

Aug
2026

THE POTOMAC APPALACHIAN



- President's Logbook**
- CentennialFest Registration is Open!
- 2026 Volunteer Award Nominations Are Now Open**
- June Hoodlums-Will the Weed Growing Season Ever Stop?
- If a Tree Falls in the Woods, Does it Disturb John's Rest?**
- New PATC Hike Leaders
- Keep Calm and Read On: AT Chills and Thrills**
- What's that Flower?
- Staying Safe on the Trail: Wilderness Safety Webinar Series**
- Back to School Reading (PATC Edition)
- Trail Maintenance Workshop**

President's Logbook

By Jim Fetig

As summer sizzles toward a cooler and colorful autumn, it's when the club begins preparing for the year ahead. In this case, that translates to building the 2027 budget, officer elections, and



Volunteer training at the Hoodlum's fall workshop

our centennial celebrations. These are the obvious things. However, much more happens behind the scenes.

Recently, **Jayne Mayne**, VP for Volunteerism, and I met with the president of the Beijing, China hiking association at PATC headquarters in Vienna. He was interested in the club and its mission. Like most folks from other countries, he was fascinated by the concept of volunteering.

Over the years, especially in my previous service with AmeriCorps, the quasi-governmental agency responsible for promoting volunteerism in our country, I've met with many international delegations wanting to learn more about volunteering.

Volunteering is almost uniquely an American concept. It arose out of the colonial period when people volunteered to help their neighbors build barns and clear fields. Volunteers supported the American Revolution and Ben Franklin started the first volunteer fire department in Philadelphia. Later, faith-based charitable causes and philanthropy entered the picture.

The most common question that comes up is why volunteers work for free. Conceptually, people are supposed to be paid for work. When you tell them that our volunteers consider

their activities to be recreation, not work, the dissonance is obvious. It doesn't make sense if it's outside of your culture.

Of course, the reason people volunteer is more complex than that. The concepts of public service, giving back, being meaningful, and making a demonstrable difference add to the tapestry of meaning. For retirees, especially, remaining a relevant member of society is important.

In addition to the aforementioned concepts, being trusted stewards of public land, having unique responsibility, the ability to take initiatives, building a repertoire of useful skills, and the pride that is derived from those efforts adds to a deep sense of satisfaction for our volunteers.

I should also mention that volunteering affords the opportunity to collect really cool tools and toys. It's a gear junkie's paradise.

In my case, I've been tending the same AT section in Shenandoah National Park since 2015. Some days I'm king. On other days I'm more like a plastic surgeon. Awarding tenure to a well-functioning stone waterbar is like exercising kingly power while nipping and tucking other structures and blowdowns has an aesthetic all of its own. In particular, clearing thorny vegetation is akin to repelling an invading army. At the end of the day, it's about taking pride in a job done well.

Meanwhile, make sure to secure your [Registration](#) for our upcoming CentennialFest. The fest will be the first weekend in October. Also, a warm welcome to **Bob Malkowski** as our new Supervisor of Outreach. Bob continues to serve as co-chair of the hikes committee.

If you're interested in training, please sign up for the Hoodlum's annual September workshop.

CentennialFest Registration is Open!

By Co-chairs Iva Gillet & Jayne Mayne



[Register Today](#)

Check your email from us! We kick off PATC's 2027 [Centennial](#) during [CentennialFest](#) at [Caroline Furnace](#) nestled in beautiful Fort Valley, Va., surrounded by the rugged but inviting Massanutten Mountains, **Oct. 2-4.**

Join our third annual "Fest" as we celebrate 100 Years of Volunteers. Come for as much of the Fest as you want, or as little. Friday



by Iva Gillet: Water mitigation demo with Mark Perschel

afternoon, we'll offer hikes and training classes, followed by "bring your own" dinner, PATC/AT Trivia with prizes, a bonfire, and singing—so bring your musical instruments. Saturday, we offer hikes, workshops, and interactive historical and hands-on learning activities from 7am until 4pm. At 4:30pm **Mills Kelly**, PATC's archivist, will speak during Happy Hour followed by our Volunteer Award Ceremony, a BBQ, and of course, a bonfire and sing along. Sunday after you pack up and clean up, consider another nearby hike before

heading home.

PATC member **Earlybird Registration is \$25** and open Aug. 1 until Aug. 13. **Regular Registration is \$35. Registration closes Sept. 18.** There is *no onsite registration and no refunds will be issued.* The registration fee gives you access to all events, our Saturday BBQ dinner, and onsite lodging options (cabin bed, your tent or camper) Friday and Saturday, plus helps offset facility and infrastructure rental and fees.

Come share a fun-filled weekend with others who have the same interests. Our leaders are offering a great variety of learning demonstrations and opportunities for camaraderie with other members. Reach out to VPVolunteerism@patc.net with questions.



PATC Trivia Contest photo by Anne Brown

2026 Volunteer Award Nominations Are Now Open

By Jayne Mayne

This is your opportunity to let our top volunteers know that they are appreciated. **We are accepting online award nominations until Sept. 7.**

Our in-person Volunteer Award Ceremony will be at [CentennialFest](#) Oct. 2-4. Award recipients in attendance will be honored.



Figure 1 by Anne Brown: Pictured left to right: Rob Lamar (1 of 5 nominations), John Hedrick, Myron Avery recipient, and Jim Fetig, President

- There are six top awards and no limit to the number of nominations you may submit. If your recipient receives an award and is absent, we'll ask if you'd like to present the award.

