THE POTOMAC APPALACHIAN

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President's Logbook

By Jim Fetig



The Israeli delegation at Weaverton Cliffs

Outdoor folks, this is our time of year. It's the time when the sun sparkles on forest floors dappled with shadows of red, yellow, and orange leaves twisting, turning and quaking in nature's cool breath. She's whispering to come out and play in the sunny dry air. Dark season is on the way, so make the most of autumn.

It's time to get outside before el Niño does whatever bratty winter antics are in the cards for us after the trees go to bed. The forecasts are all over the place – warm, cold, wet, snowy, whatever! Just do it before all hell breaks loose. The trails and cabins are calling.

The work PATC does and the way the AT is managed is of interest around the world. The scope and scale of our National Trails System is unparalleled elsewhere on the planet. Delegations often come to learn from us and take away best practices.

In addition to the Chinese hiking club leader Jayne Mayne and I talked to this summer, last year I was asked to work with a group of Korean forestry officials interested in how we

recruited, trained, and equipped volunteers to maintain the trail. They were building a national hiking trail system but would not have enough money to maintain it.

Having been stationed in Korea, I knew that volunteerism is, for them, a foreign concept. We discussed among other things forming maintaining groups from the hiking clubs that are employee groups within the giant global Korean companies such as Samsung, LG, and Hyundai. For hikers, maintaining their trails is self-interest.

In October, a group of 12 Israelis visited, representing the NGOs associated with their 30-year-old national hiking trail. We hiked to Weverton Cliffs. Along the way I discussed how the AT maintaining clubs are organized, how we find volunteers and manage them, how we train people in critical skills, how we are funded, governed, and sustained.

The next day, they hiked to Annapolis Rocks with a group of ATC leaders who discussed trail and visitor management, camping, trash, fires, etc.

On the weekends, Israelis customarily swarm their trails. We have a lot to offer within the context of our culture, climate, and resources. These were like-minded people whose interests parallel those of us dedicated to the protection and preservation of public lands. It was joy to be with them.

If you looked at the ballot for club elected officers, you noticed that we still need two more folks to step up for Supervisor of Trails and Marketing. We are still recruiting for these jobs. When there is a vacancy, the president can nominate a member to fill it with ExCom approval.

Supervisor of Trails is arguably the most important leadership role in the club. They manage the lion's share of our volunteer force through our District Managers and are the direct contact between our land managers and partners.

The Supervisor of Marketing is responsible for our online store, works with the publications committee, and coordinates integrated communications with the Supervisors of Communications, Outreach, and Membership, plus the VP of Volunteerism.

If you want to give back, stepping up for one of these jobs is an excellent way to do it.

This is my penultimate Logbook. Here's a cliff hanger. What will he say in his last one? Will he name names? Will he kiss and tell? To find out, tune in again next month, same time and station. Before then, Take a Hike!

CentennialFest – Celebrating 100 Years of Volunteers

By Matt Waurio

Photos submitted by the wonderful members who attended the event.



Community ran deep at PATC's CentennialFest, with around 150 members together for a weekend of learning, stories, and time outdoors. From the first arrivals Friday afternoon at Caroline Furnace near Luray, Va., volunteers were ready to help. Despite the heat, a couple dozen members had already checked in with the friendly parking and registration teams before 3 p.m. With prominent name tags on lanyards, everyone was off to enjoy a weekend of community and celebration.



On Friday evening, **Mills Kelly** drew a crowd of almost 40 people to the central building for his happy-hour discussion, "A Hiker's History of the Appalachian Trail." His research into the food, gear, mindset, and rich community of early 1900s hikers inspired plenty of laughter and glances at neighbors in disbelief. One surprise: PATC members once regularly hiked in full-length cotton or wool dresses and heels or in 3-piece suits complete with matching hats. Another shock from the era was the size of early PATC outings, which often included over 50 people camping together for overnight trips!

For both evenings, our CentennialFest campfires nearly reached the numbers of old. Despite intermittent rain, our gatherings featured food, drink, song, stories, and dancing flames. Animated conversations continued well into the night, as varied as Diplomatic Corp tales to the trout breeding trends in nearby George Washington National Forest streams to the finer points of crosscut saw steel quality. Many thanks to everyone who joined in, especially PATC's-own sing-along band and our skilled fire tender, **Jim Tomlin**.



