

The Pinchot Eagle



Friends of Pinchot State Park

March 2025

— Concrete Column Supports —
1960s
Old Toboggan Run
Pinchot Park



— Hepatica at Pinchot —
A sure sign of Spring!

Friends of Pinchot—
Park Visitors, Staff, & Community Volunteers—
Thank you, ALL, for your cooperative effort in stewardship.

Northern Lights at Pinchot!



October 2024



— Aurora Borealis —
A beautiful, colorful display of light in the night sky!



Vintage Pennant

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VOLUNTEER CORNER

Trail Care—Fall Work Day

As mentioned in the October issue of The Pinchot Eagle, the Friends hosted the third and final Trail Care Work Day of 2024 on October 5th. Nine volunteers contributed approximately thirty-five service hours of work, including the pre-staging of work material. The work focused on adding stone for trail build-up, establishing appropriate drainage slopes, and creating “mattresses” and crossover dips for drainage. The repairs will help

By Jim Hugar



to move the flow of water off the trail. These long-term improvements should result in less erosion, helping to stabilize wet areas. In addition, volunteers trimmed back two species of invasive plants that grow heavily in this area: Autumn Olive and Asian Bittersweet.

Thank you, trail stewards!



The area of focus included Oak Trail and Old Farm Trail—two trails connected to Lakeside Trail in Campground Area Loop B.

Crossover Dip—Newly Constructed



Assembling Trail “Mattress” for Drainage

Trimming Invasives



**Thank you,
Volunteers!**

Maytown Schoolhouse

This past December, volunteers gave the Maytown Schoolhouse a once-over in hopes of housing Friends of Pinchot merchandise here in the near future. The quaint, historic building is located at the corner of Alpine Road and Route 177 in Lewisberry, PA; it became part of Gifford Pinchot State Park in 2016.



Vernal Pool Monitoring

By Betsy Leppo

Pinchot Park is a wet place in the spring, as anyone who walks the trails knows very well. A benefit to all the wet clay soils in the park is that they support the formation of little wetlands known as **vernal pools**. Vernal pools are unique because they dry up partly or completely each year in mid to late summer and refill over the winter with snowmelt and rain. The pools reach their maximum size in spring, and for a few months, they are packed full of life until the dry phase comes around again.

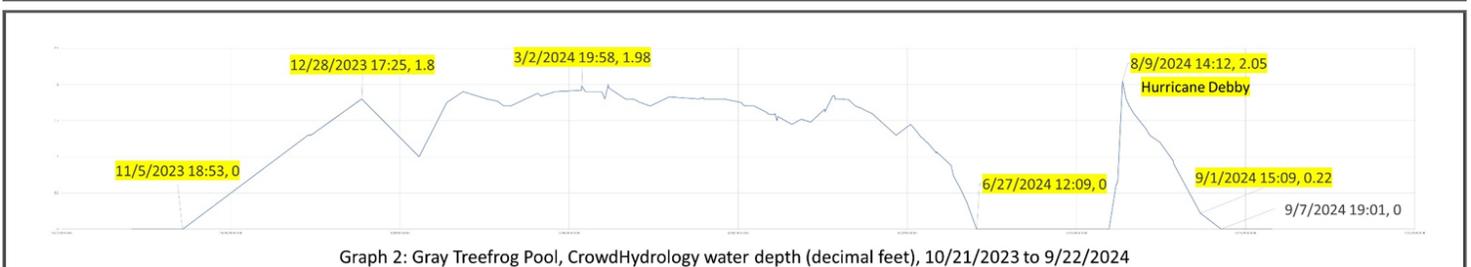
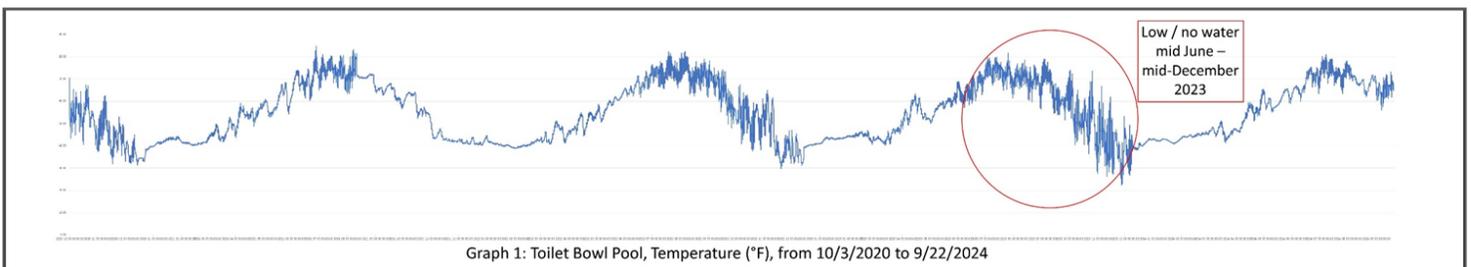
Small HOBO light-temperature sensors were installed in the 16 vernal pool basins in the park.