Struggling with your narrative? Check out last year's recipient write ups. Click on the [award](#) you want to submit. Then click on [nominated](#) (sample 2025 Myron Avery recipient nomination). Recipients receive a copy of their nomination and it is displayed on our website.

- Club Leaders may nominate one top volunteer for the Hawksbill Award and unlimited nominations for the Service Award. Narratives are not required for Club Leaders to nominate these awards.

[Click here](#) to learn more about our volunteer awards and the links to submit online nominations. Email VPVolunteerism@patc.net with questions.

June Hoodlums – Will The Weed Growing Season Ever Stop?

Tom Moran



by Tom Moran: Cynthia Connolly wields clippers with dexterity

June continued a run of excellent weather for Hoodlums Saturday, drawing a mix of veterans and first-timers, 22 in all. Head Hoodlum **Tom Troutman** reminded the volunteers that it is high season for many of the park's diverse fauna that pose risk to those venturing into the backcountry, but none were deterred and the mood was spirited. But as the crews would find out, it was the flora—vegetation exploding growth and clogging trails—that would pose the greatest challenge to keeping trails open and passable for hikers. The safety briefing concluded, crews formed and set off to accomplish their tasks for the day.

Marie Seymour led a mostly veteran crew to the Pass Mountain Hut, where they worked downhill clearing vegetation and one 10" blowdown for a little variety. The Pass Mountain Trail they worked presents challenges—it is convenient to Rt. 211 in two places so attracts a lot of hikers but has many places open to full sun which fuels

vine growth. The vines then pull trees down, and all of this must be dealt with in order to keep the trail passable. At least one, if not several return trips will be needed to complete the effort. **Michael Gergely, Venus Foshay, and Meghan O'Leary** rounded out the crew.

One of SNP's North District AT section maintainers has been on a long-term work assignment for many months, so **Dan Hippe** led a crew to the section, south of Elkwallow Wayside, to get caught up on routine maintenance. In summer this primarily means cutting excessive vegetation back from the trail, removing invasive plants and in some cases



by Wayne Limberg: Roger Friend (L) swamps as Tom Moran takes his turn on a 20" blowdown



by Cindy Ardecki: Not an alien, it's Wayne Limberg

refurbishing water control structures. They took frequent pauses to allow a stream of AT thru-hikers to pass by. Dan's crew included **Richard Lee, Connor Moynihan, Rosemary Seymour, and Mike Kennedy.**

Upper Piney Ridge trail is another trail segment that has been under-maintained, in this case a new maintainer had just been assigned to fill a vacancy, but it was a priority to have a crew help to get the situation to a point where the maintainer could keep up. This trail gets a lot of vegetation, including stout vines, briars, and poison ivy. The large crew of eight were divided into two sub-groups of four, one led by **Mark Wrobel**, the other by **Tom Moran**. The crews separated and worked their way downhill, using an assortment of tools to cut back the vegetation and clearing four blowdowns as they

proceeded. By the time it was necessary to turn around, they had fully cleared 80% of the 2-mile section. **Brian Blackman, Kevin McArdle, Lauren Deaver, Brendan Meyer, Cynthia Connolly, and Greg Foster** rounded out the crews.

Chain sawyer **Jim Fetig** formed a quick hit team including **Justin Corddry** and **Sam Klein**, with a mission to clear a number of reported blowdowns. Plotting their stops carefully, they drove to key AT access points and hiked to blowdowns referenced by GPS coordinates. Rinse, repeat. Twelve blowdowns later it was time for the Hoodlums potluck.

Wayne Limberg, Tom Troutman, and Cindy Ardecki stayed behind after the teams dispersed, tackling a cleanup and re-organization of the "large" shed where the PATC North District keeps gear supporting its volunteer mission. Nothing like having the inside track to first dibs at the potluck gathering!

Additional projects:

Several crew members stayed on after the regular Hoodlums outing with intent to work on key projects. **Noel Freeman, Cindy Ardecki, Greg Foster, and Wayne Limberg** took down an



by Richard Lee: The Elkwallow AT crew, from left - Connor Moynihan, Mike Kennedy, Rosemary Seymour, and Dan Hippe

old privy at Indian Run maintenance hut as the first step in replacing it with a new varmint proofed version. Tom Moran, Justin Corddry, and Mark Wrobel joined up with Shenandoah Ranger Forrest Agee to build a stream crossing on Little Devils Stairs trail. Forrest brought know-how and the park's grip hoist, a cable system with which they maneuvered four large rocks into position to provide steps across the popular trail. Then, heavy rain moved in for much of the rest of the week which sent the volunteers packing.

If a Tree Falls in the Woods, Does it Disturb John's Rest?

Lee Howard and Stephanie Richard

Blowdowns are a common occurrence in the PATC trails world, but when they fall on a PATC cabin, repairs require some creative thinking. In January 2025, an ice storm took out a tree near John's Rest Cabin, partially damaging the porch roof. **Lee Howard**, the newly appointed Cabins Operations Committee Chair, and **Stephanie Richard**, the new Piedmont District Cabins Supervisor, became aware of the situation after reading a newsletter article and renting the cabin later that year (see [Tree Work at John's Rest Cabin](#)), and discussed the situation with cabin co-maintainers **Nick Green** and **Rheannon Burns** at the annual Cabin Maintainers' Meeting. After a lively brainstorming session, the group quickly agreed upon a plan of action to fix the roof and decided that the repair should match the structural and aesthetic integrity of the existing building.



