

Green Link



An Employee & Volunteer Newsletter of the Monmouth County Park System

May / June 2008

THE COYOTES OF MONMOUTH COUNTY

A member of the dog family, the Eastern Coyote comes in a variety of colors. It can have a solid blonde or dark coat, or appear mixed like the photo below. Note the large, bushy tail with a black tip. The coyote's tail points downward, even when it runs. Also note the narrow, pointy shape of the snout, which helps distinguish the coyote from its cousin, the domestic dog.



Eastern Coyote. While there have been sightings in a handful of parks, this is the Park System's first photo. It was taken by Crosswicks Creek Park Ranger Kelly Cole this past winter in Upper Freehold, on the side of the road near the park.

Part Wolf, Part Coyote

Appearance-wise, it used to be that the coyote was likened to a collie, while the wolf was compared to a German Shepherd.



Western Coyote. National Park Service file photo, taken at Yellowstone by John Goode.



Gray Wolf. National Park Service file photo, taken at Yellowstone by Jim Peaco.

However, the Eastern Coyote has a unique appearance. It is noticeably bigger and has different color "phases," such as blonde and black, compared to its western counterpart. It may also have different behaviors. Scientists speculate this is due to past interbreeding between coyotes and Canadian wolves.

DNA studies of 100 Eastern Coyotes found in Maine, New York State and Canada confirm that most are actually a blend of coyote and wolf (many contained wolf genes and only 4% had an ancestry similar to the western coyote). DNA studies on the Eastern Coyotes of New Jersey are currently underway through the state's Division of Fish and Wildlife.

How Did the Coyote Get to NJ?

Coyotes didn't cross the Mississippi River until the early 1900s. It is believed that Western coyotes migrated north through Canada and the Great Lakes, appearing in New York in the 1930s and Massachusetts by the 1950s. During that time, the Western Coyote may have cross-bred with either the gray wolf or Eastern Canadian wolf, producing the larger Eastern variant seen in this area.

Today, coyote sightings have been reported in all 21 New Jersey counties. In Monmouth County, they have been sighted in the parks as well as towns. Although it is rare for coyotes to attack humans, there were two reported attacks on children in Middletown last spring, as well as reported attacks on dogs and livestock (sheep).

The NJ DEP recommends the following to reduce the likelihood of coyote conflicts: don't leave food outside; secure garbage in closed containers; cover compost piles; clean BBQ grills and fallen tree fruit; bring pets in at night; securely enclose farm animals; install motion-sensors outdoors; and clear brush, woodpiles and dense weeds from surroundings.

Monitor children outdoors, even in the backyard. If you see a coyote, make it feel unwelcome in your territory! Make loud noises, blast an air siren, throw rocks, or spray it with a garden hose.

Sources:

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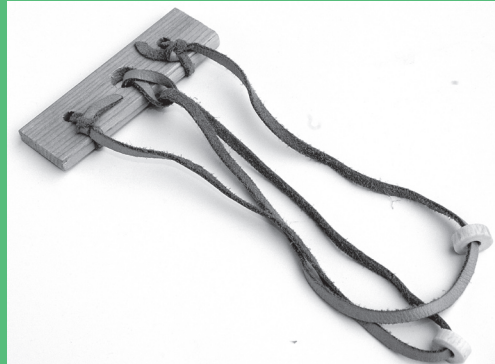
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Mott, Maryann.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS DEVICE?

(Answer: see back page)



Director's Corner



THE NAME OF THE GAME

Now that our budgets have been set, we need to concentrate on how we are going to accomplish what we said we would do this year with the resources at hand. As you know, we are expected to continue what we have been doing, while taking on additional projects, and operating and maintaining an ever growing Park System.

Our challenge is to do more with the same, or in some cases, even fewer resources. This means that if we are to continue providing quality facilities and services, we have no choice but to think and work smarter. This also means that each one of us has to pay closer attention to details and be "committed to improve." We are indeed in challenging times.

I am confident that we have the smarts and talent to meet the challenges we face today, and to excel at what we do.

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I truly believe the future is, to a large extent, in our hands—and it will reflect the decisions and efforts we make today. Our ability to anticipate change, to be creative, and to stay out in front and lead, is "the name of the game."

