

# The Pinchot Eagle

JUNE 2026, ISSUE 53

VOLUNTEER

EVENTS

GIVE NOW



*Take part in a state-wide*

## Bio Blitz!



*June 2026*

### Participating State Parks

Patterson Oil Creek	Black Moshannon
Keystone	McConnells Mill
Cowans Gap	Jennings EE Center
Codorus	Hickory Run
Cleer Creek	Evansburg
Cook Forest	Little Buffalo
Moraine	Ryerson Station
Ricketts Glen	Pine Grove Furnace
Gifford Pinchot	Nescopeck
Sizerville	Forbes State Forest
Pymatuning	Vosburg Neck
Lyman Run	Fort Washington
Cherry Springs	Sinnemahoning
Denton Hill	

Calling all self-proclaimed naturalists! If you are a mushroom hunter, fisherman, birder, or just like walking the trails and discovering the diversity of our parks, we need YOU!

To help us learn about the diversity of organisms in our parks, we are competing with other parks in a state-wide Bio Blitz competition during June!

To participate, download the iNaturalist app on your phone (it's free!), create an account, and start uploading observations found in your favorite parks!





# thank you for being a friend

## SOME OF THE WAYS YOU CAN BE A FRIEND OF PINCHOT:

1. **Help with Trail Care** Volunteers meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 5-7pm to help get hikers out of the mud! More info can be found [here](#) (scroll down) and read about the work that happened in May on page 4.
2. **Be a citizen scientist** If you come across a vernal pool in your hiking report the water height and send in a photo. See page 3 for more information on vernal pools. Or when you come across a plant or animal at Pinchot report it on inaturalist! See page 1 for details on the [Bio Blitz!](#)
3. **Let us know if you see a tree down** See page 5 for more details.
4. **Send us your Pinchot State Park Photos!** We do an annual patch contest and we would love to feature your photos in the newsletter. More information [here](#).
5. **Become or renew your [Friends Membership](#)** Being an official member helps Pinchot financially and keeps you in the loop of what's happening at the park!



# viva vernal pools

you can help  
monitor water  
levels!

By Betsy Leppo

Monitoring wetlands is essential for identifying management needs and emerging threats. Our monitoring program is sustained by the enthusiastic efforts of volunteers from the Penn State Master Watershed Steward program and the Friends of Pinchot. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program is a key partner, and they recently received funding from DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program to support our work. This spring we completed our fourth season of monitoring a vernal pool at Pinchot for the regional Vernal Pool Phenology Project. This six week program documents the migration of wood frogs and mole salamanders to vernal pools to breed and lay eggs. We also tracked the development of leaf and flower buds on the trees that surround the wetland to allow us to compare key moments in plant and amphibian phenology.

We are entering our third year of all-season monitoring to document habitat and hydrological changes in 16 vernal pools at Pinchot using CrowdHydrology water level and Chronolog photo stations. We also utilize automatic water sensor data to give a more detailed picture of the patterns of flooding and drying in each wetland. We also continue to plan for a wetland restoration project at Pinchot with the support of a PA Fish and Boat Commission habitat improvement grant. Wetland restoration expert Thomas Biebighauser helped us implement our first restoration project there in 2016. Ten years later, he is back to work with us on restoring three more wetlands. This project will help restore functioning wetlands in York County, which has lost many wetlands to agriculture and development.

We are also beginning new partnerships at Pinchot with Messiah University and Penn State University. Together we will use new and ongoing wetland restoration and monitoring project to engage students in real world research, data analysis, and application of data. Our six week phenology monitoring program went very well this year with excellent participation. With so many observant eyes we had new and interesting observations on every visit! We conducted egg mass surveys with Messiah University students and were pleased at how well several restored wetlands are supporting amphibian populations. We enjoyed the game camera footage we collected of wood frogs causing a ruckus, a barred owl catching a tasty frog, and raccoons kneading the bottom of a vernal pool looking for snails ([see the PNHP YouTube channel](#)). Thanks to all our partners and volunteers whose dedicated efforts keep this work going year after year.