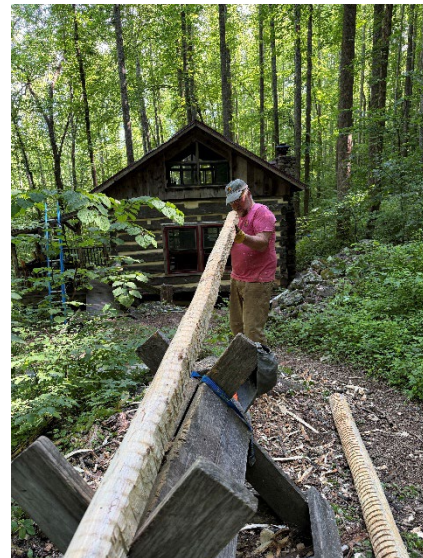
by Stephanie Richard: Nick (left) and Noah (right) Green discuss life's big questions (and roof repair)

John's Rest is a reconstructed log cabin on the PerLee/West Tract in Greene County, Va. The cabin was completed and dedicated to the late John Fishbach in 2001, who was an avid hiker and club member from 1976 until his passing in 1992. With financial assistance from the Fishbach family, John's Rest was built by luminary Robert Humphrey and his crew from logs salvaged from two structures in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. A trail along Entry Run connects the 196 acres of PATC-owned land to the Shenandoah National Park, and John's Rest and Rosser Lamb cabins to hiking trails and the history of Pocosin Mountain.



by Lee Howard: Noah Green and Kent Query refine rafter for a perfect fit

The first step was to identify a source for the pine log rafters. They say timing is everything, and fortunately, Argow Cabin Co-Maintainer **Bill Bunting** had recently mentioned that Po' Critter Lumber Company in Barboursville, W. Va. wanted to donate some wood to the club. Lee contacted Po' Critter Proprietor Larry Sappington to explain what was needed and make arrangements, and on Juneteenth, Lee, Stephanie, and Merritt's Mutton Top Cabin Co-Maintainer **Rob Gilchrist** met Larry at his farm to pick up the materials. The lumber yard was a pastoral fever dream—fields carpeted with milkweed and wildflowers, monarchs and swallowtails on the wing, and a soundtrack of birdsong; even the forks of the tractor used to move the logs and lumber had a nest of baby birds in it! The interior of the barn was full of a variety of local woods from Ash to White Oak—all dried onsite in Larry's kiln—which may be a source for future projects. The team of volunteers thanked Larry for his generosity, loaded up, and left with a trailer full of Maple planks, three 12-foot Shortleaf Pine logs, and various other boards.



by Stephanie Richard: Lee Howard performs quality control on the pine log

The second step of the journey was sustenance. Larry recommended a local soul food restaurant called Coopers Cookin and Catering in Orange, Va., which did not disappoint. Coopers is a living legacy that goes back 200 years in this area. The team didn't waste the opportunity, and enjoyed a bounty of fried catfish, fried chicken, fried okra, cole slaw, cornbread, and sweet tea.



by Nick Green: Lee Howard and Noah Green begin demolition

The third step was to visit Craig Jacobs at Salvagewrights Ltd., an architectural salvage and building company down the road from Coopers. The team suspected he might have some standing seam roofing material that could be used in the John's Rest repair. Craig is a true craftsman, and has been building log cabins and timber-frame structures for many years. He knows Larry, and the team mentioned picking up a few planks of American Chestnut while at Po'

Critter. Very intrigued, Craig asked to see one and offered to run it through his 24 inch planer. The grain of the chestnut plank was revealed after a couple of passes removed "the consequences of time" from the surface. It was quite an exciting reveal, given the rarity of this species of wood.

Next stop was John's Rest for the main event. A team of six PATC volunteers worked all day Saturday. John's Rest Co-Maintainer Nick Green and his brother, SNP Cabins District Supervisor Noah Green, led the demolition of the broken rafters, while Rob Gilchrist and Trout Run School Maintainer **Kent Query** debarked the logs with drawknives, and Stephanie used a hatchet to hew the logs. While inspecting a rotten sill log, Lee discovered some extra roofing material that was stored under the cabin, which allowed the project to be done without an additional trip to Salvagewright. A quizzical black rat snake joined the party, although it became apparent she was more interested in rodent control than construction. Our ophidian friend wasn't the only exterminator on the scene, as a very unnerved wood thrush alerted the team to the presence of a barred owl perched above a little bridge below the cabin when we sat down for dinner.

While the owl and snake were pleasant surprises, a couple of other incidents were received with mixed emotions. On Saturday afternoon a large tree came crashing down somewhere above the cabin. While no one saw it fall, and that tree didn't present any danger to the cabin, it was a reminder of why we had come to the cabin that weekend. Early Sunday

morning Kent was standing on the aforementioned bridge and was astonished to witness two American black bears pop out of the ferns, glance at him, and saunter up the path. These two events had the team pondering old aphorisms such as, “If a tree falls . . .” and “The early bird gets . . .”.