An example of a water level staff gauge used with the CrowdHydrology program.

The Friends of Pinchot have been working with partners to monitor the health of these vernal pools. One of the most important qualities of a vernal pool is its hydroperiod, which includes the depth of the pool basin, and the timing and duration of its dry phase. Getting consistent information on hydroperiods can be challenging and time consuming, but technology can help. In 2022, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) obtained a Healing the Planet grant from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and the Giant Company. WPC used funds from this and matching grants to purchase the supplies needed to set up eight photo and water depth monitoring stations where park visitors can document seasonal changes and water depths of the pools. Water tem-

perature and light sensors were also installed in all 16 vernal pool basins in the park, in order to obtain frequent and consistent hydrological information. These sensors were installed in October of 2023 and have been recording data for nearly a year. In 2020, WPC tested a similar sensor (recording water temperature only) in four vernal pools, providing an additional four years of temperature data for those four pools. This past summer and fall, as the pool levels approached their lowest levels, volunteers visited the pools to document the start of the dry phase and to retrieve the sensor data. Sensor data has been retrieved from 6 of the 16 pool basins so far. **Below are some results from this exciting new phase of WPC's monitoring!**



Vernal Pools—*continued*

GRAPH INTERPRETATION...

Graph 1 shows temperature data for **Toilet Bowl Pool**, which was so named because of a collection of porcelain toilets that had been dumped there decades ago. These toilets were dug out and removed in 2016, but the name ‘Toilet Bowl’ stuck to this otherwise lovely vernal pool. This pool has one of the temperature-only sensors, which has been taking temperature readings every

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four hours for the past four years. The overall undulating shape of graph shows the gradual rise and fall of temperature with the seasons. The jaggedness of the line reflects what is happening with the water levels. A fully flooded pool has small changes in the water temperature between night and day and the graph line makes small jumps. A pool with very little water

will warm and cool quickly during the day, creating bigger bumps in the line. The temperature in a dry basin fluctuates the most, because measurements basically reflect the *air* temperature, which has the biggest change between day and night. A period of low/no water for this pool from mid-June through mid-December of 2023 is circled in red.

Graph 2 shows the water depth data collected for **Gray Treefrog Pool** over the past year. This pool was named for the abundance of gray treefrogs that call there in the spring and summer. People who have attended vernal pool walks at Pinchot are familiar with this wetland located along Lakeside Trail near the campground. It has a wooden platform along the edge that allows visitors to

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view the pool without disturbing it. Gray Treefrog is one of eight vernal pools in the park that are easily accessible by trails—and have photo and water depth stations. These stations allow trained volunteers and park visitors to collect photos and water depth readings and submit them to websites where they are made publicly available.

Using the data citizen scientists have collected, we can map out important moments in the life of the pool, such as when it dries and when it

refills. **Graph 2 has six important dates highlighted in yellow**, showing when the pool filled around the new year, then dried up by the

end of June, then refilled around August 9 with the heavy rains of Hurricane Debby, then dried down again one month later.



Photos (next page!)
taken at the Chronolog Stations
illustrate the condition of the
pool on each of these dates.



