



Friends of the Taylor Wildlife Preserve

News --- # 8

3 Taylor's Lane, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077-1609

Voice: (856) 829-7034 FAX (856) 829-8070 email: ftwp@riverfarm.org

May 2004

Solstice Potluck Picnic Sunday, June 20 6pm.

Come with a dish to share, park as signs direct, and come to the lawn on the River side of the yellow house (or porch if it rains.) Around 7 we'll head out toward Wright's Point to dedicate a stone in memory of Hal Taylor. His youngest sister, Margy, had the idea of a marker indicating the solstice and his astronomy colleague Budd Howard prepared the design. This might be a good time to introduce a friend to the Preserve.

Birding:

The excitement and activity around the preserve lately is over the Clay-Colored Sparrow (*spizella pallida*) that has been reported with a flock of Juncos in the garden area. Birders have been stopping by to spot it. The Clay-Color may have been in the Preserve through the winter, since it was spotted Jan. 4th and Jan. 6th, and is still being reported on April 4. Apparently, it is unusual for this species to stay here through the winter.

Birders also reported spotting a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pine Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet and a Peregrine Falcon (probably nesting in the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge girders) as well as Great Blue Heron.

In Memory of Sylvia (Syb) Taylor

By Kitty Taylor Mizuno

My mother, Syb Taylor, died in her home here on the farm three weeks before her 88th birthday

on August 8, 2003. She was on the Executive Board of the Friends of Taylor Wildlife Preserve until her death.

It was the wisdom and vision of Syb and my father, Joe Taylor, that led to the creation of this Wildlife Preserve in 1975, by making a permanent conservation easement of about 90 acres of land, including the large swamp area, to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust.

She is sorely missed by everyone here on the farm. Many of us have recent memories of her sitting on her sun porch in the big yellow house, surrounded by the beautiful potted plants that she nurtured so well, keeping an eye on the comings and goings on the farm. People would come to see her there, sometimes to ask her to help identify a bird they had seen, or where to pick the best tomatoes, show her how their children had grown, or just to chat. She was always welcoming.

Until she had a heart attack four years ago she had been an active farmer. She planted by hand eggplants, peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins, and the Taylor pole lima beans that have been grown here on the farm for over a century. She helped keep all these crops weeded and picked throughout the summer. When she wasn't too busy with these jobs she would walk the loop around the trail on the wildlife preserve almost daily, usually followed by a couple of dogs, who may have frightened away some of the wildlife she would have liked to see as she walked.

Syb was an avid birdwatcher since her childhood, growing up in Awbury Arboretum in Germantown, Philadelphia. She began visiting Joe Taylor and his family on the farm when they were teenagers actively involved in Quaker activities to which they were committed for the rest of their lives. They were engaged while she was a student at Bryn Mawr College, where she majored in biology. She went on to teach biology at the Brearley School in New York City before she and Joe were married in 1938. After living for 10 years in Germantown, they moved to the farm in 1948.

Syb and Joe made this farm a nurturing place for their 6 children, 15 grandchildren and 14 grandchildren. After Joe's father, Howard Taylor, died in 1967 they took over the management of the farm and continued this until they died, Joe in 1991, and Syb last year. It was thanks to Syb's vision that they were able to change the farm over to an organic one about 25 years ago. Syb lived here on the farm for 55 years.

She asked that contributions be made in her memory to any of the following:

Natural Resources Defense Council, 40 W. 20th St., NY, NY 10011 (212) 727-2700 www.nrdc.org

American Friends Service Committee, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102-1479 (215) 241-7000 www.afsc.org

The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Chapter, 200 Pottersville Rd., Chester, NJ 07930 (908) 879-7262 www.nature.org

Friends of Taylor Wildlife Preserve, Sandy Rea, Treasurer, 2 Taylor Lane Farm, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

George Karawacki's report on Beavers:

Beavers have been living at the Preserve for several years. As interesting as these mammals are to observe, their natural instinct to build can be very destructive to the surrounding area. Beavers engineer a dam to raise the water level to protect their lodge and provide them with an

underwater entrance to their home. To accomplish this feat, beavers use their chisel-like teeth to gnaw and fell trees from nearby marsh banks. They drag, stack, and weave this natural material then pack it with mud until it is large enough and strong enough to change the course of flowing water. When the marsh is dammed, the horse pasture becomes flooded. A daily farm job for members of the Taylor family is removal of beaver dams. They contacted the N.J. Fish, Game, and Wildlife who contacted me, a licensed trapper, to help rid the Preserve of these destructive rodents. Trapping season is only the month of January and first week of February. This made trapping difficult because of the extreme cold that caused thicker ice. I made daily inspections and netted two adult beavers and one juvenile.

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Taylor's Lane 'Toon
By Joel Zickler



Joel Zickler lives in Philadelphia with his wife Colleen and one-year old son Eli. He has known and enjoyed Taylor's Lane for most of his life. Joel is an artist who has spent many an hour depicting the landscape and wildlife of Taylor's Lane. Joel is looking forward to painting FTWP member Chuck Mattern's portrait in the near future.

Eagle Scout project of Nathan Rausch:

Eagle Scout project of Nathan Rausch might be noticed by users of the Preserve this summer as he works to make the trails less accessible for motor vehicles; they deteriorate the trails rapidly as well as making conditions unpleasant for wildlife and pedestrians. About once a generation the drainage from the farm and wetlands has to be maintained, and Hal Taylor began a decade ago to address the problem. A large pipe with a flap gate allows water to drain into the Delaware at low tide and then closes to prevent high tide from entering the wetlands behind the dike at Wright's Point. The pipe had rusted and this winter was completely replaced.

Friends of the Taylor Wildlife Preserve Officers:

The following officers agreed to serve for the year 2004:

Co-Chairs: Sal Scafidi and Kitty Mizuno

Vice-Chair: Suzanne Day

Treasurer: Sandy Rea

Secretary: Patti Farley

The following people agreed to serve on the Board:

Bruce Birchard (2005)

Suzanne Day (2005)

Patti Farley (2005)

Stephanie Judson (2006)

Chuck Mattern (2006)

Kitty Taylor Mizuno (2005)

Sandy Rea (2005)

Sal Scafidi (2006)

Larry Tatum (2006)

Mike Zickler (2006)

Annual Cleanup Well Attended:

The 2004 Annual Cleanup Day on March 21 was a great success. Thanks to all those who participated: Mike Zickler, the Barth family (5), W. Edward Abel, Jr., Bruce Birchard, Demie Kurz, Ethan Birchard, Ethan's Friend, A. Leo Villa and two grandchildren, Linda Hayes, Rusty Conroy, John-John Paul Massaro, Tom, Carolyn, Carissa and Joe Bujak, Jimmy Griffin, Pam Moench, Sal and Skylar Scafidi, Suzanne Day, Takashi and Kitty Mizuno, Patti Farley,

Larry, Elizabeth, Emily and Kathryn Tatum, Karen Nulton, Michael Scheinberg, Sandy Rea, Elizabeth Judson-Rea, Robin and Jennifer Flowerdew,(from Fife Scotland!), Susan Buffalino, John Lestino, and Chuck Mattern. (We hope we have not omitted anyone who helped.)

Several of the volunteers who came found out about the event from the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust of the volunteer opportunity. Thank you to those volunteers for their assistance! Thanks, also, to the group who repaired the post-and-rail fences bordering the property. Those fences, intended to deter ATVs and other unauthorized vehicles, are often vandalized so the fences can be circumvented.

Kitty provided hot cider (much appreciated on that chilly day!) and snacks.