After the excitement of the bears sighting, work resumed with cutting deck boards and slight adjustments to the rafters so that everything fit together nicely, as well as, reinstalling the standing seam roof. Lambert Cabin Co-Maintainer **Forrest Yeager** arrived at the perfect moment, as a number of the team members had to pack up for the day. After spending his weekend backpacking in Saint Mary’s Wilderness, he decided to drop by and see how things were progressing. He helped take the project across the finish line by helping Noah tie the roof panels together—seamlessly.



by Lee Howard: Finished product at the end of the weekend

After a very productive weekend, the John’s Rest porch roof has been repaired and this popular cabin is better than ever. John’s Rest is located near Stanardsville, Va., sleeps six, and is situated next to a small river (Entry Run), which is ideal for a primitive cabin getaway. To learn more about this cabin, and how to

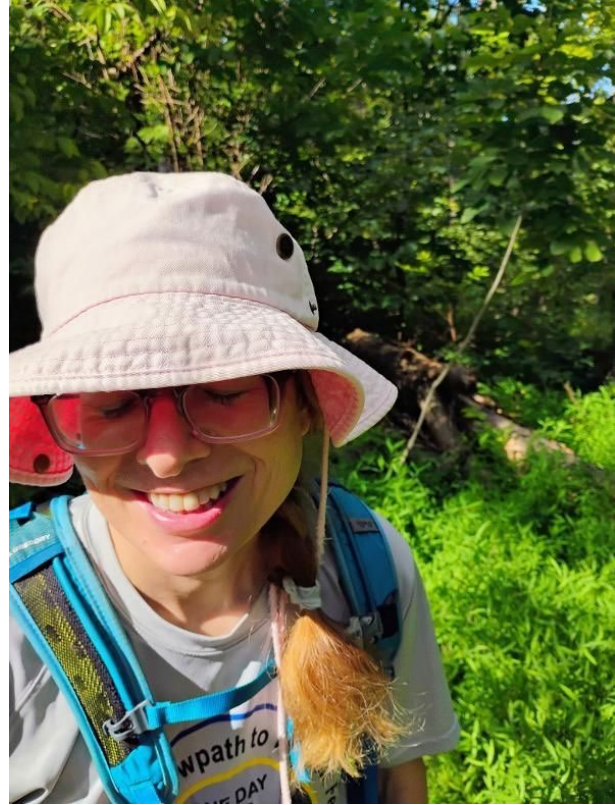
rent it, [check out this page](#).

New Hike Leaders

By Tim Muzzio

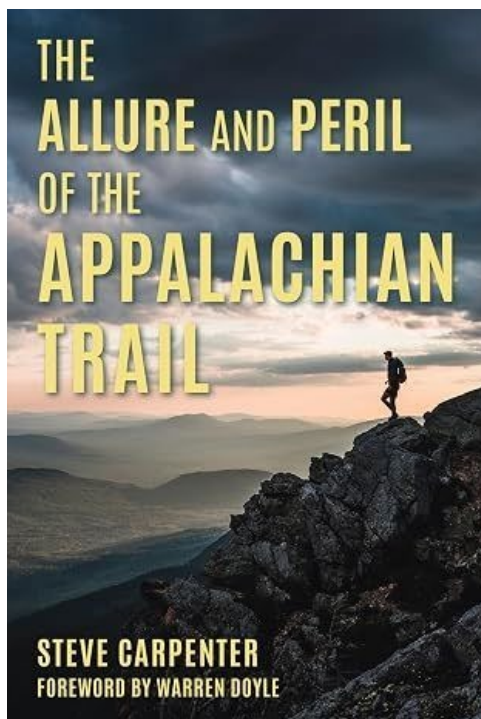
PATC is pleased to add a new hike leader to its team—**Bernadette Wright**. Below, you will find a statement from her. We invite everyone to join us in giving her a warm welcome.

Bernadette Wright enjoys day hikes exploring parks around the DC area and in Shenandoah mountains. Her favorite hikes are long endurance events, but she also enjoys leisurely hikes and is always on the lookout for birds and wildlife. She's excited to get more involved in PATC as a hike leader. In her free time, she's been learning coding to create online games.



Keep Calm and Read On: AT Chills and Thrills

By Wayne Limberg



Every AT section and thru-hiker has stories to tell, some good, some not. Too often they are rehashes of journals. Many are self-published, which in and of itself is no sign of their quality. As was the custom in mid-19th century America, Thoreau self-published "Walden." The trick is to find a novel way to tell your story that will tempt readers and publishers. In "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail," section hiker Steve Carpenter has for the most part accomplished both.

Carpenter lives in Harrisonburg, Va., and over the last 15 years has hiked most of the northern half of the AT, including Virginia and Maryland, with his friend Vince Ackerman. "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" is his second book. His publisher, Falcon

Guides, is best known for slim guides on national parks and outdoor skills. "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" is part of its line of broader themed books.

In the introduction to "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" Carpenter states that he wanted the book to explain the AT's appeal and to be something of a cautionary tale for anyone considering hiking it. To avoid writing "just another AT book," he reviewed much of the existing literature to find a new slant, which accounts for the book's emphasis on the dangers of the trail.

"The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" opens with a short overview and history of the AT that will be familiar to many readers. Carpenter wisely relies on D'Aneri's "Biography of the AT" for much of this. Throughout the book, he carefully footnotes and lists his sources which, along with a short bibliography, provides a useful reading list of those in search of more information. Unfortunately, he completed "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" before the publication of **Mills Kelly's** "A Hikers History of the Appalachian Trail."

