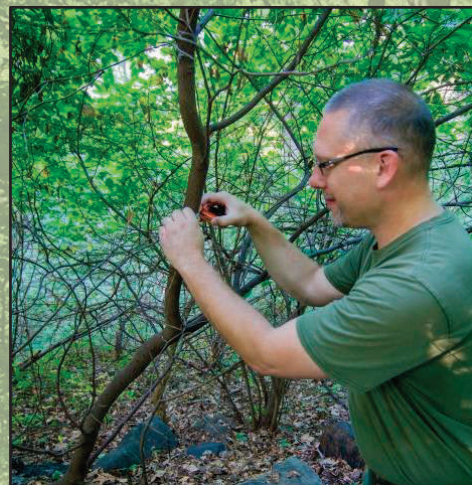
Kimberly K. Rockefeller

Donald W. Stever

Voice of Our Forest: Wood Thrush Research in the



Rockefeller State Park Preserve is designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the National Audubon Society, in part because of its breeding wood thrush. This brown bird with speckled breast, slightly smaller than a robin, nests in understory vegetation growing in moist soils near a source of water. They are relatively abundant in the preserve, particularly in the deepest forest.



*Elijah Goodwin monitoring vegetation:
photo by Steven DiFalco*

The wood thrush (*Hyllocichla mustelina*), more easily heard than seen, has one of the most distinctive and beautiful bird songs in the eastern woodlands. Each year their ethereal flute-like “*ee-oh-lay*” songs herald the arrival of spring in the preserve.

However, this exquisite song, a signature sound of the deep woods, is in danger of disappearing. Their populations have declined over 60% since 1966 and continue to fall at a rate of nearly 2% per year. The species is likely suffering from a combination of forest loss and degradation in its breeding grounds in North America and wintering grounds in Central America.

But does abundance translate to breeding and population success? It is important to understand how many young are actually fledged per pair, which determines if nesting here sustains, increases, or diminishes their population.

Since the spring of 2015, Dr. Elijah Goodwin has been leading a three-year study to examine how wood thrushes are faring in the preserve. The results will help the preserve take steps to manage woodland habitat for the thrush and other forest nesting species.

Preserve

“The thrush alone declares the immortal wealth and vigor that is in the forest... Whenever a man hears it, he is young, and Nature is in her spring. Wherever he hears it, it is a new world and a free country, and the gates of heaven are not shut against him.” - Henry David Thoreau (1852)

Dr. Goodwin and a cadre of volunteers, including local high school interns Eugenio Minvielle and Eamon Freiburger this year, locate and monitor nests in the spring. So far 33 wood thrush nests were monitored in 2015 and 45 were tracked 2016. After the chicks fledge, they take an extensive set of vegetation measurements.

and quality of nesting vegetation seems to be severely limited by deer over-browsing, which makes nests vulnerable to predation, apparently the major cause of failure.

This spring Dr. Goodwin organized a bird-a-thon in conjunction with Saw Mill River Audubon to raise funds, some of which were used to purchase motion-triggered cameras to identify the dominant predators of wood thrush nests within the preserve.



wood thrush eggs and young:
photos by Elijah Goodwin

Preliminary results indicate that wood thrushes are not breeding very successfully in the preserve. The data show that any given nest has only about a 17% chance of making it all the way from egg laying to fledged young.



photo by Flying Squirrel

Fledglings		
Year	2015	2016
# of nests	33	45
# fledges/nest	16	31
% fledges/nest	0.48	0.69

Our first recorded event came as a bit of a surprise, when a Southern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*) was photographed stalking a nest in the Thirteen Bridges area. More nest cameras will be deployed in the spring of 2017.

To learn more about the wood thrush and to learn their distinctive call, visit www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Wood_Thrush

Analysis continues on the data, but given survival rates for adults and juveniles, the rate would need to be greater than 1-2 fledglings per female to maintain or increase the population. The amount

❖ Gallery Schedule at a Glance ❖

SNAP!

Community Photo Exhibit
September 18 - October 23

CRACKLE!