Cleanup on March 21

Organic Pick-Your-Own at the Farm:

Organic Pick-Your-Own fruit and vegetables will be available from Taylor's again beginning with edible pod peas around June 1. Raspberries and pie cherries are also early. Then by mid July there should be blackberries along with tomatoes, peppers, green beans. Also in mid summer eggplant, grapes, pears, corn, apples and flowers to cut. Pumpkins ripen in September and might last until Halloween. Park opposite stand, sound your horn, and you'll be directed toward the crop you want, then return to the stand to check out. Closed Sundays.

FTWP 2004 Annual Meeting:

The annual meeting was held February 29. Bruce Birchard, Chair of Friends of Taylor Wildlife Preserve (FTWP) opened the meeting.

Present: Bruce Birchard, Stephanie Judson, Charles Mattern, Michael Robinson, Mike Zickler, Kitty Taylor Mizuno, Sandy Rea, Sal Scafidi, Suzanne Day Taylor, Patti Farley, Larry, Elizabeth and Emily Tatum

- *Treasurer's report*

Sandy Rea reported as treasurer that FTWP has been recognized as being exempt from Federal taxes under section 501 (c) 3. He also reported that during the past year, with help from financial consultant Michael Collucci, 990 EZ forms have been filed for the past two years.

- *Sluice Gate repair*

The bulk of the bill for the sluice gate repair has been paid, and the remainder will be paid upon successful completion of the project.

- *Memorial Stone for Hal Taylor*

A memorial stone for Hal has been ordered that will show the 63-degree variation between summer and winter solstices in the place on the horizon where the sun sets. It will read, "Hal Taylor (1939 – 2001)" will ask you to locate where the sun meets the horizon today. The dedication ceremony is Sunday, June 20.

- *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust.*

Bruce reported that he sent a draft of the memo to Martin Rapp for comment. The Executive Committee will consider any changes to this suggested by NJNLT.

- *Other plans and projects*

Frank Windfelder came in April 2003 to lead a bird walk on the Wildlife Preserve. A New Jersey Audubon bird walk happened later in the year

- *Other Land Preservation Issues*

a. The land next to the bus stop (in Delran Township), consisting of three acres of wetlands and three acres of non-wetland, has been pulled off the market.

b. Plans are underway for the building of 900 housing units on the Crestmont Land south of Kern and Zeisner Streets where the Halloween Hayrides have been held in recent years. Concern was expressed about the 19 acres of tideland and bluff between the Taylor Wildlife Preserve and this newly planned housing. We will contact the NJ Bureau of Tidelands and the State Office of Land Preservation to work to see that this land is preserved in its natural state forever.

- *Officers*

The bylaws were amended to reduce the number of members of the Executive Committee from 12 to 10. Our deep thanks to outgoing Chair, Bruce Birchard, and Co-Secretary, Demie Kurz for their valuable service.

The next Board meeting is Sunday, June 20th, at 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. before the picnic.

Bird Walk

On May 1st fourteen people came to the Wildlife Preserve to participate in our second annual bird walk, led again this year by Frank Windfelder. Frank says he has been going out birding on an average of 4-5 days a week for 30 years. He first came to the Taylor Wildlife Preserve in 1983 because he had heard that a Lark Sparrow had been sighted wintering here. He said that in those days they learned such things by calling a phone number with a recorded message. Now such communications are done by e-mail.

We saw, heard and identified several dozen varieties of birds, many of which are listed below, with some of Frank's comments about them. "Cloudy days cut down on song", he told us, but we heard many bird calls, and thanks to Frank learned to recognize several of them. He said that although there are some species, such as Pheasants, that we no longer see here (because there are too many foxes, he said) and some such as Bob-Whites that have radically decreased in number, there are others, such as Warbling Vireos and Orchard Orioles, whose numbers are on the increase.

Frank gave us a number of projects that the Friends of Taylor Wildlife Preserve might be thinking about, ranging from building more small bluebird-like bird houses for Tree Swallows and larger ones for Wood Ducks, to finding out why all the bulldozing is being done behind the factories on the Whitesell land on River Road, in an area that he said used to be an excellent area to see migrant birds. One priority that we are **not** too late to work on is preserving the State land contiguous to the Wildlife Preserve to the Southwest. Although it is owned by the State, it is not designated as a wildlife preserve area. We hope to work with the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust to keep this land in its natural state.