Saturday brought with it the bulk of CentennialFest classes and meetings, and the facility was bustling shortly after sunrise. Amid the relative chill in the air, warm showers refreshed the soul and wiped away smoke and sweat of the humid day prior. Both the late-night revelers and early risers bumped elbows at the spring-loaded coffee carafe where, again, the variety of conversation amazed—though this time the fixation was clearly on outdoor access and other issues specific to PATC. Our dedicated PATC volunteers were on the clock.



The day's classes offered plenty of ways to build skills and get involved. First aid, crosscut skills, chainsaw skills, trail maintenance classes, invasive plant identification, Tuscarora Trail history, and GIS were but some of the many classes taught. Dozens attended individual sessions, and some participants faced the difficult choice between two or three classes they wanted to take. The tragedy of choice!



Three sessions particularly stood out to me: **H. Shindle**'s Tuscarora Trail (TT) history, **Pete Minderman'**s presentation on PATC's Lands Management program, and from the Cadillac Crew, **Dan and Ellen Feer'**s Trail Maintenance lessons.

H. Shindle explained how the TT began as an alternative to the AT during a difficult period in the 1960s, before becoming PATC's own long-distance trail in the 1990s. Not many outdoor clubs can claim something so exceptional as a long trail of their own and hearing about the dedication of the hundreds of people who have managed its rugged terrain over the decades was both humbling and inspiring. Like the AT, the TT is more than a route through the woods; it is a lasting example of what a community can build and maintain together.

The Cadillac Crew's trail maintenance session brought that same spirit of stewardship directly onto the trail. Led by Dan and Ellen Feer, participants geared up in brightly-colored shirts, helmets, eye protection, sturdy pants, and gloves before heading to install water bars and clear drainage routes. The diligent crew listened carefully, then got to work, putting decades of trail maintenance experience into practice one shovel push and rake



pull at a time. Unlike sessions focused on learning through listening, this one showed what stewardship looks like in action. Clearing a drainage route or installing a water bar might seem like a small task, but done properly, it's an act of love that helps protect the trail from erosion and keeps it usable for years to come.

More focused on the future was Pete Minderman, who led a presentation focused on the work of PATC's Lands Committee, which manages the Club's 3,000 acres of conservation land, identifies future land holdings, works with other land conservation organizations, and acquires land for the club. The work of his team is complex and takes time, and his presentation was a reminder that protecting outdoor access takes work well beyond the trail itself. Pete has his hands full and identified areas where additional volunteers could help, including confirming trail easements, walking PATC-owned land boundaries each year, and assisting in identifying land parcels of opportunity. These are practical ways members can help protect the places that make outdoor experiences possible for the future.



Of course, our Saturday culminated in two major events: the awards ceremony and the CentennialFest feast! Intermittent rain moved the awards ceremony indoors, but it did not dampen the celebration. Award recipients received well-deserved recognition, often calling up their family members and PATC friends onto the stage for group photos. **Iva Gillet**, the recipient of this year's Myron Avery award and co-planner for Centennial Fest, was the final award recipient.

CentennialFest was a reminder that PATC is more than the trails we maintain and the lands we protect. It is the people who come to learn, share experiences, build friendships, and keep that work going. Whether you attended a class, joined a campfire conversation, or learned about a new way to volunteer, you helped strengthen the community that makes outdoor access possible.

And if the weekend left you wanting to do more, there are plenty of ways to get involved – from learning a new trail skill to helping care for PATC's lands. The next century of the Club will be built by people who carry the spirit of the first: people who show up.

Hoodlums Host 2026 Trail Maintainers Workshop

By Tom Moran



by Cindy Ardecki: Hoodlums enjoying time around the campfire while dinner is cooking a few feet away

From March through November PATC's Hoodlums conduct work outings in the Shenandoah National Park's North District on the 3rd Saturday of each month. The sole exception is in September, when they host an event that reaches beyond its member list and is explicitly open to PATC members outside the group. As in recent years, **Dave Nebhut** was the organizer of the North District Trail Maintainers Workshop, which spans parts of three days and is hosted in the Mathews Arm campground. Working with Dave to lead the workshop activities was Head Hoodlum **Tom Troutman.**

The purpose of the workshop is to offer trail maintainers at any level, from beginner to experienced, the opportunity to improve their skills as well as make acquaintance with peers from around PATC's many domains. This year's event drew trail maintainers who



Cindy Ardecki: Mike Gergely is amused as the novices tackle a blowdown

work in such diverse areas as the South and Central districts of SNP, the Tuscarora Trail, Rock Creek Park, and the AT in Maryland. There were also a handful of volunteers who had scant experience but were eager to gain basic skills to support their volunteering aspirations. All of them shared the common goal of improving skills while making new friends and important contacts to help further their volunteering aspirations.

