

Photo: Herbert Hadad



A great day to be on the Rockefeller Preserve carriage roads

Protecting the Carriage Roads of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve Now and for the Future

By Herbert Hadad

The Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve – the 20-year-old supporter and guardian of the lands contributed by Rockefeller Family members – now has a major new opportunity and responsibility to assure the quality of the Preserve and its carriage road system for current and future generations.

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Friends Gala To Be Held December 9, 2017

By Herbert Hadad

The Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve will hold a holiday gala at the famed Rockefeller Family Playhouse in Pocantico Hills on Saturday, December 9, starting at 6 p.m.

The festive event will celebrate the Preserve's more than 30 miles of carriage roads that are now over a century old and the plan to preserve and protect them for the future.

"These extraordinary roads are used by walkers and runners, equestrians, carriage driving, dog walkers, bird watchers, photographers and painters, cross-country skiers, fisherman and women, and those who just want to commune with nature in a host of bucolic settings," said George Gumina, president of the Friends group.

"Our mission is to ensure that these roads, and an additional 20 miles of

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Photo: Herbert Hadad

George Gumina

Gumina Takes Lead Of Friends Group With An Ambitious Mission

By Herbert and Evelyn Hadad

George Gumina, a founder 20 years ago of the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve and its first president, was elected to a second term earlier this year.

"The Friends and its supporters have a clear and vital mission," he said. He was originally inspired by David and Peggy Rockefeller, an avid naturalist and environmentalist, to carry out his task.

"Aunt Peggy said it all. We have extraordinary beauty here and have

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Gumina *continued from page 1*

an obligation to protect it while inviting the public to enjoy it as well," Mr. Gumina said. Most notably, The Friends organization is coordinating with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to gain for the century-old carriage road system full designation on the State and National Register of Historic Places. (See article on page 1.)

Mr. Gumina accepted the reins of Friends leadership, following 10 years of exemplary service by Clare M. Pierson, who will be honored Dec. 9 at a Friends Gala at the Rockefeller Family Playhouse in Pocantico Hills.

Also honored will be Thomas A. Caposella, for his 30 years of service to the Greenrock Corporation, which has maintained the Preserve in coordination with the State and maintained the adjoining Rockefeller family properties. William E. Krattinger, the historic preservation analyst for New York State, will be the featured speaker.

George Gumina and his wife Rachel were recently profiled in the magazine *Equestrian Living*. Rachel is the granddaughter of Nelson A. Rockefeller, who served as governor of New York and vice president of the United States.

The publication reported that George founded the philanthropy office for the Town of Greenburgh, New York and works with El Centro Hispano, which assists 6,000 clients in finding housing and jobs, promoting English literacy and engages in weekly food distributions, among other activities. Mr. Gumina has always maintained an interest in assisting the disadvantaged, particularly in improving their access to community service programs.

Earlier George Gumina taught computer science, art and horticulture at the Woodfield Cottage Maximum Security Facility for Juvenile Delinquents in Westchester County for nine years, serving as a "father figure," mentor and confidant to many youth offenders.

He is also an enthusiastic equestrian and carriage driver. Rachel is actively involved in women's issues and rescuing animals. Because Rachel feels it's not just about rescuing animals, it's about rescuing people, teaching people compassion and teaching humans to be humane.

George, as leader of the non-profit Friends, reflected on his early schooling for *Equestrian Living*. "We learned the words of President Kennedy," he said. "A country must be judged by how it treats the neediest." This led to his deep belief in public/private partnerships to get important things accomplished. Hence the founding of the Friends.

Gala, *continued from page 1*

Rockefeller family roads traditionally open to the public, will be maintained as originally created," he said.