After the customary history lesson, Carpenter turns to a six-chapter discussion of the AT's draw and rewards. Topics include wildlife, points of interest, encounters and adventures, shelters and hostels, and trail culture. Once again, much of this is familiar ground to those who know the trail but useful to those new to the trail. The chapter on points of interest reads like many AT travelogues, while the one on encounters strings together excerpts from Carpenter's trail journals. The one on animals provides some useful dos and don'ts about bears and moose and the one on shelters is a good introduction to shelter etiquette. The chapter on trail culture explains, among other things, trail names and trail magic. A glossary at the end of the book does the same for common hiker slang and terms.

And then there is the chapter titled "Sex and Other Trail Anomalies" where Carpenter tells of coming across some fellow hikers in the throes of passion. He also explains hike-naked day and then turns to ponies in Virginia's Grayson Highlands and the latest in AT record setting. Carpenter has a MA in religion from Eastern Mennonite University, but he only notes what might be called the AT's spiritual attraction in passing, a topic handled in some detail in other recent works like Mills Kelly's and Tim Kaine's "Hike, Ride, Paddle."

"Allure and Peril of the AT" comes into its own when Carpenter turns to the perils of the AT. In the first of the three chapters comprising the second half of the book, Carpenter looks at the specific physical and mental challenges facing thru-hikers from Earl Shaffer and Grandma Gatewood to present times. A second chapter deals with disasters, including plane crashes, drownings, fire, lightning, and illnesses. The third examines murders and accidents on the AT.

In general, these chapters deliver on Carpenter's promise to present the darker side of the AT. At times, however, they border on titillation or sensationalism. Nor do they always accurately reflect the perils of the AT itself. Carpenter includes the 1996 murder of the two women in SNP, for example, when they were neither hiking nor camping on the trail but an abandoned side trail and camping spot. In fact, they would have been safer on the trail. Similarly, none of the plane crashes he catalogs hit the trail or hikers. The long passage on Grandma Gatewood's time on the trail seems more a tale of the trail's allure than its dangers as she was seeking refuge from an abusive marriage. Carpenter also couldn't resist the temptation to use long journal passages to describe medical problems he had on the AT but gave scant attention to more common health threats like Lyme and other tick-borne diseases or Noro virus.

Bottomline: "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" is an entertaining, cleverly packaged introduction to the AT for those who are considering hiking it or just wonder what it's all about. And stay tuned. Carpenter still has miles to go before he has completed the journey.

Do you have a read to share? If so, send it along to wplimberg@aol.com. On that note, thanks to those who recommended adding Stephen A. Lawrence's "Skruggs: The Squirrel Who Helped Save America" to last month's list of kid books. Skruggs befriends Ben Franklin and rescues the Declaration of Independence in the tradition of Robert Lawson's classic "Ben and Me." A pdf version of "Skruggs" is available on the America's National Parks website. Keep reading. See you on the trail.

What's that Flower? Tuscarora Trail, Dry Gap to Power Lines—Autumn

By Richard Stromberg

This article shows you some of the flowers to look for in Autumn on the Tuscarora Trail north of Dry Gap. The trail is described in Section 16 of the PATC publication "[The Tuscarora Trail: A Guide to the South Half](#)." This is a popular trail section because of the spectacular view from Eagle Rock, one mile north of the Dry Gap parking.

All species below are native unless otherwise noted.

Autumn is dominated by the Aster/Daisy family (Asteraceae), particularly Asters and Goldenrods.

The only Aster I have seen on this stretch of trail is **White Wood Aster** (*Eurybia divaricatus*). It is topped by a flattish cluster of daisy-like flowers, with strap-like, white rays surrounding a center disk of small, yellow flowers. The lower leaves are elongated heart shaped with coarse teeth. Up the stem, the leaves are smaller and the heart-shaped indentation at the petiole may not be there.



White Wood Aster

Goldenrods (*Solidago*) are known for their sprays of many small flowers. **Erect Goldenrod** (*Solidago erecta*) has straight clusters of flowers at the top of the plant with flowers all around the stem.

Its leaves are sessile (attach directly to the stem



Spotted Knapweed

without a

supporting stalk). **Wreath Goldenrod** (*S. caesia*) has long, narrow leaves that separate the flower clusters growing from the axils. Instead of standing upright, it often leans over forming an arch.

Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*) flowers look like daisies, but the rays are very thin, and there may be up to 400 of them. The central disk is yellow, and the rays are white or tinged pink. Its stem leaves are sparse and have smooth edges.

Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*) has shaggy disk flower heads that look similar to Thistles but the florets are flatter and spread more than Thistles. They do not have spines and are much shorter than thistles. Its leaves are divided into narrow, irregular segments. It is an invasive alien.

White Snakeroot (*Ageratina altissima*) can grow to five feet tall. It has branching clusters of up to 30 small flowers at the top. Individual quarter-inch flowers have five, pointed petals and protruding white stamens. Leaves are long-pointed, egg-shaped with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch stems.



Three-leaved Rattlesnake Root flowers

Three-leaved Rattlesnake Root (*Nabalus trifoliolatus*) is also known as Gall-of-the-earth. Clusters of flowers hang down like bells: tubes with petals flaring at the end and stamens protruding. Lower leaves are large and deeply divided into three lobes. Upper leaves are smaller and less cut.