"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

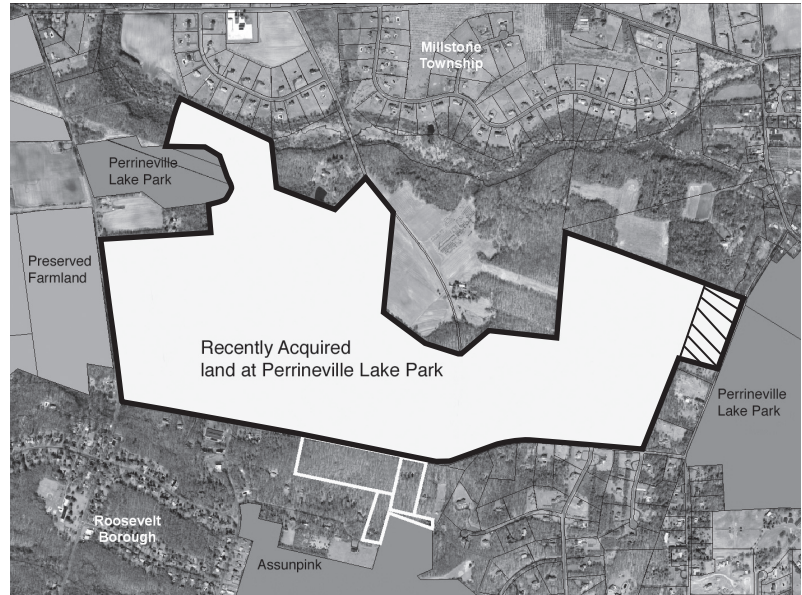
--Mark Twain

Did You Know?



At 843 acres, Central Park in Manhattan is just a bit larger than Perrineville Lake Park in Millstone (804 acres), or Hartshorne Woods Park in Middletown (787 acres) but within its borders, it contains: 58 miles of walking trails; 26,000 trees; over 9,000 benches; 36 bridges/arches; and 21 playgrounds. Located in one of the most populated cities that hosts many tourists each year, it's no surprise that Central Park attracts more than 25 million visitors each year.

PERRINEVILLE GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS



With the addition of 319 new acres in Millstone and Roosevelt in 2007, Perrineville Lake Park grew by a whopping 40% last year to 804 acres. And, more acreage was added in early 2008. Since the first parcels for this property were purchased less than 10 years ago in 1999, that's an impressive accomplishment.

According to staff at the acquisitions office, Perrineville's impressive growth was made possible with support from the township of Millstone, and illustrates the power that people still have over what happens in their towns. Here's a year by year breakdown of acres added to Perrineville since the park started.

- 1999 93 acres (2 parcels)
- 2000 30 acres (3 parcels)
- 2001 4 acres (1 parcel)
- 2002 24 acres (1 parcel)
- 2003 24 acres (1 parcel)
- 2004 185 acres (4 parcels)
- 2005 125 acres (1 parcel)
- 2006 --
- 2007 319 acres (4 parcels)

But that's not all...the new parcels at Perrineville have strategic importance as well. These most recent additions will ultimately help attach the park to a much larger state wildlife area, known as the Assunpink Wildlife Management Area (south of the new land), providing a large, uninterrupted tract of land for future park users. Also, recent additions alongside the stream corridor at Rocky Brook provide waterway protection since the land will not be developed.

Note: The striped parcel above is owned by Millstone Township.

RETIREE NICK FIORILLO STILL A NATURALIST AT HEART

The Green Link recently invited Park System retirees to drop a line and let us know what they are up to. Former Park System Naturalist Nick Fiorillo, now living in the Ozark Mountains (Calico Rock, Arkansas; pop. 1,000) did just that.



Nick and his wife Dee, doing what they do best. He and wife Dee, have a 70-acre property in the forested mountains of north Arkansas.

In addition to nature photography and his boa breeding business (www.whiteriverboas.com), Nick enjoys fishing the White River nearby for rainbow and brown trout. Did you know? Three world-record brown trout came out of the White River at 38-39 lbs! Nick spent a few years making his own fishing rod, and is now just waiting until the next record sized trout grows big enough for him to catch, so he can claim the record.



Main Street in Calico Rock, Arkansas.

When asked, "Why Arkansas?" Nick explained that he read about the area in a retirement magazine while at the dentist. It listed the Twin Lakes region (30 miles north of where he lives) as the #1 place to retire. "For people from the colder, north-central US, it's like Florida is to NJ," he said.

If he steps out his back door, Nick can walk for 15-20 miles before he hits the next town. It is so quiet at night they can hear the cows in a neighboring pasture-over a mile away! There are no jets overhead, only a few cars and the occasional freight train. At night, they can see millions of stars because there is no light pollution (because there are no other sources of light).

He and Dee travel about 3 hours north (into Missouri!) to go shopping at Sam's Club, or to eat at a Red Lobster, but Nick has no "withdrawal symptoms" since leaving New Jersey. He says he just misses the ocean and the fishing sometimes. They keep very busy with their property, snake business, deer-watching, and feeding lizards off the back porch. Nick can be reached via his business website, above.

Nick-who worked for the Park System for 31 years, from 1970 until 2001-is still an avid hunter and outdoorsman.