The fund-raising gala will feature as a special guest speaker William A. Krattinger, historic preservation analyst for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Also to be honored are Clare M. Pierson, Friends president from 2007 to 2017, and Thomas A. Caposella, director of grounds for the Greenrock Corporation from 1978 to the present. The Greenrock Corporation was established in Pocantico Hills almost a century ago to look after the carriage roads and grounds of the Rockefeller family. They have continued to help the State maintain the carriage roads that are now part of the Rockefeller Preserve. And they could not be in more capable hands than Greenrock.

The renowned carriage roads themselves will also be designated as honorees.

Honorary co-chairs of the event are Ann Rockefeller Roberts, the Lanza Family Foundation and the Westchester Community Foundation.

The gala will also feature a silent auction, to include a painting donated by Kimberly and Steven C. Rockefeller, Jr. and a photograph of Kykuit, featured below, by Mary Louise Pierson.



Mary Louise Pierson: Aerial View of Kykuit and Forecourt with Hudson in background, c. 1990 Edition of 5; Size: 30" x 40"

To purchase tickets, purchase an ad in the gala journal or make a donation to the Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve, please email Jessika Creedon at friendsrock.org or call her at 914-762-0209.

Carriage Roads, *continued from page 1*

And the effort is being guided by newly elected Friends President George Gumina.

"The Rockefeller carriage road system, a large portion of which is now maintained within the boundary of the... Preserve, is a historical and landscape resource of remarkable scale, scenic complexity and natural beauty," wrote William E. Krattinger, historic preservation analyst for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.



One of the many picturesque bridges in the Rockefeller Preserve

He said, "The Division for Historic Preservation (DHP) has previously offered the opinion that the historic carriage road system is State and National Register of Historic Places (S/NRHP) eligible, and we are looking forward to upgrading this status from eligible to fully designated. My work on the nomination, which consists of a detailed physical description of the road network and the accompanying estate landscape in addition to a fully developed historic context, is now advancing steadily, and I expect to complete this documentation by the end of 2017." The Friends organization is also working to help accomplish this.

Considerable research and field work have already been completed in association with this project and it is presently anticipated that the bulk of the S/NRHP documentation will be completed by the end of 2017, which will allow for the review of the nomination at the March 2018 State Review Board for Historic Preservation meeting.

This status will protect the more than 50 miles of carriage roads from any degradation and relocation. And the status will complement the companion Friends efforts to maintain the quality of the road system for daily activities including walking and hiking, carriage driving and for the other visitors who share the Preserve -- equestrians, runners, dog walkers, bird watchers, photographers and

painters, and cross country skiers. Seasonal activities also include trout and bass fishing.

"We have a legacy and tradition to maintain the carriage roads as originally created," said George Gumina. He became the founding president of the Friends, followed by 10 years of exemplary service by Clare M. Pierson, and has now assumed the presidency for another term. An essential time for preservation," he said, "and we'll do all we can to make this happen."

The Preserve attracts more than 300,000 visitors each year. The only comparable recreation site in the tri-state region is the 800-acre Central Park in Manhattan. The Preserve is 1,600 acres, with an additional pledge by the late David Rockefeller of more than 400 acres.

The importance of the Preserve is also reflected in the support for historic designation by elected representatives who realize the vital role the Preserve plays in the quality of the lives of their constituents. They include federal, state and local officials.

Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey, whose district includes Pocantico Hills, wrote on behalf of the historic designation: "the...Preserve represents a part of the overall historic carriage road system that was designed by John D. Rockefeller Sr. and Jr. to complement the landscape. The carriage roads allow thousands of visitors to experience the natural wonders of the area."

Newly elected Westchester County Executive George Latimer wrote: "The nomination of the...Preserve is an important investment in our regional infrastructure and a benefit to all of the Hudson Valley and State of New York residents. It is a legacy that must be preserved for future generations."



Reaching the Friends

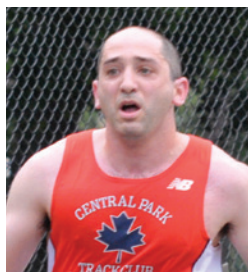
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The Preserve Observer

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Editors: Evelyn Hadad, Herbert Hadad
Letters and submissions are invited.
Please contact us c/o the Friends.