Organizers arriving early Friday the 18th were immediately confronted with an issue—the group camping area, which had been reserved for nearly a year, had been double booked and was already occupied by another group. They quickly found a block of adjacent campsites and worked as a team to redirect incoming attendees as they arrived throughout the day. After this hiccup, it was time to pitch tents, enjoy a campfire and mingle with fellow attendees. Saturday morning following breakfast, Tom Troutman brought folks together for introductions, a safety discussion and crew assignments. Saturday was to be a working day—hands-on skills learned by conducting real maintenance activities on trails adjacent to the group campground at Mathews Arm.



by Jim Fetig: You wouldn't know Troy McCurry (L) and Alex Hart were beginners from this water bar work

Trail Work Basics crew members drove to the Elkwallow Picnic area before hiking onto a nearby section of the AT. Here they were taught names and purposes of structures, rules for blazing, invasive plants ID, weeding basics, and simple hand sawing with pruning saws including safety and binds. The crew was led by Certified Trail Maintainer instructors **Jim Fetig**, **Wayne Limberg,** and **Kevin Cwalina**, who divided the crew in three working groups. Hands-on practice included construction of four rolling grade dips, repair of an undermined check dam, check dam and water bar cleaning, and reconstruction of seven water bars. The training also included tool identification and uses, safety considerations, PPE, and reporting. Crew members

included **John Foley, Ethan Glick, Janee Harris, Alex Hart, Troy McCurry, Christian Wilson**, **Paul Perry,** and **Paul Kitchings**.

The Novice crew was led by Certified Trail Maintainer instructors Tom Troutman and **Mike Gergely** and included **Brian Blackman, Amanda deBrun, Sarah DeGennaro, Sarah Montana, Carl Leubsdorf,** and **Anthony Senerchia**. The crew hiked out along the Traces trail, pausing to discuss safety protocols and the work that needs to be done to the trails before applying the skills selectively covering the full range of maintainer skills.



by Cindy Ardecki: Amanda DeBrun (L), Tom Troutman, Mike Gergely, and Brian Blackman assess a blowdown before beginning removal

The Advanced crew hiked over to Overall Run trail, a section of trail difficult to maintain because of heavy hiker traffic, steep terrain and lack of easy access to maintainers. The amount of time hiking to and from the work areas left only a few hours to make a dent in the trail areas suffering from erosion. Plenty of follow-up work was noted. Led by Dave Nebhut and **Tom Moran**, the crew also included **Noel Freeman, Elizabeth Moser, Dave Jordahl, Rich Lordahl, Marie Seymour, Mark Wrobel, Ed Howell, Dallas Cecil,** and **Steve Woofter.**

The workday ended around 3:30 for all the crews and we hiked back up to the campground, for a chance to sit down in a comfortable chair with a refreshing beverage and begin anticipating the dinner already being prepared. Hoodlums chef **Joe Wood**, assisted by **Cindy Ardecki,** was creating a banquet including chicken, grilled sausages, pepper and onions, and pasta. Vegan options were included. He had a tired but hungry set of mouths to feed! Following dinner, folks adjourned to the campfire for a while before turning in for the night.