He and wife

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GOOD NEWS & KUDOS Staffers Make the Grade



Susan Stafford Smith receiving her black belt in the Tiger Schullman style, Mixed Martial Arts.

Geographic Information Systems Specialist, **Susan Stafford-Smith** from A&D recently received her black belt in Mixed Martial Arts. This art form is a mix of stand up (kick boxing) and ground (grappling) fighting. Susan has been a martial arts student since 1998, but took some time off to get a Professional Certificate in Geomatics at Rutgers.

In total, the black belt took her about 4 years to achieve. She trained consistently to reach this goal, and then intensified her training and conditioning regiment during the months leading up to the black belt test. She also completed supplemental training in boxing, outside of her standard martial arts practice. The Green Link congratulates Susan on this impressive accomplishment!

Also of A&D, Land Acquisition's **Terry Grewen** recently received a Master's Degree in Liberal Arts from Thomas



Terry Grewen recently completed a Master's Degree in Liberal Arts online in just two years.

Edison State College, one of the first online colleges (sponsored by the state of NJ). Terry has been studying for 2 years, focusing mainly on the fine arts, to pursue her advanced degree. As part of her degree curriculum, she received life credit for painting classes based on Mason Gross School of Fine

Arts graduate program and completed a special project organizing a group show for "emerging" and "re-emerging" artists at the Middletown Public Library. The show, titled "Five Points of View," included her work and that of four other artists. Congratulations to Terry for "mastering" her advanced degree!

VOLUNTEER CORNER...

National Trails Day is Coming Up, June 7

The Green Link would like to take this opportunity to identify the hard-working volunteers and park staffers in this photo, that appeared in the previous issue. They are (l to r) Dennis Launzinger, Mark Siebel, Cathy Clark (in the




hat), Park Ecologist Anna Luiten, and Park Ranger Allison Petruzzo (back). The group is preparing the tread for a new trail at Huber Woods Park.

FUN FACTS & PARK STORIES

Europe Calling

Last January, Park Manager Mark Borchert got an interesting call from overseas. A couple from Austria, who were moving to the US, saw our website and wanted to get married at Seven Presidents. Mark noted that the call is a reminder that the internet really is a "world wide web."

Only in the Park System...



Public Information Officer Susan Walsh was recently overheard discussing the finer points of red-worm composting with new Coordinator of Volunteers Karen Livingstone (previously of Deep Cut Gardens, home of the Park System's composting bin demonstration site). But that's not the funny part...Susan was explaining how she once had a composting bin where the worms kept on dying, and she couldn't figure out why. As it turns out, the worms weren't dying, they were disappearing-her son had just taken up fishing and was using them for bait!

5 Million and Counting...

The Park System reached a record-breaking 5,095,911 visits in 2007.

Think Housing Prices Are High in Monmouth County?

The most expensive housing markets are actually on the other coast, in California. Average home prices there are well over \$1.5 million in Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Clara and Orange counties. Not surprisingly, in Beverly Hills the average home price is over \$2 million!

Source: Appeared in: County News; January 14, 2008. Original source: www.cnnmoney.com; December, 2007.

On Astronauts and Houseplants



According to the National Gardening Association website, studies done at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) found that 2-3 plants placed in an average size room can remove up to 87% of air pollutants. Pollutants come from carpet, furniture, building materials, smoke and cleaning supplies and these living "air filters" improve air quality. Here are the Top 10:

- Areca Palm
- Australian Sword Fern
- Boston Fern
- Dwarf Date Palm
- English Ivy
- Janet Craig Dracaena
- Peace Lily
- Reed Palm
- Rubber Plant
- Weeping Fig

Source: Celebrating the Seasons Newsletter, www.garden.org/celebratingtheseasons/?page=natures-filters. Accessed January 15, 2008.



Staff at Work Outdoors...



Holmdel Rangers Bill Oakes and Rose Lang and Manager Drew D'Apolito staff the sledding hill after the season's first real snowstorm in late February.



Ray Smith, a Carpenter with Construction and Repair, holds up this leaning silo in the Claypit Creek section of Hartshorne Woods so it can be stabilized. This silo (manufactured in the early 20th century) along with other structures nearby, hint at the presence of a small scale, "gentleman's farm" operation at this site. The silo probably stored corn silage used as animal feed for cows.

Say Hello to Reservations...

Pat Douglas (left) and Dawn Clayton (right) of Reservations answer the phone, and take information for thousands of programs each year as well as picnic site and room reservations.



Cash or Credit ...



(l to r) Karen Rutt, Jean Kline, and Donna Browne (seated) from Accounts Receivable process all the money transactions (incoming) for the parks, marina, reservoir, campgrounds, Seven Presidents and golf courses, as well those for programs and reservations.