Allure of Trails Leads to Service On Friends Board

By Ron Vogl



Ron Vogl

I vividly remember the supremely peaceful but foreboding dusk of that clear fall day in 1990. Deep in the woods of the Brook Trail on the long downhill from Buttermilk Hill, I wondered whether the darkness would close in before I made it back to the parking lot. A couple of hours

before, Rich Clark, my cross-country coach, for the first time had brought me along with some teammates on one of those little yellow school buses to this beautiful place he called Rocky's. By the light of the already sinking sun, he stood in the parking lot by Swan Lake and announced that we were all going to run 11 miles, a mind boggling distance for a 14-year-old barely a month into high school. I remember the chatter at the beginning of the run, then, as the effort started to bite, the mesmerizing patter of the quieting pack's feet on the clay and gravel, and finally the enveloping solitude as the group spread out through the miles.

That run was the first of hundreds I've done at Rockefeller. The frequency of my visits have varied with my distance from the park, but even during my time living in Boston, I don't think a year passed without at least one. When I've been following a training regimen, they've been an important ingredient. The carriage roads provide a precious respite from pounding the hard pavement, without the ankle-twisting roots and rocks of trail running. And at all periods of my life, even those like today's in which my training goal is just to avoid being a slob, my Rocky's runs are a contemplative salve: the woods, the gently rushing brooks, the rolling terrain, the Hudson views from the tops of the hills.

In the last ten years or so, I've been increasingly distressed with the deteriorating state of the carriage roads. The nadir was Hurricane Sandy, which made the roads in some of my favorite far corners of the park barely passable. That crisis prompted me to reach out to the Friends of the Preserve to see how I could help, and I came to understand the challenge that is the Preserve's future. The Preserve is part of the Rockefeller family's immense legacy of so many treasured public institutions of our country. Having generously given it over to the public's use, the family cannot indefinitely bear the burden of preserving it for our and future generations' enjoyment. In the last few years, I've seen the Friends work with the Preserve's management to secure new sources of

private and public support, but the Preserve is not yet on secure footing.

For years before and after that 1990 trip, Coach Clark brought his charges to the park because it's a great place for runners to train, but I think he had a deeper motive: to share with us a place that he loved, in the hopes that it might be as meaningful to us as it was to him. I still run into him on the carriage roads, and now I too bring my friends and family to the Park with that same intent. But for those of us who can do more, sharing our love is not enough. And so, when Clare Pierson invited me to join the board of the Friends of the Preserve, I came to see the invitation as not just an honor but also a call of duty, to ensure that others, present and future, get the same peace and enjoyment from the park that I have.

Ron Vogl is a software executive and real estate investor and our newest member of the Friends Board of Directors.

New Park Staffer Trades Home Depot for Our Park

By Herbert Hadad



Sean Liegey (left) and Preserve Director of Operations, Laurence Gill

Say you were Sean D. Liegey weighing two jobs he has held. No. 2 was The Home Depot in Flagstaff, Arizona, No. 1 was with the Rockefeller Preserve.

In Flagstaff, Sean "supervised department and associates to ensure customers received excellent service."

In Westchester County, Sean is the Maintenance Supervisor, applying talents learned at Home Depot as well as with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in New Canaan, Connecticut and JPL Construction in South Salem, New York.

"I've been at the Preserve for going on a year," he said, "and it's the best. I love working outdoors."

Although Sean won a degree at Northern Arizona University in theater studies, with a minor in social anthropology, he has realized there is no greater theater than nature itself.

From the Friends President



By George Gumina

I am honored to be president again of the organization that I founded.

The remainder of 2017 and 2018 promise to be banner years for the Friends organization and its faithful supporters. Most notably, we are coordinating with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to gain for our century-old carriage roads system full designation on the State and National Register of Historic Places. This means the Preserve roads will be protected for current and future generations. (See article on P. 1.)

The Friends will mount a gala at the Rockefeller Family Playhouse in Pocantico Hills on Saturday, December 9, to raise funds necessary to care for the more than 30 miles of these carriage roads. The banquet will also honor past Friends president Clare M. Pierson and Tommy Caposella, for his 30 years of service of the Greenrock Corporation, which has maintained the Preserve in coordination with the State and maintained the adjoining Rockefeller family properties. William E. Krattinger, the historic preservation analyst for New York State, will be the featured speaker.

As the first president of the Friends, I am excited to be named president for a second term and to continue to carry out the mission I pledged to pursue: to keep the beauty of our preserve for all visitors, and to assure that the roads, which after all are the veins and arteries of this glorious landscape, are kept as they were designed by past generations of the Rockefeller family.

A great deal has happened since the Friends -- composed of members of the community and the Rockefeller family -- met on a fall day at the Preserve Visitor Center and agreed with my idea that a Friends organization would serve us all well. We would protect the Preserve as the gift from the Rockefeller family, coordinate our activities with New York State to which the Preserve was donated, encourage local populations and visitors from afar to enjoy this wonderful gift and encourage support from the people who have begun to depend on the Preserve for their daily exercise and spiritual enrichment.

Please join me in this worthy enterprise. It's been an exciting adventure so far and with your help, enthusiasm and friendship, the Friends and I look forward to the next chapter of our journey.



Photo: William Golden

What were these elephants doing in the Rockefeller Preserve? This was the filming of the elephant segment for the TV show "Blacklist" shot earlier this year.

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OAK TREES IN THE PRESERVE: MIGHTY, BEAUTIFUL & IMPORTANT

Magnificent trees define the landscape of Rockefeller Preserve. Huge oaks are the stand-outs...for their girth, their stature, and the abundant wildlife they support. When afternoon sun lights up their russet leaves in October or glistens on their snow-coated branches, they can take your breath away. Not surprisingly, people have personal relationships with their special oaks in the Preserve. Rockwood Hall and Swan Lake area are two of the best oak-viewing sites in the Preserve.

Our oldest and largest oaks probably date back to the day a few hundred years ago when a farmer saved them to shade his livestock. Growing in the open allowed them to spread out rather than up. They now are the heftiest oaks in the Preserve; in fact, two oaks are the largest known in the State with circumferences of 6.2 and 5.7 feet. In the forest, you may notice oaks with spreading branches surrounded by the younger straighter trees, which grew in after the pasture was abandoned.

Oaks matter. Native Americans relied on their acorns for food and hot-burning logs for warmth. Colonists built furniture, cabin floors, and bridges with oak, a wood known for its strength and durability. Large oaks served as property line markers. Today oaks are valued for their beauty and ecological role in the forest. In recent years, we've learned that they sequester significant amounts of carbon, so every oak plays a role in mitigating climate change.

Of all the tree species in North America, oaks support the most wildlife--from their roots to their outermost twigs. More butterfly and



moths depend on oaks than any other known plant. Their caterpillars, while feasting on leaves, become feasts for a host of insectivorous vireos, warblers, orioles, and chickadees. Owls, woodpeckers, wood ducks, and raccoons seek snags and holes for nesting and even escaped honey bees make hives in their hollows.

Six species of oak grow in the Preserve, identifiable by their leaves, bark, and habitat. Red, black, white, and scarlet oaks are found throughout the hardwood forest whereas chestnut oaks with their deeply furrowed bark favor dry ridges such as the top of Buttermilk Hill, Ferguson's loop trail and 13 Bridges ridge trail. Less common swamp white oaks grow in deeper moist soils in valleys.

