

Streamlines

Summer 2018

In this issue:

2018 Annual Celebration

Pennsylvania Master Naturalist Programs

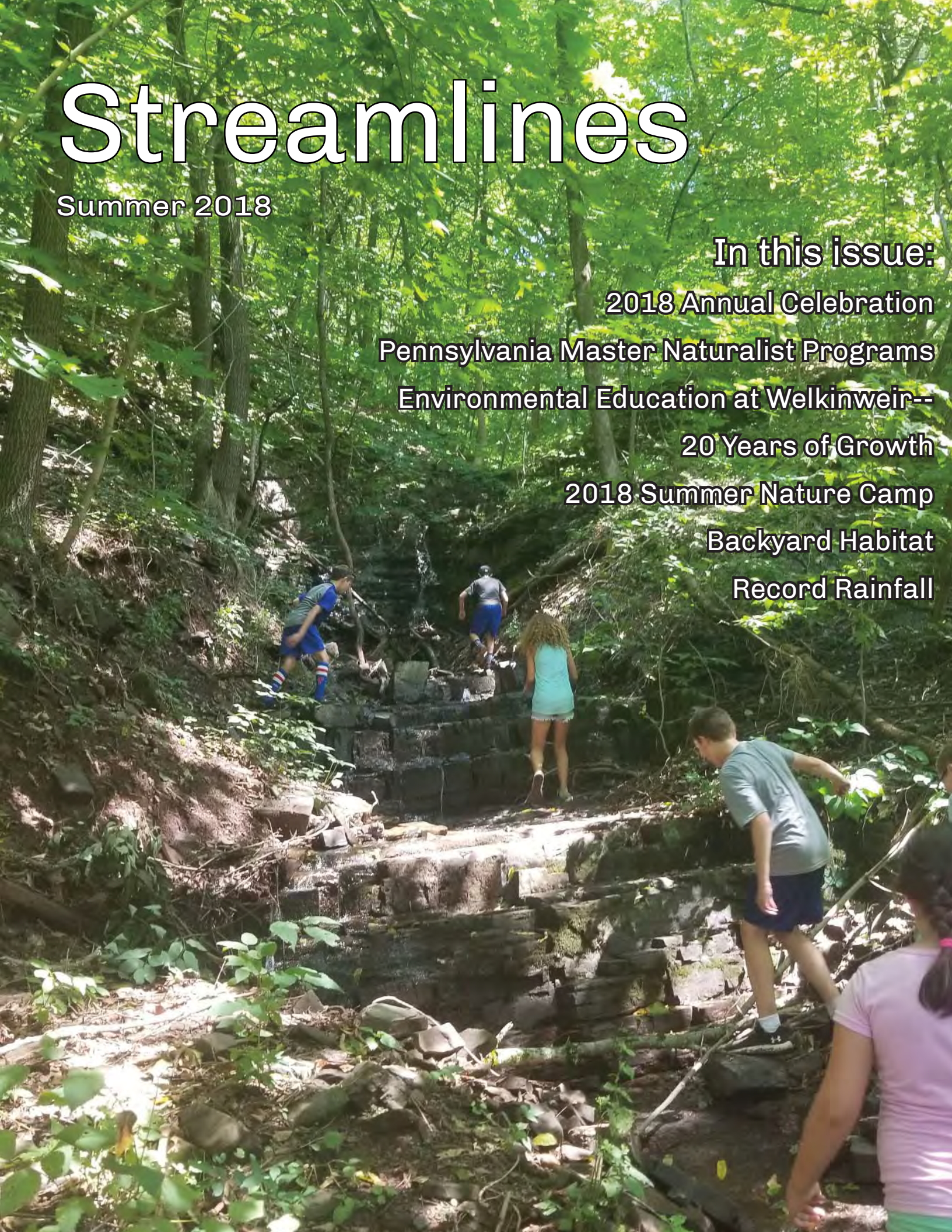
Environmental Education at Welkinweir--

20 Years of Growth

2018 Summer Nature Camp

Backyard Habitat

Record Rainfall



PA Master Naturalist Program-- *Leadership for Community Based Conservation*

GVWA is joining forces with the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist program as a coordinating partner. We will be hosting PA Master Naturalist volunteer trainings here at Welkinweir, beginning in 2019!