The last flower

to bloom in our area is **Witch Hazel** (*Hamamelis virginiana*). It is not in the Aster family. Witch Hazel often grows as a thick, shrubby clump, though sometimes as a small tree. Witch Hazel's oval leaves have wavy, rounded teeth. The flowers appear as the leaves turn yellow and fall, so the flowers stand out on leafless branches.



Witch Hazel flowers

The flowers have four long, thin, yellow petals and often grow in bunches, so you see yellow streamers in the wind. The fruit is a fuzzy, one-centimeter capsule with remnants of the four sepals remaining. It takes over a year to mature, so it remains on the bush with the new flowers.

Two species offer decorative leaves close to the ground:

Striped Wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*) leaves are long and toothed with pale yellow along the veins. Fruit grows on top of straight stems above the leaves. They start out green and turn brown.

Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*) is most noticeable for its evergreen, dark green leaves with a network of white veins at the base of the plant. It is an orchid. Fruits are little brown balls on stems above the leaves.



Striped Wintergreen flower buds

Staying Safe on the Trail: Wilderness Safety Webinar Series

By PATC Hikes Committee. Photo by Griffin Dill



On July 15, the PATC Hikes Committee sponsored the first in a series of online seminars to educate our members how to protect themselves in the woods. Over 200 members registered online for the first presentation: Ticks and Insect Bites. The Hikes Committee co-sponsored the event with the Center for Wilderness Safety (CWS). CWS is a nationally-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization celebrating over two decades of wilderness medicine education & training.

Since the beginning, CWS has set out to be the leader in wilderness medicine training, always incorporating the latest science into our curricula and wilderness medical field protocols. It is located in Sterling, Va.

Master Wilderness Safety Skills

Clif Castleman, Director and Co-Founder of CWS, delivered the presentation. He shared highly practical strategies to reduce exposure to trail hazards and handle emergency bites.

The session arrived at a critical time due to nationwide surges in tick populations.

Key takeaways for your next hike include:

- **Cover Up:** Wear long, light-colored clothing to spot crawling pests easily.
- **Use Repellent:** Apply effective repellents to skin and treat gear with permethrin.
- **Remove Safely:** Use fine-tipped tweezers to pull ticks straight out without twisting.

Missed the Session? Watch Online Soon

Do not worry if you missed the live event. PATC is currently processing the webinar video. It will be posted on the official PATC website shortly. Keep an eye on our digital channels for the launch announcement.

Looking Ahead: Future Training Sessions

By the time you read this newsletter, the Hikes Committee and CWS will have wrapped up their second webinar. This latest session covered heat-related injuries, lightning protocols, snake bites, and professional blister care.

The Hikes Committee is planning several more educational sessions to support our hike leaders and general members. Future topics under consideration include:

- Allergies and anaphylaxis management
- Orthopedic injuries and joint dislocations
- Cold-related injuries and hypothermia
- Backcountry soft tissue wound care
- Digital navigation tools like AllTrails and Gaia GPS

We want to make sure these sessions meet your needs on the trail. If you want to help shape our future educational lineup, please send us comments on topics you would like to see covered and other ways we can help keep you safe on the trails. Send comments to Hikes@patc.net.

Happy Trails!

Back to School Reading (PATC Edition)

By Jess LaPolla

Your next adventure starts with a good book.

The PATC Store is filled with guidebooks, trail references, and fascinating reads that can turn every hike into a learning experience.



Trail Guides: Your Outdoor Textbooks

Every successful hike starts with a little homework.

PATC's trail guides are written by hikers, for hikers, and are packed with detailed maps, mileage, elevation profiles, trail descriptions, and local knowledge you won't find in a generic map app.

Whether you're exploring Shenandoah National Park, your local state parks, or the Appalachian Trail, these guides help you hike smarter and discover hidden gems along the way.

Perfect picks include:

- [Appalachian Trail Guide to Maryland and Northern Virginia with Side Trails \(19th Edition\)](#)
- [Appalachian Trail Guide to Shenandoah National Park with Side Trails](#)
- [Circuit Hikes in Shenandoah National Park](#)
- [Circuit Hikes in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania](#)
- [Guide to Massanutten Mountain Hiking Trails](#)
- [Guide to Great North Mountain Trails](#)

Study the Landscape

Every trail has a story.

Want to know why the mountains look the way they do? Curious about the wildflowers blooming beside the trail? Interested in the people who lived here long before the parks were established?

PATC offers books that help you see beyond the trail itself.

Add these to your reading list:

- [Wildflowers of Shenandoah National Park](#)
- [Geology Along Skyline Drive](#)
- [Shenandoah Secrets: The Park's Hidden Past](#)
- [Shenandoah Heritage: The People Before the Park](#)
- [Shenandoah Vestiges: What the People Left Behind](#)
- [These Hills Were Home](#)

Read the Stories That Built the Trails

Some of the best adventures begin long before you lace up your boots.

Discover the people, volunteers, and history that shaped the trails we enjoy today through titles like:

- [Diary of a Trail](#)
- [Breaking Trail in the Central Appalachians](#)
- [Lost Trails and Forgotten People](#)

These books offer a deeper appreciation for the landscapes PATC has helped protect for generations.

Build Your Outdoor Library

Think of your bookshelf as part of your hiking gear.

A good guidebook helps you plan safer adventures. A history book deepens your appreciation for the places you visit. A natural history guide teaches you to notice things you might otherwise walk right past.

The more you learn, the richer every hike becomes.

Every Purchase Supports the Trails

When you purchase a book or guidebook from the PATC Store, you're investing in more than your next adventure.