NATURE

Vernal Pools—*continued*



2023_11_05 Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 0.0 ft dry



2024_06_27 Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 0.0 ft dry



2024_01_01_Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 1.8 ft stable filled



2024_08_09 Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 2.05 ft near max
Hurricane Debby



2024_03_02 Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 1.98 ft near max



2024_09_01 Gray Treefrog
WPC113 depth 0.22 ft nearly dry

Overall, the water temperature and light measurements produce a uniform and consistent set of data, because we get readings every 4 hours of every day. The sensor data is working well for identifying periods of low/no water in the pool basins, based on

the jaggedness of the line forming the graph. The Chronolog photos and CrowdHydrology data collected by citizen scientists correlates nicely with the sensor data and helps confirm and clarify the readings we are getting from the sensors.

**Extending a big thank-you to the
Friends of Pinchot and York County Master Watershed Steward volunteers
who 'adopted' vernal pools
and did an outstanding job monitoring them this past year!**

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Pinchotween

As the camping season came to a close, Pinchot finished off the 2024 fun with its annual Pinchotween celebration, which, as always, included trick-or-treat and the festive campsite decorating contest. This year, the winners were chosen exclusively by registered campers; campers could choose between voting via an online poll or paper

ballot, choosing their three favorite sites. Sites portrayed various fun and creative themes! This year's 2024 winning sites/themes were as follows:

- 3rd Place: Site 40 —“Frozen”
- 2nd Place: Site 294 —“Skeleton Campfire”
- 1st Place: Site 308 —“Harry Potter”

**1st Place Winner
Site 308—Harry Potter Theme**



*Thank you to everyone who participated,
making Pinchotween
a special and memorable experience for all!
We can't wait to see what you all come up with for next year!*

Behind the Scenes —

Greetings...
from *The Pinchot Eagle's* newsletter editor, Flo Spangenberg—
and her fabulous editing assistants, Belva and Blanche...

It's been fun! We've so enjoyed the past five years
of assembling *The Pinchot Eagle*, but alas...
We have birds to watch & napping to do.
Farewell, Friends!

Best...



But fear not!
The Pinchot Eagle
will continue to
soar high—
**Be on
the lookout for
the next issue!**

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

First Day Hike



13 dogs – 130 community folks – Friends of Pinchot – Park Staff... All joined together to usher in the New Year with Pinchot's annual First Day Hike – one of more than 70 guided hikes that took place in 46 state parks and one forest district across Pennsylvania. The comradery was made complete with tidbits of park & natural history, mugs of hot cider, and whitecaps on the lake!

Volunteer Picnic

Prizes-Plaques-Peeps-Provisions...

All things necessary for celebrating at the **Friends of Pinchot 2024 Volunteer Picnic!**

Folks joined together at the Sunnyside Pavilion on September 18th to share a meal—in appreciation of all of the amazing volunteers—and to reflect upon the collaborative effort, accomplishments, and fun while participating in Pinchot projects this past year!



A huge thank-you to the 449 volunteers who collectively worked 2,741 hours in 2024—the equivalent of 457 8-hour work days!

Plaques & Prizes



Promo



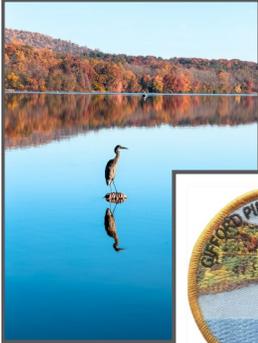
Peeps



Provisions!

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Patch Design Contest



Each year, the Friends of Pinchot host a **photo contest**, in order to enlist community help in the annual redesign of their 3" x 3" embroidered souvenir/collector's patch.



Please join in!

For **2026 patch contest** consideration, please submit your Gifford Pinchot State Park photo in jpg format to friendsofpinchot@gmail.com by October 24, 2025.

Up to four entries per person are accepted!

Presented here is Pinchot's 2025 collector's patch, created from Corynne Rutz's contest-winning photo. Thank you, Corynne!

Patches are for sale for \$5 and can be purchased at the Park Office (year-round), at the Campground Office (in season), and at various events hosted/attended by the Friends of Pinchot throughout the year.

FOR SALE

Goings-On...



Vernal Pool Walks:

April 4
April 5

Wildflower Walks:

April 3
April 12
April 17
April 25
May 1
May 11



Earth Day
Park Litter Pick-Up:
April 26

Events hosted by Friends of Pinchot volunteers and Pinchot Park staff—

Mark your calendars for these upcoming spring events!