When a mature oak falls after standing witness for hundreds of years, a bit of the Preserve's historical and ecological fabric unravels. And these days it's unlikely that it will be replaced by another oak. Only 1 acorn in 10,000 manages to grow into a tree, if it's lucky. Not only are acorns the favorite food of turkeys, deer, squirrels, and multitudes of wildlife big and small, but today in Westchester County oak seedlings and saplings are browsed by deer and they are suppressed by invasive plants, so even fewer grow into trees. This underscores how important our forest restoration program is. Our land stewardship protects and favors oaks so that they can continue to grace the Preserve for generations to come.

For more information visit:

www.instagram.com/rockefellerstatepark/
www.facebook.com/RockefellerSPP
parks.ny.gov/parks/59/

Background image by: Jeffrey Friedkin
Centerfold content & design layout by:
Susan Antenen & Laurence Gill

❖ Gallery Schedule at a Glance ❖

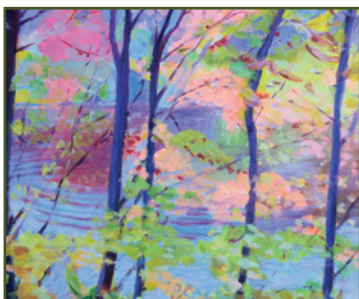
“CRACKLE”

Sunday, November 19, 2017 – mid-January 2018

Opening Reception: Sunday, December 3, 2017 1PM -3 PM

Artists pay homage to Rockefeller Preserve in this multi-media exhibition curated by Audrey Leeds. Inspired by the Preserve, artists have created images that express their appreciation of the landscape and living beings within 2000 acres, including Stone Barns and Hudson Pines farmland.

*The image on our front cover is a watercolor by Sharon Linsker entitled *Early Evening at Rockwood* and is one of the works shown in this exhibit.



TK Schwarz – *Through the Trees*



June Farnham – *Red Truck 2*



Robin Fruchter – *Barn Door 15*

“The Art of an American Folk Craft-Painting with Wool”

Sunday, January 28 – March 4, 2018

Opening Reception: Sunday, January 28, 2018
1PM-3PM

This exhibit will feature the talents of the Hudson River Rug Hookers, several of which are illustrated here.



“Lobomir Tomaszewski”

Opening: Sunday, March 18, 2018

This exhibit contains the art work of renowned global artist, sculptor, painter and designer Lobomir Tomaszewski.



From the Preserve Manager

By Susan Antenen

When you visit the Preserve, you walk the crushed stone roads artfully laid out between 1910 and 1950 by John D. Rockefeller, Sr. and his son, John D. Jr. Inspired by their personal love of the outdoors and Frederick Law Olmsted, father of American landscape architecture, they designed the roads to lead visitors into nature and to create surprises and sensory experiences. There is intentional harmony between the alignment of the trails and the terrain. The trails reveal the natural features of the landscape - topography, ponds, lakes, streams, glades, vistas, rock outcroppings, forested valleys, and rolling pastures. The curves and sweeps of the roads emphasize continuity, anticipation and ease of movement. With no dead ends, there are alternative loops, which offer a variety of ways to experience the landscape and reach destinations.

John D. Jr believed that all people, especially those in cities, need access into beautiful landscapes to experience the wonders and solace of the natural world. From the day they were built, the carriage roads were open to the community. A hundred years later, he would be thrilled to see how many people enjoy the carriage roads and love the Preserve.

Maintaining this legacy and the character of the landscape, both wild and pastoral, is our goal. This includes taking care of the carriage roads, which is an essential but challenging responsibility. Luckily, the Friends help and the staff is building some capacity. BUT – it's a big place with many miles of carriage roads. So it's great that the carriage roads and Preserve will soon benefit from NYS Parks 2020 Funding, Governor Cuomo's \$900 million commitment to

upgrade Park facilities across the State. The Preserve is embarking on a multi-phased set of capital projects to rehabilitate several miles of carriage roads.