Your purchase helps support PATC's stewardship of over **1,200 miles of trails, 49 cabins, 47 shelters, and nearly 3,500 acres of protected land**—ensuring these special places remain open, welcoming, and well cared for for generations to come.

This school year, make the outdoors your classroom.

Pick up a new guidebook, discover a new trail, learn something unexpected, and let every hike teach you something new.

Happy reading—and happy hiking!

Trail Maintenance Workshop

Saturday and Sunday, September 19 & 20, 2026

Shenandoah National Park - North District

For more than 35 years, the PATC's Hoodlums Trail Crew and SNP staff have conducted a

Trail Maintenance Workshop in the North District of the park. The objective is to teach basic skills to new and prospective trail maintainers and to provide experienced trail maintainers advanced training in trail design, construction, and maintenance. SNP trail professionals and experienced PATC crew leaders provide instruction that will help novice and veteran trail maintainers alike. Workshop participants typically camp for the weekend at the Mathews Arm Campground in the North District of the park. Participants will have free entry to the park and campground.

The workshop will begin Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. and end Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Participants are encouraged to arrive Friday afternoon/evening and camp at Mathews Arm, socialize with other participants, and thereby avoid an early-morning drive. The fee for the workshop, which includes dinner Saturday and breakfast and lunch Sunday is \$45.

The workshop is limited to 30 participants, which we typically reach by early August. The registration deadline is Friday, Sept. 4. For more information contact **David Nebhut** via e-mail: david.nebhut@gmail.com or by phone: 571-465-1041.

Limited spots remain! Register today!

If you are ready to register click [here](#)

Participation in the workshop is available only to PATC members age 18 and above, and registration in advance is required.

Help Wanted for July

Cabin Volunteers

Lee Howard, lhoward@patc.net

Maintainer at Meadows ~ Map 10

Co-maintainer at Old Rag ~ Map 10

Shelter Volunteer

Henry Horn ~ 301-642-1122 patcshelter@comcast.net

Paul Gerhard Shelter ~ PATC map F

SNP North District Blue blazed ~ Map 9

Tom Moran, (703) 715-0050, twmoran19@gmail.com

Jeremys Run Trail (middle) ~ Co ~ 8th Ford of Jeremys Run to junction Knob Mt. & Neighbor Mt. Trail (2.7mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ SNP Boundary to Thompson Hollow Trail (1.5 mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [north] ~ Map 10

Patrick Wilson ~ pwilson@hsc.edu

Eugene "Buz" Groshong ~ 540-522-6749, buzgroshong@verizon.net

Josh Fuchs (703) 346-4842, jrfuchs48@gmail.com

Catlett Mountain ~ Hannah Run Trail to Hazel Mountain Trail (1.2mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [south] ~ Map 10

John Hedrick ~ 540/987-8659, jhedrick@erols.com

Rock Spring Parking/Cabin/Hut ~ Rock Spring Parking to AT/AT to Rock Spring Cabin & Hut (.2mi)

Rock Spring Cabin/Hut Spring Trail ~ Rock Spring Cabin & Hut to spring (.1mi)

SNP South District Appalachian Trail ~ Map 11

Bob Pingry ~ 434-981-5094, bobpingry@gmail.com

AT ~ Co ~ Loft Mtn Camp Store trail to Loft Mountain Amphitheater trail (1.3)

SNP South District Blue blazed ~ Map 11

Wayne Limberg, H 703-533-8639, C 703-216-2396

Jeff Landis, 540-434-6354, knobred-muddled@yahoo.com

Jones Run Trail ~ Jones Run Parking Area to Doyles River/Jones Run Jct. (2.5mi)

Brown Mountain - Brown Mtn. Summit to Big Run Portal Trail (3.5

mi)

Gap Run Trail - Junction of Rocky Mount Summit Trail to bottom of Gap Run (1.50mi)

Rocky Mountain Run Trail ~ Big Run Portal Trail to Brown Mtn. Trail (2.7 mile)

Furnace Mountain Trail (Upper) ~ Furnace Mountain Summit Trail to Trayfoot Mountain Trail (2 mile)

Pennsylvania Tuscarora ~ Maps J & K

Chris Firme ~ 717-794-2855, bncfirme@innernet.net

Dave Trone ~ 717-778-1308, trildavidt@gmail.com

Pete Brown ~ 410-207-2921, trailpete@gmail.com

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Fowler Hollow shelter to Hemlock Rd (2.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Mountain Rd. to Jct. PA 641 (6.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Alice Trail to Yellow Blazed Trail (4.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Yellow Blazed Trail to PA 456 (6.7mi)

Tuscarora Central ~ Map L

Bill Greenan ~ wpgreenan@yahoo.com

Co-District Manager needed

Tuscarora Trail ~ Burnt Mill Bridge to Lutkins Passage (3.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Meadow Branch to Eagles Nest Parking (2.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Eagles Nest Mt. Parking Lot to Meadow Branch Trail (3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Larrick Overlook to Lucas Woods Trail (2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek Registration to Hampshire Grade Road (5.6mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Hampshire Grade Road to High Rock (2.7mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Lucas Woods Trail to Powerline (3.5mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek WMA Border to VA 671 (Shockeysville Road) (4.1mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ US 50 (Back Creek) to Gore Access Trail (1.3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Powerline to Dry Gap (3.5mi)