Trained Master Naturalists design and pursue a wide variety of service projects from habitat restoration and native plantings, to nature walks and interpretative displays or publications on natural history, to supporting the natural resource conservation efforts of partnering organizations. Since 2010, Pennsylvania Master Naturalist volunteers have:

- engaged in more than 19,000 hours of conservation service
- contributed over \$445,000 in conservation value and impact to regional partners
- reached over 29,000 people through education and outreach initiatives
- restored over 1400 acres of habitat through stewardship service
- donated 19,640 Volunteer Service Hours
- improved 59 miles of waterways

To become a certified Master Naturalist volunteer, participants must complete an initial 50-hour volunteer training course – a mix of classroom learning and outdoor field work - followed by annual volunteer service and continuing education in the natural sciences.

Adults who are curious about nature, enjoy the outdoors, and want to be a part of natural resource management and conservation in Pennsylvania are perfect candidates to become Pennsylvania Master Naturalists. More information will be coming soon about our spring 2019 class.



Annual Celebration Save the Date:

Wednesday October 10, 2018 5:30 to 8:30

Celebrate the 2018 accomplishments of our association and get a sneak peek at what's ahead! Enjoy a harvest table of local cheeses, meats and homemade crackers followed by a sit down dinner, wine and beer.

This year features an extraordinary speaker who will take you on an incredible journey:

The View Below – Amazing Sights in our Everyday Streams

Below the surface of our freshwater streams lies an unexpected, largely unnoticed, amazing underwater world! Naturalist Keith Williams shares his adventures of exploring and discovering the underwater world of our mid-Atlantic streams. As the executive director of Northbay Adventures, in the Chesapeake, Keith and his team connect student environmental studies with positive actions to protect and restore the natural world. Keith has developed river snorkeling based science curriculum and has established river snorkeling programs for nonprofits and the US Forest Service.

Sponsors are needed for this event – contact Vicki at 610-469-4900 or visit www.greenvalleys.org for more information



**2018 Annual GVWA Birdseed Sale
Flyer Enclosed**

Green Valleys Watershed Association Mission is to protect, preserve, and restore the natural waterways of northern Chester County. We inspire, educate, and involve our community to make a difference for this generation and for generations to come.

Welkinweir, our headquarters, is the former home of founding members Everett & Grace Rodebaugh, showcases the organization's mission. Located in East Nantmeal Township with 219 acres of permanently preserved land featuring an arboretum, wetlands, ponds, stream, meadows, and forest habitats.

Open for visiting Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Board Officers

Allen Heist, President
Chris Orzechowski, VP & Secretary
Don Hans, Treasurer
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Staff

Victoria Laubach, Executive Director
victoria@greenvalleys.org
Elaine Armbrust, Bookkeeper
elaine@greenvalleys.org
Michael Bullard, Science Coordinator
mikeb@greenvalleys.org
Katie Grubb, Educator
katieg@greenvalleys.org
Becca Schulze, Volunteer Coordinator
rebecca@greenvalleys.org
Margot Taylor, Restoration Coordinator
margot@greenvalleys.org
Dawn White, Education Coordinator
dwhite@greenvalleys.org

1368 Prizer Road
Pottstown, PA 19465
Phone (610) 469-4900
Fax (610) 469-4990

Email gva@greenvalleys.org
Web www.greenvalleys.org

On the cover:

Summer Nature Camp Herons group (6&7th grade) explore the Upper Schuylkill River Trail

Building a Bridge to Nature

Environmental Education-- 20 years of Growth at Welkinweir

A key motivation for moving our head quarters to Welkinweir in 1997 was the *potential* to develop new environmental education programs. The extensive and highly accessible natural areas were an ideal setting for this work.

Starting out, there was essentially no infrastructure, and the first camps at Welkinweir were held in a borrowed military surplus tent! Limited parking was in a small field near the barn, which soon became eroded, sending soil and water into the street and field below.

Over the years since this humble beginning we have steadily built a functional environmental education facility. Starting with the development of a Master Plan in 1999, we renovated the existing maintenance barn into classroom place, ran a water line from the main house, built the porous paving parking lot, built the Ralph Heister Pavilion, and added numerous smaller features. To all of our supporters over the years, a hearty Thank You! The thousands of students and campers who have come to Welkinweir for programs have benefited greatly from your support.

A New Education Building-- For the Decades Ahead

With each passing year, the importance of effective environmental education grows. Children are spending ever-decreasing time outdoors, and more time with screens. They are on average less connected to nature, while at the same time, the seriousness of environmental issues we face today and in the future is growing. Further, the demands on their time are greater than ever, which in turn means that the time we have to engage students is very limited.