CONSTRUCTION NEWS



New cubbies give skaters a place to store their stuff while skating.

• The Park System recently completed a series of improvements to the **Skateplex at Seven President's Oceanfront Park** in Long Branch. Take a look. The use of colored concrete in a pattern really brightens up the site (though it's hard to tell in these black and white photos). Plus, the new amenities will certainly make both skaters and spectators more comfortable.



One of three new shade shelters to protect spectators from the harsh rays of the sun, and give skaters a place to cool off.



If the shade shelters aren't enough, this water mister will certainly help take down the temperature on a hot day.

• At **Charleston Springs Golf Course**, park staff are installing fans intended to remedy an air circulation problem caused by too many trees on the South Course. Additional circulation should help correct pithium damage to the grass in that area.



C & R Electrician Dave Hollabaugh (left) and Charleston Springs Senior Greenskeeper Mark Foulks (right) install the cement base for one of the fans, last fall.

• Also at **Charleston Springs**, 45 acres of land have been cleared for the long-awaited 6-hole Short Course. Intended as another instructional component, it will become a part of Charleston's existing Short



Game Area, making this site one of the area's premiere locations for practice and lessons.

Senior Greenskeepers Martin Gonzalez and Mark Foulks operate equipment to clear the Short Game area.



May

- 1 John Carey • Drew D'Apolito
- 2 Steve Clayton • Denise Dockweiler
- 3 Laura Lieneck
- 4 Leigh Sommers
- 6 Tim LaVance
- 7 Heng Chin • Craig Fraser
- 7 Brian Sullivan
- 8 Patti Conroy • John Eisemann
- 9 Ken Thoman • Bob Ward
- 10 Ann Sage
- 11 Cathy Barfield • Marijane Bruncati
- 11 Bob Kolczynski • Janet Ryan
- 12 Dave Compton • Peter D'Angelo
- 14 Laurie Marswillio
- 15 Chris Davidson
- 18 Helen Fiore • Karen Livingstone
- 18 Julie M. Soleil
- 20 Tom Noordzy
- 25 Hank Schreiber
- 26 Michelle Scolletta Gosha
- 27 Jeff Szalc
- 28 Tim Butner
- 30 Gary Stedman

June

- 2 Liz Haenchen
- 5 John Lillis
- 7 Andy North • Bill Vaughn
- 8 Regina DeVeau
- 9 Spence Wickham
- 12 Jeanne Bezio
- 13 Nick Podsvirov
- 15 Aileen Desiata • Nick Samaras
- 16 Stephanie Weise
- 18 George Moran
- 19 Tom Dillon • Eric Doren
- 19 John Hoffman • George Siebert
- 19 Edward Zarella
- 20 Bill Kampe
- 22 Karen Rutt
- 23 Alan Archer
- 24 Vern Hasselbrock
- 26 Michael Janoski • Betty Leong

July

- 2 Travis Bryan
- 3 Harold Ayers • Mike DeMauro
- 5 Anthony Ribera • Phyllis Storms
- 6 Charlie Todd
- 8 Brian Corrigan
- 9 Chris Plantamura
- 10 Keith Bennett
- 14 William Bellingham • Paul DeJesus
- 21 Donna Dugo
- 23 Kerry McKenna
- 24 Anna Luiten • Mike Vaccaro
- 27 Bill O'Shaughnessy
- 30 Pat Douglas • Martin Gonzalez
- 30 Paul Lippert • Ryan Ponnwitz

“...And Then, There Was One!”



Can you identify the long-time naturalists in this photo? They are (l to r) recent retiree Patty O'Rourke, Gerry Savitz, Doug Krampert, Andy Coeyman, and Bob Henschel. We don't have the year of this photo, but for those of you who would like to guess, the staff appears to be wearing courduroys.

Answer: CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS DEVICE?

Think of it as a historic “rubiks-cube,” a type of puzzle or mind game used by the Eastern Woodland Indians who lived in this area long ago. The goal was to remove the circular piece of bone from the leather, without taking it apart.



This puzzle is just one small part of a brand new exhibit that will soon open at the Huber Woods Environmental Center, in Middletown. If you have time, come check it out! Many of the exhibit's historic tools and toys were made from scratch, and using natural materials, by park staffers. This puzzle, for instance, was made by part-time naturalist Brenda Davis.

Farewell, Retirees!

Principal Park Naturalist

Patty O'Rourke

*retired in February of 2008
after 32 years of service.*

Chief Park Naturalist

Doug Krampert

*retired in April of 2008
after 34 years of service.*

Sr. County Park Ranger

Gerald Kwiatkowski

*retired in April of 2008
after 31 years of service.*

Thompson Park Bldg. Maintenance

Dennis Siemon

*retired in April of 2008
after 21 years of service.*



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