Morning Bird Walk:

May 2



Native Plant Sale
Saturday,
May 17, 2025
9AM-Noon

*** For more detailed information on these events: ***

www.friendsofpinchot.org
www.facebook.com/FriendsofPinchot/
https://events.dcnr.pa.gov/gifford_pinchot_state_park

MERCH—MEMORIALS—MEETINGS

Park Souvenirs

FRIENDS OF Pinchot STATE PARK
 Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

FOR SALE

Hooded Sweatshirts.....\$35
Long-Sleeved Hoodies.....\$25
T-Shirts (Youth & Adult).....\$20*
 *[Friends of Pinchot Members – \$16]
Tote Bags.....\$15
Ball Caps.....\$15
Beanies.....\$15
PA Passports.....\$13
Souvenir Patches.....\$5
Bandannas.....\$5
Stickers/Magnets.....\$4

CASH or CHECK* only, please!

*Check made payable to **PPFF**

Items are available for purchase
 April through October at the Campground Office and year-round at the Park Office.

PLEASE STOP BY!

Proceeds help to fund improvements in the park!

Memorial-Dedication Donation Options



Memorial Bench Program

Pinchot offers *two contribution programs*—for both memorial remembrances and living tributes.



Tree and Native Plant Donation Program

www.friendsofpinchot.org/memorial-donations

For more information, please contact the Park Office at (717) 432-5011.

Curious about other park happenings & projects?

Friends of Pinchot meetings take place on the **last Tuesday of each month** at 6 PM, excluding the month of December.



Please join us!

- ◆ Winter meetings are conducted at the Park Office or via Zoom during November, January, and February.
- ◆ Spring, summer, and fall meetings (March through October) take place at Conewago Day Use Area, Sunnyside Pavilion.

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are attended by Friends, volunteers, community members, and park staff.
The public is welcome to attend!

Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men.

-Gifford Pinchot



For general information, please email friendsofpinchot@gmail.com, visit our website at www.friendsofpinchot.org, or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FriendsofPinchot/. You may also call the Gifford Pinchot State Park office at (717) 432-5011.



2200 Rosstown Road
Lewisberry, PA 17339
(717) 432-5011

friendsofpinchot@gmail.com

ADVISORY BOARD

- Chair**
Betsy Leppo
- Co-Chair**
Jim Hugar
- Treasurer**
Tammy Klunk
- Secretary**
Karen Tynes

Social Media Coordinator
Terry Christopher

Membership-Volunteer Coordinator
Joyce Gayman

Newsletter Editor
Vacant

Board Members
Phyllis Crooks
Dean Gibbons
Jim Grove

Park Representative
Beth Kepley-McNutt

This volunteer advisory board is dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural and recreational resources of Gifford Pinchot State Park for present and future generations.

Friends of Pinchot State Park is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

FRIENDS OF PINCHOT STATE PARK

2025-26 Annual Membership Application

Make checks payable to: PPF
(include FOPSP on the memo line)

Mail form with payment to: Friends of Pinchot State Park,
2200 Rosstown Road, Lewisberry, PA 17339

NEW MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State/Zip Code _____
Phone _____
Email _____

- I would like to receive the newsletter via email.
- I would like to receive a printed copy of the newsletter in the mail.
- I am interested in volunteering.

All members receive a FOPSP membership card, a newsletter subscription to *The Pinchot Eagle*, and discounts on various FOPSP apparel.

___ Senior (age 62+)	\$10.00	___ Purchase the annual GPSP
___ Individual	\$15.00	souvenir patch: Add \$5.00
___ Family	\$30.00	___ Additional tax-deductible
___ Damselfly Sponsor	\$50.00	contribution of \$_____
___ Dragonfly Sponsor	\$100.00	
___ Corporate	\$250.00+	TOTAL \$ _____

Friends of Pinchot State Park was formed in March 2009 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions to PPFF are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Memberships are for one year, June 1 through May 31.

Gifford Pinchot State Park continues to be so very essential to our community... providing healthy outdoor activity and fun— & much needed respite for ALL! Please... consider becoming a Friend of Pinchot!




Find us on Facebook at:
[Friends of Pinchot](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofPinchot)