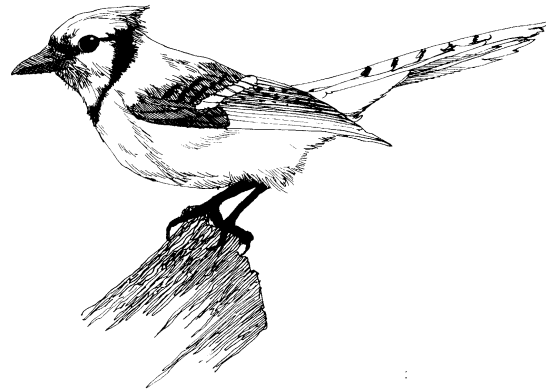


## Bird Call

Pickering Creek Audubon Center  
Volunteer e-news, September 2011 Edition



### Volunteer Highlights

Volunteers from the new Kohls store opening in Easton joined regulars in the Children's Garden for a Pickering Garden Day on Wednesday August 10. They removed old mulch and planted one hundred plugs of native plants including Turtlehead, Blazing Star, False Indigo, and Coneflower. These additions will fill the front of the garden with color next July through October when many other garden plants have finished blooming.



"We are excited to be partnering with the Kohls for this and future volunteer events. Kohls is committed to its employees volunteering in the communities where we are located," note Todd Lockwood, a regional manager of Kohls, and Debi Systo, manager of the new Easton Kohls. "We are especially interested

volunteer activities that benefit children as well as the community at large." "This was our first volunteer event in our new community on the Eastern Shore" noted Yolanda Jackson, assistant manager, "and we had a great time".

Another group came out for a day of volunteering in the gardens on Monday, August 22. Thirteen energetic students from Gettysburg College finished off their adventure weekend kayaking and camping at Wye island with a bit of hands on service learning at Pickering Creek. They removed old mulch from the picnic area near the herb garden and weeded the Songbird Island and FeederWatch gardens near the Main Office. Their work prepared these two sites for additional planting of natives by our garden regulars this summer: high school service learner Mark Turner and the McDonald family.



Now that Summer Eco-Camp is just a fond memory and kids are back in school, it's time to thank the volunteers who helped Pickering staff create another successful year of summer fun and learning. Fourteen Junior Naturalists assisted seasonal educators Krysta Hougan and Eddie Chen with eight camps, for students from kindergarten to middle school this summer. On hand to help with canoeing efforts were volunteers Nancy and Herman Espenhorst and Cemmy Peterson.

As part of essays they wrote about the Junior Naturalist experience, Marjorie Hoxie and Spencer Kessinger commented on the EcoCamps. "What I loved about the summer camp is going canoeing and doing traditional summer camp things, but it's even better because I am a JN," Marjorie wrote. And Spencer noted: "The best part of summer camp is being able to see the excited smiles and hear enthusiastic talk from the campers." Pickering Creek is grateful to all of the Junior Naturalists for their cheerful and tireless work at the EcoCamps

### **Pickering Creek Profile: Nancy and Herman Espenhorst**

Nancy and Herman Espenhorst both recall that they loved to be outside, hiking in the natural world when they were children. Fast forward to 2008, and you'd find them hiking still, in the outdoors that they cherish. Now, however, the venue has changed. From their homes in Hopewell, then Bordentown, New Jersey, they retired to Easton.



Busy in New Jersey in active careers, Nancy worked as administrative assistant for Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association, and as Friends Coordinator for the State Museum. Herman's work involved sales of heavy equipment and wholesale floristry. Both were quick to become occupied in activities when they moved to the Eastern Shore. Volunteering gave them an opportunity to get involved in their new community, provide help where it was needed, and put their energy to good use.

They serve as monitors for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and volunteers at the Avalon. Nancy volunteers at the Chesapeake Bay Herb Society, and—to Pickering Creek's great fortune, Herman and Nancy became part of LIFE: a program sponsored by Adkins Arboretum, the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, and Pickering Creek Audubon Center. In addition to providing an intensive course on topics of importance to the Bay, the program required participants to volunteer for 100 hours at one of the sponsoring sites.

The Espenhorsts have been committed volunteers at Pickering Creek ever since. At the start, they cut back invasive multi-flora rose, Mile-a-Minute, and the like, that choked out other plants, critical to habitat balance. Nancy spent many a morning observing birds for Cornell Ornithology Lab's Project Feeder Watch. Herman has helped with painting projects. Together, they have assisted with canoeing activities for EcoCamp and school

groups. Recently, they have taken on the task of trail maintenance, clearing the Farm to Bay Trail every other week.

The Espenhorsts point out that teaching about the environment and protecting it for others is good reason to volunteer at Pickering Creek. We at the Center realize that their efforts create the paths for this generation of children to follow.

### **Coming Up in September**

**Volunteer Naturalist Program: Be Part of the Pilot!** We will initiate a program this fall: Thursday morning Fresh Air Walks, encouraging people to come with a friend or two or more and walk along the trails at Pickering Creek. A Volunteer Naturalist will lead each of the walks and we hope you will be one of them.

Volunteers must be willing to commit to two required training sessions: September 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to noon, and September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 2 to 5pm and at least one other training opportunity between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Volunteers must also be willing to lead a Fresh Air Walk at least once a month, October through December. This pilot program is limited to eight volunteers; please contact Samantha Pitts as soon as possible to tell her of your interest.

**National Public Lands Day, September 24, 10am-3pm:** Join in on this national day of stewardship as we get the trails in tiptop shape for school trips, public programs, and use by Center visitors. There are a great variety of activities to choose from. You could trim and mulch trails, tidy up gardens, remove invasive plants, plant native wildflowers, and more. Lunch will be provided. Advance registration is encouraged so that plans can be made for lunch and supplies. You can learn more about National Public Lands Day events at <http://www.publiclandsday.org/>. TogetherGreen, a unique partnership between the National Audubon Society and Toyota promoting citizen involvement in conservation, supports the efforts of Pickering Creek on National Public Lands Day.

**Volunteer Time Roundup.** Volunteers! Your time is valuable and so is your record of time spent working on projects for the Center. This record is one tangible way that we can show funders the level of support we receive from the community. A grateful thanks goes to all of you who have been diligently recording your volunteer time after each activity. For those of you that have fallen a bit behind in your record keeping, it's not too late to turn in your hours. The Volunteer Coordinator hopes to update hours for all volunteers before the end of September. Remember you can always submit time online at [www.pickeringcreek.org](http://www.pickeringcreek.org) or email the Volunteer Coordinator directly. Make your best estimate of times, dates and activities for this year and send it in as soon as possible. For those of you who have been looking for the volunteer logbook that is kept in the Welcome Center, it has been found and returned to its rightful place! **The Volunteer Coordinator thanks everyone in advance for not making her cry over recordkeeping in September.**

## **Volunteer Appreciation**

Volunteers are welcome to attend one or all of the Bird Walk'n Talk sessions, as described below at half-price. Regular program cost is \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. Just let Samantha know ahead of time that you are able to attend. The first scheduled walk is September 25, with a focus on hawks.

### *Bird Walk n' Talk Series*

The Bird Walk n' Talk series introduces beginning birders of all ages to the birds found along the Delmarva Peninsula. Each program will be an exploration of the habitat, identification, and calls of different bird groups.

Sunday, September 25 from 1:00-3:00 PM, Welcome Center – Hawks  
Sunday, November 6 from 1:00-3:00 PM, Main Office – Feeder Birds  
Sunday, January 22 from 1:00-3:00 PM, Main Office – Woodpeckers  
Saturday, February 25 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, leave from Acme in Easton  
– Diving Birds at Tilghman Island (*a limit of 9 participants*)

## **Save the Dates**

**Harvest Hoedown is coming up on October 9.** We're counting on you to help on this festive occasion! We need over fifth volunteers to help with parking, gate/entrance fee collection, welcome tent, Pickering Pop, children's crafts and activities, wagon loading, boat-ride sign-up and crowd control. Volunteers are assigned two to three hour shifts from 9 am to 5 pm. Consider setting aside the day to volunteer, with time to enjoy the event. Contact Samantha so she can put you on the schedule.

**Thursday, October 20, 6:00 p.m.**—please save the date! The staff at Pickering Creek looks forward to thanking you at our annual Volunteer Celebration. Enjoy a meal of hearty hor'doeuvres while the staff applauds the time and energy you have devoted to Pickering Creek over the year. Look for an invitation in the mail at the beginning of October.

**Contact Samantha Pitts, Volunteer Coordinator to register for events or ask questions. Email: [spitts@audubon.org](mailto:spitts@audubon.org) Phone: (410) 822-4903 x26**



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