Community Art Exhibit
October 30 - November 27

Reception: Sunday, November 12 1 – 3 PM

A two-part series; “Snap!” featuring photography and “Crackle” presenting multi-media images by emerging and experienced artists, residing in the Hudson Valley. Each artist has been enraptured by the diverse subjects found within the boundaries of this treasured park and preserved them through their special talents.



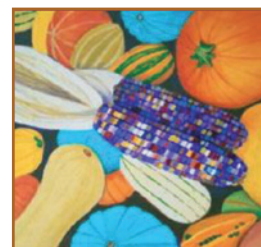
Screech
by Michael Garber



Homage to O’Keefe
by Helen Arbor Young



Blue Ewe
by Patti Ettinger



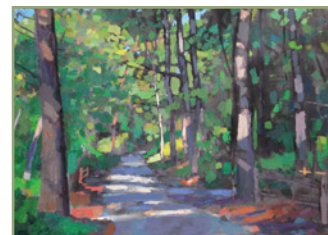
Stone Barns Fall Harvest
by Toni Silver-Delriver

“A Spiritual Quest”

December 11, 2016 – January 22, 2017

Reception: Sunday, December 11 1 – 3 PM

The Art Gallery of the Rockefeller Preserve celebrates Larry Horowitz’s reverence for nature as he continues his “A Spiritual Quest”. This Holiday exhibition of panoramic landscapes imbues the joy of the artist’s own discoveries, from mountains to wine-growing valleys, sunsets on shimmering lakes, all his images are associated with different emotional levels as are his color palettes heightened. There is a transcendental quality that pervades – such as light in a sky of twenty shades of blue, the impression is of a world wrapped in glorious color. We find ourselves in each vivid color, in each lush stroke, in nature’s heart, everywhere it beats.



Paintings by Larry Horowitz

From the Preserve Manager

By Susan Antenen

We recently received a lovely note from a regular visitor thanking us for “providing such a beautifully maintained nature preserve.” We greatly appreciate hearing this, because an amazing amount of effort goes into managing the Rockefeller State Park Preserve. We work every day to protect and rejuvenate the 32 miles of carriage roads, the forest, fields, and biodiversity, and visitor facilities. We are assisted in myriad ways by the Friends of Rockefeller State Park Preserve and a small, but dedicated corps of volunteers of all ages. Thank you, all.

(Excerpt on back cover under Praise for Friends)

Regular visitors comment how quickly Sean Liegey and Dom Garcia, our maintenance crew, respond to fallen trees, the bane of our existence. Unfortunately, white ash trees, hemlocks, and beech trees are dying prematurely due to non-native insect pests and diseases, while sometimes huge oaks and tulip poplars blow down when the soil is saturated. Multiply this times 30 miles of trail and it’s never-ending. While dead trees and snags are homes for woodpeckers, owls, native pollinators, and many animals, we are ever vigilant for those that need our attention.

Our native wildflower propagation and planting is beginning to pay off. Bright goldenrods, asters, purple ironweed, woodland sunflowers, and Joe Pye weed, all native species that add late summer color and attract native pollinators, are growing and blooming in new places. Steven DiFalco, Natural Resource Specialist, leads this on-going effort with the help of volunteers, including Scarsdale High School students James Cotter and Lucas Malhotra, and seasonal stewards Mike Brereton and Frazer Winsted. This hearty crew also tackled invasive vines, removal of barberry, and restoration efforts on the very steep slopes of Rockwood Hall.

We received two grants from NYS Environmental Protection Fund for our native pollinator conservation initiatives. One underwrote the production of the stunning

summer exhibit, *Wild Bees of Rockefeller State Park Preserve*. The second grant is for planting more wildflowers, specifically the food plants that our 80 or so species of native pollinators need to thrive.

Audrey Leeds and Laurence Gill have mounted one superb exhibit after another in the Gallery. As noted elsewhere in this Observer, this season we have a run of shows that reflect the beauty, character and depth of this preserve and the Hudson Valley. I urge you to stop by the Gallery regularly so that you don’t miss anything.

We’re upgrading our restrooms! We have combined \$5,204 raised for the preserve by Jonah Gorevic, 12 years old, with contributions from numerous film shoots to repair the Clivus-Multrum toilets, replace old fixtures, and improve ventilation. I’m sure I speak for everyone when I say thank you to Jonah and numerous film companies for helping us fix these vital facilities.

Speaking of film shoots, this year the preserve was the site of 19 film and photography shoots, including those by Woody Allen, Miley Cyrus, John Turturro, NBC’s *Black List* with James Spader, MAC Cosmetics, Amazon, and Showtime.

Next year we will start a multi-year initiative to rehabilitate the carriage road system, beginning in the Pocantico River-Big Tree-Witches Spring section of the preserve. New layers of crushed stone will be laid down, drainage will be re-defined, stone bridges will be re-pointed, and invasives will be removed while some new trees will be planted. I’ll have more to report on this in the next Observer.

So, whether you come to enjoy nature and tranquility, to soak up the beauty, to exercise, or spend quality time with friends and family (or all of the above), we strive to make this the preserve you want to come to over and over and over. There’s so much to explore and see!

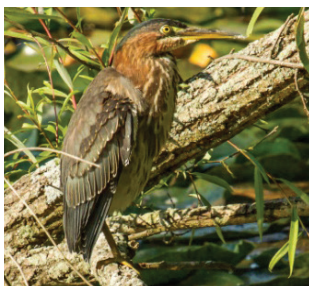


Spend Time with Our Fine-Feathered Friends

By William Golden

[Editors note: This article is part 2 of a two-part series. Part 1 appeared in our Spring 2016 issue and is available on our web site: www.friendsrock.org.]

Fall is a great season for observing birds. Whereas land birds are hidden in the trees, waterfowl are much easier to see, that is except for the stealthy green heron that usually is found along the banks of the lake. But sometimes they do come out into the open, especially when they are hunting for fish on the lily pads or are hunting for insects on branches in the water. They are very secretive and usually fly away when they realize they are being watched. Below is a picture of a green heron. Although they are called green herons, they are mainly blue and brown.



Green Heron

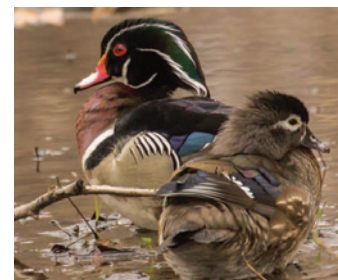
Green herons are small, about 16-22 inches. The large grayish blue heron, that is about 42 to 52 inches, is the great blue heron. It is frequently seen wading in the water along the shores of Swan Lake. Sometimes there is one perched in a tree along the lake or standing on one of

the islands. Great Blue Herons stay way into the fall. They nest nearby but not in Rockefeller Park. Great Blue Herons typically nest in a rookery which is a large group of nests in high trees. Both parents care for the young. The only known great blue heron rookery in Westchester is near the intersection of Routes 121 and 137 in Bedford. The rookery is an amazing sight to see. When I was there, I was able to observe about a dozen active nests.

Mallards are the year-round resident ducks of Swan Lake. The most frequently seen spring migration duck is the wood duck. Male wood ducks are easy to identify. They are very colorful whereas the female is mainly brown with a touch of blue and has distinctive white markings around the eyes. In the next column is a photo of a pair of wood ducks.

Over the last few years there have been wood ducks migrating to Rockefeller Preserve, and at least one pair stay to breed in the park. But don't expect to see the couple raising their young together. Male wood ducks leave the female wood duck to raise the ducklings on her own. Female wood ducks typically nest in tree cavities previously inhabited by woodpeckers. When the young are ready to leave the

nest, they jump from the tree to land on the ground. They follow their mother to the lake where she cares for them until they are able to be on their own. A PBS Nature film "Duckumentary" has excellent film footage of this process. The juvenile wood ducks stay with us throughout the summer. The immature wood ducks lack the vivid colors of the male wood duck. They look more like their mom. They spend a lot of their time swimming around the lily pads and sometimes can be seen swimming in more open water.



Pair of Wood Ducks

Most birds are not that easy to see because while we want to get close-up views of them, they want to be as far away from us as possible. So a pair of binoculars or a spotting scope will give you the opportunity to see these birds in greater detail. Another alternative is a camera with a telephoto lens, and that way you can get photos too. But you will need at least a 300 mm lens to get a decent photo and 400 mm is what is usually recommended for bird photography. Fortunately, many of the inexpensive new super zoom compact cameras have lenses that far surpass 400 mm. Whatever way you like to observe nature, there certainly is a great deal of wildlife in the park to enjoy, no matter what the season.