When we asked Frank when would be the best time to have a bird walk next year, he said that there really is no best time, because different birds migrate through at different times. The greatest number of migrants can probably be observed around the 6th of 7th of May, he said, but some have already come through before that time, and others don't arrive until later. Last year we walked in early April and saw the Great Blue Herons in their nesting plumage with their more than 30 nests on the island at the entrance of Dredge Harbor. We all agreed that whatever date we decide on we'd definitely like to do it again next year.

This year's participants were: Gene Chambers, Carol LaFon, Patti Farley, Ruth Fink, Suzanne Day, Chuck Mattern, Sam and Kathy Carswell, Mimi Mattern Scalia, Joe Schmeltz, Bennett Landsman, Takashi and Kitty Mizuno

Birds spotted during the walk (with Franks' comments)

1. Baltimore Oriole ("beautiful bird, beautiful song")
2. Orchard Oriole (The Orchard Oriole is seen south of this area, and the slightly larger Baltimore Oriole further north, but they overlap here, so that both are seen.)
3. Solitary Sandpiper (Seen in the big wet area in the pasture.)

4. Redwing Blackbird
5. Tree Swallow (Here year-round)
6. Laughing Gull
7. Great Blue Heron
8. Yellow Shafted Flicker
9. Warbling Vireo ("the quintessential little brown bird")
10. Green Heron (Nests here. Seen at Orchard Way.)
11. Wood Duck (Seen at Orchard Way)
12. Cowbird (A parasite. It finds other birds' nests, pushes out the eggs and lays its own. "I've seen Song Sparrows raising baby Cowbirds that grow to three times their size.")
13. Song Sparrow (Here year-round)
14. Canada Geese
15. Yellow Warbler (They just came back in the past week – always around April 25. They sing "Sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm so sweet!" They sing a lot when they first arrive, because they have a lot of things they have to do, such as finding mates, building nests, and protecting their territory.)
16. American Redstart (Their song sounds like a short, harsh Yellow Warbler call.)
17. Northern Parula Warbler (They don't nest on this wildlife preserve, but they do nest in humid woods in the area, such as Pennypack Park. They like Spanish Moss.)
18. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
19. Yellow-Rumped (Myrtle) Warbler (This migrant, that does not nest here, can be found in flocks of as many as 100.)
20. Gray Catbird ("dirt common")
21. Mallard Ducks
22. Herring Gulls
23. House Wren (They come back around April 20)
24. Belted Kingfisher (Male has one band, female has two. Eighty per cent of birds are dimorphic by sex [males and females look different])
25. Great Crested Flycatcher (nests here)
26. Downy Woodpecker
27. Eastern Towhee (Calls "Drink your tea! Drink your tea!")
28. Common Yellowthroat
29. American Goldfinch

- 30. Carolina Chickadee
- 31. Great Crested Flycatcher (Nests here)
- 32. Chipping Sparrow
- 33. House Finch
- 34. Flicker
- 35. Swamp Sparrow (Nests here)

Last, but not least, Frank identified a Silver Spotted Skipper butterfly for us. He showed us where he had seen Falcate Orange-tip butterflies before, but we didn't see any this time. "Butterflies fly more when it's sunny", he told us, "but when it's windy it's even worse."

TO: Friends of the Taylor Wildlife Preserve
3 Taylor's Lane
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077-1609

Here's \$10 _____ annual dues to help FTWP.

Here's \$_____ additional contribution. (FTWP is a tax exempt organization under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions may be deducted as provided by law.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

___ I would like to receive FTWP newsletters by email. My address is:

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Kitty Mizuno and Sal Scafidi.....co-Chairmen
Suzanne Day Vice Chairman
Sandy Rea Treasurer
Patti Farley Secretary

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