Devils Nose Connector Trail ~ Devils Nose Parking Area to Tuscarora Trail (.5mi)

Spruce Pine Hollow Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Spruce Pine Hollow Park Trailhead (.10mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Gore Access Trail to Hunters Cabin (Forest Road Crossing) (2.1mi)

Massanutten North ~ Map G

Steven Parsley, 443-864-3606, mbspeak2000@gmail.com

Zoe Sollenberger, (703) 447-8636, zoe4dogs@shentel.net

Massanutten Trail 408 ~ Bear Trap Trail to Rte 675 (2.2mi)

Duncan Knob Trail 409A ~ Gap Creek Trail to Duncan Knob (2.7mi)

Milford Gap Trail ~ Tolliver Trail to Hazard Mill Campground Road (1.81mi)

Bear Wallow Spur Trail ~ Mud Hole Gap to Tuscarora Trail (2.4mi)

Mud Hole Gap Trail ~ Parking off SR678 [800] to Parking off Massanutten Trail (FR66) (4.28mi)

Shawl Gap Trail ~ SR613 [700] to MM/TT intersection at Shawl Gap (2.3mi)

Sherman Gap Trail ~ Mudhole Gap Trail to SR613 [580] (5.79mi)

Sidewinder Trail ~ Mudhole Gap Trail to Tuscarora Trail (.83mi)

7-bar None Trail ~ Peters Mill Run Trail to Massanutten Trail (.46mi)

Bear Trap Trail ~ Peters Mill Run Trail to Massanutten Trail (.48mi)

Lupton Trail ~ Massanutten Trail to Peters Mill Run Trail (.43mi)

Indian Grave Ridge Trail ~ Parking lot off SR717 to Massanutten Trail (2.44mi)

Kennedy Peak Trail ~ Massanutten Trail to Tower Lookout (.24mi)

Tolliver Trail ~ logging road to Milford Gap Trail (1.79mi)

Massanutten South ~ Map H

Paul Boisen, (540) 246-5662, paulboisen@hotmail.com

Massanutten South Trail ~ Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail (1.4 m FR 65) (3.3mi)

Roaring Run Trail ~ Catherine Furnace to TV Tower Road (3.8mi)

Pitt Spring Lookout Trail ~ Massanutten South Trail to lookout point (.27mi)

Great North Mountain ~ Map F

Mike Allen ~ 540-333-3994, michaelallen0056@gmail.com

North Mt. Trail ~ Stack Rock Trail to VA 720 (4.3mi)

Stack Rock Trail ~ Forest Rd 252 to North Mt. Trail (1.5mi)

Long Mountain Trail ~ Trout Pond Trail to FR 1621 (4.4mi)

Big Schloss Trail ~ 2.3 Mile Marker of Mill Mt. Trail to Big Schloss View (.3mi)

Mill Mt. Trail ~ Wolf Gap to Big Schloss Cutoff Trail (2.8mi)

Gerhard Shelter Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Vances Cove (1.5mi)

Bucktail Cutoff Trail ~ Bucktail Trail to Halfmoon Trail (2.7mi)

Bucktail Trail ~ Trout Run Road to Waites Run Road (5.2mi)

Capon Trail ~ Bucktail trailhead to Waites Run Road (2.9mi)

German Wilson Trail ~ Halfmoon Lookout Trail to Bucktail Trail (1.2mi)

Cedar Creek Trail ~ FR88 to FR1863 (4.4mi)

Old Mailpath Trail ~ Wilson Cove to TT Three Ponds Trail (2.3mi)

Sulphur Springs Gap Trail ~ SR603 to TT Little North Mountain Trail (2.9mi)

Little Sluice Mountain Trail ~ FR92 to TT Three Ponds Trail (5.3mi)

Trout Pond Trail ~ SR59 to Long Mountain Trail (2.5mi)

Falls Ridge Trail ~ FR1318 Laurel Run Spur Trail to North Mountain Trail (2.5mi)

North River Map-National Geographic Trails Illustrated #791

Lynn & Malcolm Cameron, (540) 234-6273, slynncameron@gmail.com

Braley Pond Loop ~ 491, 496, 654 from Braley Pond Parking to Braley Pond Parking (3.6 mi)

MD Montgomery County Parks ~ Map D

Lynn Gallagher ~ (301) 320-4862, or lynn.t.gallagher@gmail.com

Cabin John Trail ~ Seven Locks Rd to Tuckerman Lane

Prince William Forest Park

Dennis Calhoun, 703-583-4386, dennis_calhoun@comcast.net

Carl Nicholson, 703-314-6365, cwnicholson@gmail.com

South Valley from Scenic Drive [3rd Intersection] to North Orenda Road (1.1 mi)

Seneca Creek State Park & Monocacy Natural Resources Mgt. Area

Jim Tomlin, (301) 774-1228, jftomlin@gmail.com

Jeffrey Clyman, (443) 864-4547, jiclyman@verizon.net

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ River Road to lower Berryville Road (1.5 mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ lower Berryville Road to upper Berryville Road (2.1 mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ upper Berryville Road to Route 28 (1.9mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Route 28 to Black Rock Road (1.2mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Black Rock Road to Route 118 (1.5mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Route 118 to powerline (1.4mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ powerline to Riffle Ford Road (1.5mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Riffle Ford Road to Seneca Creek Road (1.6mi)

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail ~ Seneca Creek Road to Visitor Center (1.10mi)