To see a list of recent bird sightings in Rockefeller Park, visit <https://ebird.org//ebird/hotspot/L299350>.



Reaching the Friends

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The Preserve Observer

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Website: www.friendsrock.org
facebook.com/rockyspark
instagram.com/rockysparkfriends
Editors: Evelyn Hadad, Herbert Hadad
Letters and submissions are invited.
Please contact us c/o the Friends.

Social, *continued from page 3*

visitors via their social media account names (known as handles) and when extra attention is needed to increase event visibility and registration, Facebook Event posts are created and Boosted (paid ads for a few dollars a day for a limited number of days). What do these tactics mean?

Hashtags are a word or phrase that begins with the “#” symbol. This is a way to mark the topic (or topics) of social media posts to make them more discoverable to people with shared interests. Clicking a hashtag will reveal all the public and recently published posts that also contain that hashtag.



Photo: @vlad_ny

Morning Swim

results creating a virtual gallery of visitors’ Preserve images and videos.

Geo-tagging is the process of adding geographical identification to photos or videos. For example, photos and videos can be geo-tagged “Rockefeller State Park Preserve” and all photos and videos with this geo-tag will be grouped together in Facebook and Instagram search



Photo: @vlad_ny

Swan Lake

On the Friends Instagram account, we established our own custom hashtag #rockysparkfriends. Followers and individuals are asked to include #rockysparkfriends with their posts from the Preserve. This information is communicated in our Instagram Bio. We’ve developed a following of super fans that regularly post photos they’ve taken in the preserve and use our custom hashtag #rockysparkfriends including @vlad_ny whose photos accompany this article.

They are regularly the most popular images posted on our Instagram feed.

Other tactics on Facebook included adding a “Donate Now” button to the Friends Facebook Page navigation to spur giving for preserve maintenance via 1-click access to friend-srock.org. This stimulated online donations made via PayPal where prior year-to-date time period there were no PayPal donations. Please check us out on our Social Media sites!

Kelly Leonard is the Founder and Principal Consultant of KLO Associates, LLC, a digital marketing boutique specializing in custom content strategy and influencer engagement for authors, publishers, local businesses and nonprofits. Previously she held senior management positions at Time Warner Book Group and Hachette Book Group.



Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

- Susan Antenen, Preserve Manager
- Laurence Gill, Director of Operations
- Steven Di Falco, Natural Resource Specialist
- Sean Liegey, Maintenance Supervisor
- Dominie Garcia, Maintenance Assistant
- Amy Zimmerman, Office Assistant
- Anthony Corda, Parking Lot and Visitor Service Assistant
- Mark Jones, Parking Lot and Visitor Service Assistant
- Susan Lewenz, Fall Patrol
- Jamal Eissa, Operations Assistant



Friends of the
Rockefeller State Park
PRESERVE

Celebrating 20 Years

The Preserve Observer

Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve
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HERE TO ENJOY...OURS TO PRESERVE

Praise for the Friends From the Park Manager

(Excerpt from the Preserve Manager's Letter on page 9)

This summer and fall, the Friends are enabling extra field and trail shoulder mowing and trail blowing at Rockwood Hall, Eagle Hill fields, and shoulders of popular trails such as Ash Tree Loop, Witches' Spring, and Peggy's Way. They are also supporting vital drainage work in some key locations to help the trails withstand winter storms. At Rockwood Hall, the Friends funded tree work to cut branches and snags interfering with three Hudson River views from the lower trail at Rockwood Hall. This fall, with funds from the Friends, the Preserve and garden volunteers are enhancing our wonderful tree peony garden with new shrubs to add more winter color and texture. Thank you, Friends!

This and all the pictures accompanying the Social Media article on page 1, as well as the background picture on the cover, were taken from our Instagram site. The two photographers, Vlad_ny (his Instagram handle) and the Friends Administrative Director Jessika Creedon, post their pictures all the time. Our instagram hashtag is #rockyspark-friends. Please come for a visit!



Photo: @vlad_ny

Swan Lake in June