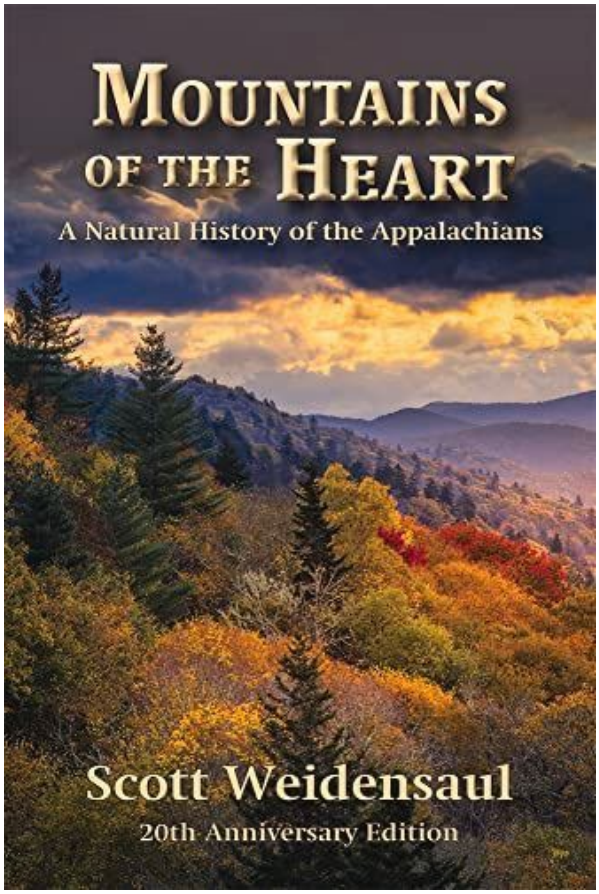
Sunday morning, Joe and Cindy prepared coffee and a light continental breakfast, and we began the day's program. Two one-hour sessions were offered, from which participants could choose from options that included a hands-on crosscut saw demo, "what's in my pack", a discussion on what District Managers expect of Trail Maintainers, map and compass and SNP Wilderness boundaries. Then, Shenandoah National Park Biologist Jake Hughes discussed invasive species of plants in the park, passing around samples he had

collected that morning, Jake has great insights into pragmatic strategies on how they might be controlled or limited within the role of a typical maintainer.

Following these sessions we concluded with a large brunch, again prepared by Joe with Cindy's help. Scrambled eggs, sausage, potatoes, the works. Vegan options were carefully segregated and available. The sumptuous meal concluded the event, folks headed off well fed and with that satisfied sort of tired feeling.

Keep Calm & Read On: One from the Heart

By Wayne Limberg



On its publication in 1996, Scott Weidensaul's "Mountains of the Heart: A Natural History of the Appalachians" received rave reviews for its melding of poetry and science with some even comparing it to the works of Muir and Thoreau. Thirty years is a long time, even in natural history. Fortunately, Weidensaul put out a new edition of the book on its 20th anniversary. Non-spoiler alert: "Mountains of the Heart" does not deal with the Appalachian Trail except in passing. Anyone who loves the AT, however, would be wise to have this book in their library. The good news is that it is readily available online or on Apple Books for a song.

Writing a successful natural history of any region is a challenge. The author must have a deep understanding of a broad range of disciplines, including geology, biology, botany and history. While it should be multidisciplinary and comprehensive, it should be accessible to both the general reader and specialist.

Weidensaul meets the challenge and then some largely because of what he brings to the job. A native Pennsylvanian, the Appalachians captured his imagination as a child, and even as an adult he gets "twitchy" when he spends too much time away from them. At

twelve, he started watching the annual migration of hawks, which in turn opened his eyes to the true sweep of the Appalachians. For years he was the nature columnist for the "Philadelphia Inquirer," and he has also written for "Smithsonian," the "NYTimes," "Nature Conservancy," and "Audubon." In all, he has authored 30 books, most on birds, including "Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds," which was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2000.

Weidensaul defines the Appalachians as one of the greatest geographic features of North America, stretching over 2,000 miles from Alabama to Newfoundland and containing a biological diversity unequaled elsewhere on the continent. Weidensaul divides the region into five main geographic parts: the Piedmont on the eastern flank, the Blue Ridge running from the Smokies to South Mountain in Pennsylvania, the series of ridges and valleys extending from New York to Alabama, the Appalachian Plateau in the west, and the northern Appalachians running from the Hudson Valley to Belle Isle about 15 miles north of Newfoundland. What is generally known as "Appalachia" occupies only a quarter of the range in West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Nor are New York's much younger Adirondacks part of the Appalachians.

The first chapter of "Mountains of the Heart" deals with the geological history of the Appalachians and sets the tone for the book. Weidensaul confesses that he is not a geologist and worries that those who are may find plenty to criticize, but he wanted to establish a rock-solid foundation for the rest of the book (pun intended). Though one of the shorter chapters in the book, some may find it slow going as Weidensaul rehearses the basics of continental drift and the differences between sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rock. It can be hard to relate to rocks, but readers who press on will be rewarded. To ease the way, Weidensaul turns to personal stories and observations that create a narrative that will not turn off the professional geologist or those who took "rocks-for-jocks" to fulfill their college's science requirement.