The first set will be the most eroded sections of the Pocantico River Trail, Big Tree, Gory Brook, and the access to Eagle Hill. The carriage roads will be rebuilt and re-surfaced with layers of crushed stone. Drainage swales and bluestone culverts will be restored. In addition, the stately stone bridges over the Pocantico River– the Single Arch, Stone and Timber, and Triple Arch bridges– will be repointed.

The second set of projects, currently in the construction drawing stage, will be the Preserve's main entrance carriage road and the 1.1 mile Brothers' Path, the most heavily used carriage road, which circles Swan Lake, and the core trails of Rockwood Hall. The Friends have applied for a grant that, if awarded, will enable reconstruction of additional nearby carriage roads, particularly David's Loop, Overlook, Ash Tree and other central carriage roads.

When the projects begin construction, there will be signs and notices on our Facebook page (@Rockefeller SPP). We should expect temporary inconvenience in the project areas, but in this expansive Preserve, by design, there are always more routes and parts of the Preserve to explore. And the result will be smooth carriage roads re-built to last.

Every day, we work to make sure the Preserve continues to delight you and all visitors for generations to come.



Rockefeller State Park Preserve Staff

Susan Antenen, Preserve Manager
 Laurence Gill, Director of Operations
 Sean Liegey, Maintenance Supervisor
 Dominic Garcia, Maintenance Assistant
 Hunter Salmon, Seasonal Maintenance Assistant
 Steven Di Falco, Natural Resource Specialist
 Dylan Findley, Seasonal Natural Resource Steward
 Brian Keating, Seasonal Natural Resource Steward
 Julia Ann Jardine, Conservation Communicator
 Amy Zimmerman, Office Assistant
 Anthony Corda, Parking Lot / Visitor Service Assistant

A Thank You Story...



Photo: Herbert Hadad

Let the Numbers Tell the Story

By Lynn Lucas and Debbie Homer

As an equestrian fundraising event, the Friends felt we needed to do better than having a Pace, since that is extremely costly in terms of time and money. Lynn Lucas and Debbie Homer, two accomplished horsewomen who had helped run the Pace for a number of years, put together a new event last year that we think was fun for riders and volunteers alike and which made better use of volunteers: "Bridge to Bridge Amble and Gamble". We held this exciting event again this year and Lynn and Debbie wanted to let the numbers tell the story.

70 horses/ riders at the 2017 Amble and Gamble fundraiser for RSPP carriage roads.

1 hour and 55 minutes was the average time spent on course.

32 riders chose to ride the extra 2 mile loop on the 13 Bridges Trail.

20 riders registered on the day of the event.

250 corn stalks decorated the tent poles.

3 – Kings was the winning poker hand.

10:15 to 10:30 saw the most horses starting on course – 16.

46 riders played poker.

5 buckets of horsey cheer were awarded to noteworthy participants.

300 dollars worth of donated gift certificates were awarded to the top 4 poker hands.

1:15 to 1:30 saw the most horses finishing the course – 12.

24 hand decorated pumpkins added color and fun to the lunch tables.

125 (my guesstimate) lunches were served.

4 mile ride including Sleepy Hollow cemetery, Spook Rock, Witches Spring & Gory Brook.

5 story stops to entertain the riders.

AND

39 VOLUNTEERS made it all happen!

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU
HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT YEAR HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT YEAR HOPE TO SEE YOU THEN

The Woodpeckers of Rockefeller Preserve

By William Golden

Knock, knock. Who or what is that knocking? If you are in the preserve, it's probably one of several types of woodpeckers that inhabit Rockefeller Park. We have woodpeckers year round. To find them, just listen for that knocking sound or one of the distinctive calls that are made by woodpeckers. They are in every part of the park where there are trees. The best time of the year to see them is in late fall, winter and early spring when there are no leaves on the trees to obscure the view.