# getting the hikers out of the mud

Thank  
you!

by Jim Hugar

The effort of getting strollers, hikers and bikers "out of the mud" is making progress! We focused on Lakeside Trail West of its exit from the Conewago Day Use Area due to its heavy use and its role as part of the Story Book Walk. The progress this month was thanks to two groups. The Friends Trail Care team met for our monthly Trail Care event on Tuesday evening May 12. The team of 6 focused on the first 500 feet of Trail exiting the day use area. They added additional gravel across portions of this area and opened some drainage ditches as part of our routine maintenance. In addition, they installed two French Drains (AKA "burritos") which allow water to move under the trail surface through encapsulated clear gravel.

The second group, Laborie Medical Technologies made a major contribution to the effort. Their team wasn't daunted with moving, placing and compacting part of 10-12 tons of gravel used in the work they performed. They installed a 15' burrito and added some additional gravel on sections of the trail. They then took on the elimination of part of one very low section of Lakeside Trail that is perpetually wet via installing 40 feet of burrito and 20 feet of perforated and expandable geogrid. The geogrid is better suited for deeper fills as it will both stabilize this section which is subject to very high lake levels, while supporting heavy traffic ranging from bikes to equipment. In addition, it will allow larger volumes of water to migrate in either direction as the lake elevation rises and drops.

Next trail care event is June 9; 5-7pm.  
photos by Jim Hugar and Sarah Williams



# thank you for your support of our native plant sale



Spot a downed tree blocking the trail? We'd love your help keeping the trails clear and accessible! If you come across one, please snap a photo and email it along with the most accurate location details you can provide to

[friendsofpinchot@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofpinchot@gmail.com).

Helpful info includes the nearest trail marker, intersecting trail, closest parking area, or any other landmarks that will help our Sawyer team find it quickly.

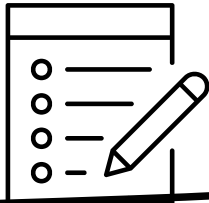
If you use a tracking or mapping app that can log your location or GPS coordinates, feel free to include that too — it makes the crew's job even easier. Thanks for helping keep our trails in great shape!

## tree down?



how are we  
doing?

CLICK [HERE](#) TO GIVE US YOUR THOUGHTS AND  
SUGGESTIONS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF  
PINCHOT STATE PARK



## be a friend

Not yet a friend of Pinchot?  
Make a yearly gift of as  
little as \$15 per year and  
support the park and get  
this newsletter delivered to  
your inbox regularly! Find  
out more [here](#)!

## advisory board

Jim Hugar, Chair  
Betsy Leppo, Co-chair  
Tammy Klunk, Treasurer  
Denny Daugherty, Secretary  
Alicia Bracken, Social Media and Website  
Coordinator  
Joyce Gayman, Membership and Volunteer  
Coordinator  
Phyllis Crooks, Firewood Sales Coordinator

\*Two board positions are currently vacant -  
please contact us for more information about  
these board opportunities.

Newsletter editor: Abby Leese

# Merch Sale



Want to help support the park?

Stop by the campground or park office  
to get your official Pinchot gear!

All proceeds benefit Gifford Pinchot. Thank you!

- YOUTH & ADULT T-SHIRTS \$20
- LONG SLEEVE HOODIES \$30
- HOODED SWEATSHIRTS \$35
- TOTE BAGS, BALL CAPS, BEANIES \$15
- PA PASSPORT \$13
- SOUVENIR PATCH \$8
- STICKERS & MAGNETS \$4
- BANDANAS, DOG TAGS & HIKING MEDALLIONS \$5

**\*\*CASH OR CHECK ONLY\*\***

Please make checks out to PFFF.

Friends of Pinchot members receive Adult and Youth T-shirts at a  
discounted rate of \$16.

Stop by Bathhouse #5 in the B Loop at  
the Campground on Sat July 4 9:00-  
12:00 OR the Dillsburg Farmers' Market  
on June 27 & July 18 from 8-12pm to  
grab new Pinchot merch! \*June 27<sup>th</sup> we  
will have additional native plants for  
sale at the Market as well!

## be in touch



<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofPinchot>  
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[friendsofpinchot.org](http://friendsofpinchot.org)

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