Announcement

West Chester University is pleased to announce that we have approved a one year pilot program for a part-time Stewardship Manager for the Gordon Natural Area (GNA). The Department of Biology has appointed Dr. Gerard Hertel, Adjunct Professor of Forest Ecology and Entomology, to fill the Stewardship Position. Dr. Hertel retired in 2001 after working 34 years for the USDA Forest Service. He has an AS (Forestry) from Minot State University-Bottineau, BS (Forestry) from the University of Montana, a Masters (Forestry) from Duke University and a PhD (Entomology) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has taught Dendrology and Entomology at WCU and has volunteered many hours in behalf of the GNA.

As Stewardship Manager, Gerry should be contacted in regard to any planned activity in the GNA (ghtel@wcupa.edu; 610-436-2722 (W); 484-883-3371 (C)). He encourages all to consider how the GNA can be used as part of your educational experience. The GNA is an ecological treasure island in a sea of development and is the last public land link to the woods that William Penn experienced in the late 1600’s.

The GNA was established in 1973 for education, research and the protection of biodiversity.

Special Days/reception for GNA Neighbors & Users (hikers, walkers [w/dogs too], birders etc):

- April 18, 2007- meet me in the Department of Biology for Q & A’s-7PM (dessert & coffee)
- June 20, 2007- meet me in the Gordon Natural Area-6PM (walk & talk); drinks provided

Work Days [mark your calendar NOW!]
9:30AM-12PM (lunch provided)

- April 21, 2007 Great Garlic Mustard Pull
- November 10, 2007 Clean up day

Billion Tree Campaign
(http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/)

The United Nations Environment Programme has launched a major worldwide tree planting campaign. Under the “Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign,” people, communities, business and industry, civil society organizations and governments are being encouraged to enter tree planting pledges on their website with the objective of planting at least one billion trees worldwide during 2007.

“When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and seeds of hope”
-- Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize laureate

GNA has pledged 100 trees—how about you?
Grants

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (Wild Resource Conservation Program) has just awarded WCU a grant to establish demonstration areas on the GNA to show the effects of deer and invasive plants on the forest ecosystem.

Google Earth (http://earth.google.com/)

Download software, go to Search. Fly to: enter: 39.9387413562,-75.5958784953 (you are in the GNA)

Skunk Cabbage (look for it in March in the GNA)

Skunk cabbage, found in wetlands from Manitoba to Maine and south to Georgia, can flower when snow still blankets the ground and ice glazes the bare tree branches. It has been known to bloom inside snow banks, creating its own ice caves. It can do this because it is one of the few plants capable of generating intense heat.

Like most members of the arum family, the skunk cabbage produces strange-looking blooms consisting of a leathery hood called a spathe that surrounds a stubby stalk called a spadix covered with minute pale-colored flowers. The spathe is maroon, often mottled with yellow or green. Since it doesn’t open much, you have to peek inside to see the flower stalk. If you can stay outside long enough without freezing, you may also get a glimpse of insects such as carrion beetles and flesh flies, lured by the plant’s hothouse environment and color, which resembles raw or decaying flesh. The skunk cabbage also employs an olfactory come-on to entice these potential pollinators: its unmistakable eau de skunk, another way the plant mimics rotting meat. (picture taken in GNA 12/30/06!!!). But it is the ability of the skunk cabbage and other so-called thermogenic plants to generate heat—lots of it—they have long captivated scientists. Temperature regulation is a characteristic shared by birds, mammals and even many flying insects, but it’s a surprise to find it in flowers.

http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?issueID=112&articleID=1418
Songs:

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<td>&quot;Inconvenient Truth&quot;</td>
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Climate change is real!

The Island of Woods

The first name given to the land (Ireland) was "Island of Woods", and this name was given by a warrior of the people of "Nin, son of Bel"
Three time indeed was the island all one woodland, as the poet says-"Three times Eire put coverings on her, and three times bareness off her."

We do not want to repeat what happened to this island nation!

Native Plants:

This is for the 40 neighbors whose property joins the GNA. Enhance your yard and the Gordon Natural Area by extending our boundaries using plants native to the GNA.

For the past two tears Yellow Springs Nursery has donated trees to be planted in the GNA. Their products can be used to extend the habitats of the GNA to your property.

Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery is located in Chester County, PA on a 150 year old dairy farm. Their mission is to promote land stewardship through the propagation and sale of plants native to the mid-Atlantic area. If you tour the property, you will find, among the display areas, a meadow, wetland and woodland area that we are in the process of restoring with native plants.

Yellow Springs Farm produces and grows many species of native plants, including wildflowers, shrubs, trees, grasses and ferns. The plants are organically grown in containers so they are easy to transport from the farm to your home. They promote the use of organic fertilizers and sustainable, biodynamic farm practices.

They also offer design and installation services, focused on new or existing residential properties. Call them today to start planning your native habitat garden whether it be a woodland, meadow, rain garden, butterfly garden or deer resistant garden. They offer a discount on plant material purchased from Yellow Springs Farm when you contract their design services.
You can contact them or purchase online at [www.yellowspringsfarm.com](http://www.yellowspringsfarm.com) or reach them by phone at 610-827-2014 or email at catherine@yellowspringsfarm.com

National Wildlife Federation’s Back Yard Habitat

[By becoming a Backyard Habitat you will be extending the ecological benefits of the GNA-thank you]
Natural places - and the plants and animals that inhabit them - face ever-increasing pressure from human activity. Few places left on Earth have not been affected in some way by our actions. As a result, habitat loss is the number-one threat to wildlife today.

The way we choose to manage the land under our care has had major effects on wildlife habitat. At the same time that the trend in landscaping began to favor close-cropped lawns, exotic ornamental specimen plants, and a desire for neatness and uniformity, new chemical fertilizers and pesticides were rapidly becoming available that made an insect-free, perpetually green yard an obtainable goal. Needless to say, we have disturbed the balance of the ecosystem and banished the wildlife from the land we once shared. The continued conversion of natural areas into such landscapes has resulted in drastic reduction of habitat and the disappearance of many species of wildlife.

We can, however, choose to create landscapes that help restore the ecological balance. We can choose to invite the wild plants and animals back into the land and our lives. To demonstrate this, the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) encourages people to landscape and garden in a more sustainable, natural way, with wildlife in mind. The NWF Backyard Wildlife Habitat program educates people about the benefits, for both people and wildlife, of creating and restoring natural landscapes.

Through the Backyard Wildlife Habitat program, you will learn how to restore wildlife habitat in your own yard, balcony, workplace or even your entire community. Trained Habitat Stewards are available to help community members and organizations create NWF certified Wildlife Habitats, beneficial for humans and wildlife, on their properties.

Feel free to contact your local Habitat Steward, Kelley Kramer, at kelleylou72@gvcad.com or (484) 678-2910. The Habitat Resource Network of Southeast Pennsylvania at www.habitatresourcenetwork.org is a great website of local resources and the National Wildlife Federation at www.nwf.org can help you learn more about creating your own backyard habitat!

**GNA Supporters:**

**2004:** Presidential Initiative (WCU); Environmental Council (WCU); USDA Forest Service; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

**2005:** Wegman’s; Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery; Environmental Council; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

**2006:** Yellow Springs Farm Native Plant Nursery; Valero Energy Corporation; National Wildlife Federation; Henderson High School Environmental Club; Friends of the Gordon Area

**2007:** Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources; WCU Alumni Association; Friends of the Gordon Area

Contact: ghertel@wcupa.edu; 610-436-2722; 484-883-3371 (cell)