In order to meet these significant challenges, we are creating a new GVWA educational building. The facility will feature indoor classrooms suitable for environmental science programs or public meetings, and expanded office space for staff and visiting instructors. The range of programs we will be able to provide on a year round basis will be enormously expanded over current capacities.

Portions of our 2017 Annual Appeal funds were used develop conceptual designs. This year's Appeal proceeds will go directly to creating the construction ready drawings we will need for the next phase.



Conceptual design for future GVWA Environmental Education Center.

2018 Summer Nature Camp

When Richard Louv published his groundbreaking book, *Last Child in the Woods*, in 2005, it was a wakeup call - the health of children and the health of the Earth are inseparable. In that book he devotes an entire chapter "Camp Revival" focused on the importance of nature camps - the restorative power of nature and the awe and amazement our Earth inspires - which leads many to believe the future of education is in the outdoors. With the highest attendance at our Summer Nature Camp in many years, our supporters believe this too! While the increase in the number of participants in camp is gratifying, it is also fun to hear how past attendees were inspired by nature camp. Many of our current camp counselors started out as camp attendees - we thought we'd share some of their thoughts:

Caroline Cody, senior camp counselor--

I have been at Green Valleys Summer Nature Camp since I was a camper here, and I love the camp and the property. I believe it is vital to teach the future generations the importance of our environment, and to get outside.

Richard Fox, junior camp counselor---

I came to camp at Green Valleys as a child, and had so much fun, I applied to be a Counselor in Training. I like working here because I like to teach the campers new things about nature, including things they can see in their own backyards. I just graduated and will attend Pennsylvania College of Technology to study forestry.

Deidre "Dee" Deischer-Eddy, junior camp counselor--

I've been going to Summer Nature Camp since I was a second grader. After a break, I applied to be a Counselor in Training and am now a Junior Counselor. Even as a counselor, this camp teaches me so much about the natural world, and I hope to use this knowledge in my future major.

Maya Brigandi, counselor in training--

What I love the most about Summer Nature Camp at Welkinweir is, no matter if you are a camper or counselor, there is always something new to learn here!

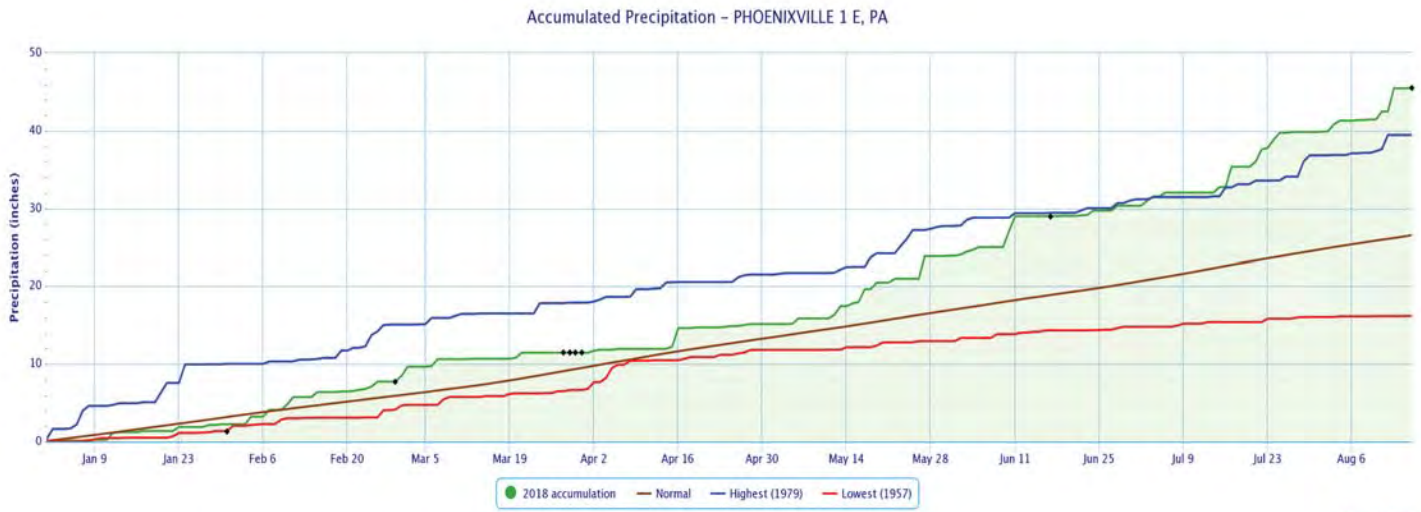
We thank all the parents of campers for their support. While Summer Nature Camp has wrapped up for the year we are planning for next year and for other programs that will build a bridge to future stewardship of the natural world.