Pileated woodpeckers make a loud knocking sound as they chisel away creating cavities in dead trees as they search for insects. If you have ever seen a Woody Woodpecker cartoon you will recognize the call of the pileated woodpecker. While Woody was supposedly inspired by the acorn woodpecker, his famous laugh is said to bear a slight resemblance to the call of a pileated woodpecker. The pileated woodpecker is one of the woodpeckers that can be found in the preserve. But seeing one of them is a real treat because they are elusive and secretive. They are the largest, 17 inches, and the noisiest of the woodpeckers in the preserve. They are about the size of a crow. Males have red striped cheeks. At right is a picture of a male pileated woodpecker.



Pileated woodpecker



Downy woodpecker

In contrast, Downy woodpeckers are the smallest of the woodpeckers. They are about 6 inches and make a peeping sound. They have black and white stripes. The males have a small red spot on the back of their heads. Males and females have different pecking strategies. The males peck at trees looking for insects while the females lift the bark looking for insects. At left is a photo of a Downy woodpecker. The hairy woodpecker looks very much like the Downy woodpecker, only larger, about 9 inches, and has a louder "peep."

One of the more commonly seen woodpeckers is the red-bellied woodpecker. They are about 10 inches. They make a shrill "churr, churr" sound. The male has a red head and only a small amount of red on the belly. The female has only red on half of her head and even less red on her belly than the male. Males initiate the building of nests and attract the females to them through calls and tapping. When a female accepts the overtures of a suitor, they complete the nest

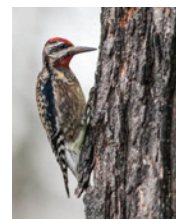
together. At right is a photo of a male red-bellied woodpecker alongside the nest he was building. Some people mistakenly think the red-bellied woodpecker is the red-headed woodpecker. The red-headed woodpecker's entire head is red and it is a dark red. They are rare in our area. I have never seen a red-headed woodpecker in Rockefeller Park although I have seen them in Croton Point Park.



Red-bellied woodpecker

The yellow-bellied sapsucker is also a member of the woodpecker family. They are about 8 to 9 inches. Unlike the previously described woodpeckers, the yellow-bellied sapsucker is migratory. The males have a patch of red on their throat. The female's throats are pale. Both have a patch of red on their foreheads and very pale yellow bellies. You can easily identify which trees they have been pecking by the series of small holes they leave behind. Yellow-bellied sapsuckers drill a series of deep holes in sap-producing trees such as maple trees. They drink the sap but also eat the insects that are then drawn to the sap. My experience has been that they tend to return to the same trees repeatedly. In spring, red throated humming birds feed on these sap wells. One strategy I employ is to repeatedly revisit the trees that I know are favorites of the yellow-bellied sapsucker. I keep seeing yellow-bellied sapsuckers returning, but so far I have not witnessed the humming birds there. One of these trees is right on the path going from the Visitor Center to Swan Lake. Below is a photo of the male sapsucker that I took on that tree.

When you are on the trails looking for woodpeckers, you are most likely to find them by being quiet and listening for their sounds. Take your time. Stop, listen and watch. If you want a close-up view, use binoculars or a spotting scope. Wait long enough for the woodpecker to give away its location with repeated pecks and calls. Wait for it to make its way down and around a tree. You will be rewarded for your patience because they spend a lot of time on a tree before flying off to the next. If you miss one that flies off before you can locate it, keep looking and listening. You are bound to see woodpeckers in the preserve because there are so many of them. Most of them are here all year long, and they are so noisy that you can't miss them.



Male yellow-bellied sapsucker





The Preserve Observer

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



Photo: Herbert Hadad

Love Blooms for Couple On Visit to Our Preserve

Jair B. Linan Neyra and Alexandra Mateus Vasquez were newlyweds disappointed with their routine wedding photos for family, friends and posterity. The couple were living in White Plains after emigrating from Lima, Peru. They had never been to the Rockefeller Preserve until this past summer, but it became their enchanting land. Deeply in love with each other, they found a new love in the landscapes, trails and waterways. Here, they declared, are where our officials wedding photos must be taken.

And so they did.