This talent to personalize and humanize the hard science is at the core of "Mountains of the Heart." Each chapter is a stand-alone essay that reflects a firm grasp of the science and, perhaps more importantly, love for the Appalachians equal to Muir's for the Sierras and Thoreau's for Walden Pond. Sadly, many are stories of loss involving human interaction with the natural environment. Some, like the extinction of the passenger pigeon, are irreversible. In other casest—the disappearance of elk, gray wolves and chestnuts—Weidensaul holds out hope, however thin, for a better future.

Much of this may be familiar to even the casual reader but given that the first edition of "Mountains of the Heart" appeared in 1996, Weidensaul must be credited for a certain prescience. He does not directly address climate change and while he notes the

importance of human impact and agency, he refrains from outright policy prescriptions, preferring to let the facts and science speak for themselves. And "Mountains of the Heart" is a book of science as evidenced by its detailed glossary of common and scientific names, detailed footnotes, and substantial bibliography. In that they have been shaping the Appalachians for centuries, Weidensaul sees humans as part of the story along with bees, birds, bisons and bears, albeit at times a very damaging part.

Weidensaul saw the second edition of "Mountains of the Heart" as more of an homage than update of the first. His paramount goal was to keep the sense of joy and wonder of the earlier edition. It was written as Al Gore warned of global warming. The second appeared on the eve of what would become a challenging decade for the world environment. As 2026 draws to a close, one has to wonder if it is time for Weidensaul to pen another edition.

Do you have a good read? If so, send it along to wplimberg@aol.com. In the meantime, keep reading. See you on the trail.

What is that flower—Bear Church Rock—Spring

By Richard Stromberg



Bloodroot

This article shows you some of the flowers to look for in spring on the way to Bear Church Rock in the Central Section of SNP. Bear Church Rock offers a fantastic view of the SNP mountains with no signs of human habitation. It is just off Jones Mountain Trail. It can be accessed by going down from Skyline Drive, but I am describing the flora you may see going up from the parking lot at the end of State Route 662 on Staunton River Trail (described on pages 269-272 of PATC's "Appalachian Train Guide to Shenandoah National Park").

All species below are native unless otherwise noted.

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) plants have one leaf and one flower. The flower and leaf arise separately from the ground. The flower

bud appears wrapped in the leaf and opens above the leaf as both unfold. It has up to 16 one-inch-long white petals surrounding yellow stamens—twice as many stamens as petals.

Large-flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) has three showy petals, three green sepals seen between the petals, and a whorl of three leaves. It is also called white trillium, but it also shows up in various shades of pink or turns pink as the flower ages. The flowers are held erect above the leaves on a stalk up to five inches long. Each petal may be three inches long.

Umbrella Magnolia (*Magnolia tripetala*) is a small tree. Its leaves are clustered in umbrella-like circles at the end of flowering branches. The long-oval leaves can be up to two feet long. One flower emerges from the leaf cluster. The flowers have three sepals that look like petals and six to nine petals up to six inches long. Inside the petals is a cone-like aggregate fruit.



Mountain Laurel

Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) bushes are up to ten feet tall with evergreen leaves up to four inches long. The petals are fused and open like a saucer, usually white but sometimes pink inside. From inside a red ring in the middle of the saucer, the pistil points straight out while ten white stamens bend their anthers into red-spotted pockets inside the petals. When a pollinator lands in the mountain laurel flower, the anthers spring from their pockets to shower it with pollen. The pointed flower buds have ridges radiating from the tip back to each anther pocket.



Wild Geranium

Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) rose-purple flowers are up to one and a half inches wide. and stand above the leaves. The leaves, up to four inches long and six inches wide, are deeply and irregularly cleft and the segments are again cleft or toothed at the tips.

Virginia Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*) leaves are deeply divided into 5-7 deeply incised leaves. They are often mottled with white as though water-stained. The stems can be up to three feet long, but are weak and tend to sprawl. The

flowers are so tightly bunched that they disguise that they are in a scorpioid raceme. They are white, sometimes tinged purple. The quarter-inch long petals don't open wide and are joined together halfway. Long stamens protrude.

Wild Hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*) is a shrub with large, pointed, opposite leaves. Its small white flowers grow in an umbel up to five inches wide. The umbel of brown seed capsules remains on the plant all winter.

Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*) is a vine up to five meters long, twining around other plants. It has shiny, six-inch, heart-shaped leaves that have prominent veins that circle from the stem to rejoin at the pointed tip. The leaves grow in whorls around the stem. In early spring, the first whorl of leaves is an eye-catching, shiny, light green. The plants are dioecious (male and female flowers grow on separate plants). The tiny, six-tepal flowers grow on long, branching strands. The female flowers are on top of quarter-inch long ovaries. Fruits are in three sections and hang on the dead vines through the winter.



Indian Strawberry fruit

Indian Strawberry (*Potentilla indica*) sprawls across the ground. The leaves have three leaflets. The leaflet edges have rounded teeth. The flowers have five round, yellow petals, completely separated from each other. The flower is one-half to one inch in diameter. The fruit looks like a strawberry, but the seeds embedded on the outside of the fleshy berry are red while true strawberry seeds are light brown. Also, Indian Strawberries are tasteless.

False Solomon's Seal aka **Solomon's Plume** (*Maianthemum racemosum*) plants have a single erect or arching stem with several ovate leaves alternating along the stem. The leaves have no stem and have distinct, parallel veins. Flower clusters grow at the end of the stem. The flower cluster is branched and pyramidal. The individual flowers have six tepals but are only about an eighth of an inch across. (When petals and sepals look alike, they are called tepals.)

Common Fleabane (*Erigeron. Philadelphicus*) has daisy-like flowers. The central disk is yellow and the rays around the disk are white or tinged pink. It has 150-400 rays, each less than half a millimeter wide. The stem leaves widen from the pointed tip all the way to the stem and grasp the stem.

Honewort (*Cryptotaenia canadensis*) has tiny white flowers that grow in a sparse, wide-spread, irregular head. The leaves have three leaflets with varying teeth and lobe formations.

Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) plants are one to two and a half feet tall. They have two leaves though they seem to have many because the first leaf is divided into three, and then again into three and sometimes again into three with two-to-three-inch leaflets on the final division. The leaflets have three to five lobes above the middle. Panicles of five or more flowers bloom at the top of the plant. The half-inch flowers are dominated by 6 sepals with tiny petals at the base of each sepal. The sepal colors are a mixture of yellow, purple and green. Inside the ring of petals are six yellow-topped stamens surrounding the stigma. The fruits stand up at the top of the plant. They start out green and turn blue.

Gray Beardtongue (*Penstemon canescens*) has spikes of colorful, one-inch flowers atop the plants. The flowers are tubular. The tube is narrow at the stem end and then abruptly widens, ending in two-part upper lips and three-part lower lips. The flowers are pale purple outside and white with purple stripes inside. You can see four stamens under the upper lip. The fifth stamen is sterile and rests on the bottom of the tube, and is usually hairy yellow, which gives the name beardtongue. Short hairs make the stems look gray, which is what canescens means.



Gray Beardtongue

When young, **Indian Cucumber-root** (*Medeola virginiana*) plants have a stem topped by whorl of five to eleven four-to-five-inch egg-shaped leaves about a foot above the ground. When the plant has built up enough energy in its rootstock, it grows the stem another foot above the whorl of leaves and develops another whorl of two or three smaller leaves from which an umbel of three to ten flowers grows. The flowers hang downward beneath the top whorl of leaves. Each flower has six greenish yellow tepals about a quarter inch long and curving back, but they are dominated by three threadlike styles that are longer than the tepals and hover above them. After pollination, berries form and their stems straighten up so they are positioned on top of the plant.

One Small Fix

By Matt Waurio



PATC is big. More than 7,000 members, hundreds of volunteers, dozens of committees and crews, and so many trails and cabins that, to my knowledge, nobody has seen every mile and cabin. With all that size and complexity, it's easy for something to become just a little bit harder than it needs to be.

I bet you've got one of those issues—the taxing, draining, onerous type. Maybe an event is difficult to find, a webpage has outdated information, or you've answered the same question three times because the information isn't written down anywhere. None of these problems are necessarily a crisis, but together, they make a process more painful than it should be.

You can help fix one.

If you notice something is confusing, outdated, broken, or unnecessarily complicated, don't just work around it next time. Let someone know. Raise the issue again. If it requires funding, now is also a good time to bring it up as we approach the end of the year and plan future budgets.

Better yet, if it's something you can fix yourself—fix it. Document a process, introduce two people who should've met months ago, draft up a new trail sign that points in the correct direction, tell Communications they're bad at their jobs (well…maybe be nice about it).