Stormwater--

Making the Land Water Connection

The extraordinary amount of rainfall this year has placed us on track to be the wettest year on record locally. Regionally, many new “wettest” records are being set. The intensity of individual precipitation events this year has also been remarkable. What we are observing locally agrees with the conclusions of multiple scientific studies of weather records--both the intensity and amount of rainfall in the northeast US is increasing in recent decades.



All of this leads to increases in stormwater, overland flow, and rapid stream bank erosion. Stream banks are vulnerable at many locations throughout our watersheds where the stream banks are cut vertically and there is no vegetation to protect them. Erosion and collapse of these banks is delivering large amounts of silty sediments into the streams, where it clogs the stream bottom, disrupts aquatic food chains, and provides ideal conditions for harboring very large numbers of bacteria. Disrupted food chains and excessive bacteria will impair streams and lead to impairment listings. It is very important to understand how much sediment is being produced; for this reason GVWA is currently measuring streambank erosion rates in selected sites in the French and Pickering watersheds.

Stormwater controls, both permanent and temporary at construction sites, are not typically designed to handle these extreme rainfall events. As a consequence, these controls may be overwhelmed by water volume, releasing sediments and large volumes of water into our streams.



Vertical cut bank along Pickering Creek, six feet in height, with exposed and rapidly eroding sediments. Sites like these are ubiquitous throughout the watershed, and have always been candidates for study and restoration. However, with our changing climate, the impact these sites are having on water quality is growing. Mapping these sites, quantifying erosion rates, and prioritizing these sites for restoration are key tasks for our organization.

The Waterthrush Project

Have you seen me lately?

Maybe, but more likely you've heard it! This elusive bird is the Louisiana Waterthrush (photo). Despite its name it does live in our area and is not a thrush at all ...it's a migratory warbler that nests in densely vegetated stream banks and feeds on aquatic insects found in abundance in healthy streams.

This bird, and dozens of other (less elusive) species thrive in areas where creek and streams are surrounded by trees, shrubs, and deep forest. Many of us have cleared land to improve our view shed or access to the waterways. For the next three years, our partner, Audubon PA, is hoping to inspire property owners to plant some of that back as part of The Waterthrush Project, a component of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, funded by the William Penn Foundation.

If you would like to learn more about the birds of your backyard and how to make your property a sanctuary for the beautiful migratory and resident birds of Chester and Berks Counties, visit: pa.audubon.org and click on The Waterthrush Project.

Creating wildlife habitat, including streamside habitat, will provide you a virtually endless display of native colorful birds, butterflies, and other wildlife.



The health of our watersheds has been our focus for over 50 years.

Green Valleys Watershed Association is located in northern Chester County, Pennsylvania, where our scenic watersheds are comprised primarily of Exceptional Value (EV) and High Quality (HQ) waters. These streams are in the top tier in Pennsylvania. They are a precious resource.



1368 Prizer Road
Pottstown, PA 19465

www.greenvalleys.org

610-469-4900

Already renewed your membership? Share with a friend!

Please join us!

Your membership is an investment in clean water and healthy watersheds, for now and for future generations.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
I would prefer to pay with: Check (payable to GVWA)
 Visa MasterCard Discover American Express
Credit Card # _____
Exp. ___/___ CID _____ Phone* _____
Email address* _____

**Phone & email needed to process credit card payments. We do not share your information with other charitable organizations.*

Detach this form and mail with payment to:

Green Valleys Watershed Association
1368 Prizer Road, Pottstown, PA 19465

Online membership also available at
www.greenvalleys.org/support

Dues and contributions are tax-deductible. Green Valleys is a registered charitable organization. Copies of registration/financial information is available by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

MEMBERSHIP includes newsletter subscription, notice of special events and programs, and reduced rate to special programs, workshops, and Summer Nature Day Camp.

Membership levels (please check one):

- Individual.....\$45
- Family.....\$60
- Naturalist.....\$100
- Environmentalist.....\$250
- Protector.....\$500
- Preservationist.....\$750
- Steward.....\$1,000

I am a: New Member Renewing Member
 I am interested in including GVWA in my legacy planning.

Please notify me of GVWA volunteer opportunities:

Email: _____