PATC's history is of members who see something that needs doing and step up to do it. 100 years of that's made for some creaky processes. Let's do what we do and make something easier for the next person.

If you're unsure who to contact about your idea, email me at: mwaurio@patc.net.

Before We Say Anything Else: Thank You

PATC has had an impactful year and that's worth celebrating

By Abbie Fine



By Bill Bunting: Hikers at CentennialFest



Group workshop at CentennialFest

This year, you picked up the tools. You showed up to workdays in the rain, and you drove out to cabins to fix what the weather broke. You led hikes, answered hikers' questions, and wrote the trip reports. Volunteers filed more than 7,000 work reports this year. More than 200 of you joined a single wilderness safety webinar, just to be better prepared for the next person you meet on the trail. Others helped PATC add 188 new miles of trail to the system we maintain, bringing us to nearly 1,300 miles of trails that we collectively care for. And last month 150 of you helped us celebrate at CentennialFest as we enter our 100th year as a club.

Some of you participated from far away. You never lifted a lopper, but you read every newsletter, kept your membership current, and told a friend. That counts, too.

PATC began in 1927 with a handful of passionate hikers on a rainy morning. Ninety-nine years later, it's still made of people like that.

We think the reasons to show up for this club are worth saying out loud. Later this month, you'll get a message from our President, **Jim Fetig,** with some of them. For now, we just want you to know that we noticed, and we're grateful.

Thank you for every way you've shown up.

Upcoming Events

Crisp autumn air, colorful trails, and plenty of opportunities for adventure await this November!

As the seasons change and the temperatures cool, November is the perfect time to embrace the outdoors with PATC.

November 5 – Rock Creek Park Northern Section Hike

9:30 AM | Washington, DC

Discover the quieter side of Washington, DC, on this 6.6-mile hike through the northern section of Rock Creek Park. Enjoy wooded trails, scenic stream crossings, and the beauty of one of the region's most treasured urban parks.

November 5 – Virtual Hike Leader Training

7:00 PM | Virtual

Ready to take the next step in your hiking journey? PATC's Hike Leader Education course provides experienced hikers with the knowledge and skills needed to confidently lead safe, enjoyable group outings. This virtual class is part of PATC's hike leader certification process and is a great opportunity to become more involved in the club.

Advance registration through PATC is required. Do not register through Meetup.

November 6 – Buzzard Rock Hike

9:30 AM | George Washington National Forest, VA

Take in spectacular mountain views on this moderate 3.8-mile hike to Buzzard Rock, located just outside Front Royal, Virginia. With approximately 750 feet of elevation gain, this scenic adventure rewards hikers with impressive vistas of the surrounding landscape and a refreshing day in the mountains.

November 7 – Rock Creek Park Southern Loop

9:45 AM | Washington, DC

Explore another beautiful section of Rock Creek Park on this moderate six-mile loop. Following portions of the Western Ridge and Valley Trails, hikers will discover peaceful woodlands, historic landmarks, and scenic creekside paths. Highlights include Pierce Mill, Pulpit Rock, and Boulder Bridge.

November 7 – Potomac Nordic Ski Club Ski Fair

1:00 PM | PATC Headquarters, Vienna, VA

Winter adventures are just around the corner! Join the Potomac Nordic Ski Club at PATC Headquarters for its Ski Fair and get ready for the upcoming ski season. Connect with fellow winter recreation enthusiasts, learn about ski trips, and discover opportunities to enjoy the outdoors throughout the colder months.

November 9 – Veach Gap: Hiking Through History

9:00 AM | Fort Valley, VA

Combine history and adventure on this seven-mile hike through George Washington National Forest. With approximately 1,300 feet of elevation gain, the route offers a rewarding outdoor experience featuring rugged terrain, fascinating historical connections, and beautiful views. This special outing also celebrates the upcoming 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

November 14 – Morning Walk & Stretch

9:00 AM | Shenandoah River State Park, Bentonville, VA

Start your weekend with movement, mindfulness, and fresh air! Part of the Fall Women's Wellness Series, this morning gathering combines a refreshing outdoor walk with gentle stretching in the peaceful surroundings of Shenandoah River State Park. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with nature, recharge, and enjoy time with others.

Don't forget to check our calendars regularly! New hikes, workshops, and volunteer opportunities are added throughout the month, and some activities have limited space or require advance registration.

Explore upcoming events and sign up:

- PATC Hikes & Events on Meetup
- PATC Events Calendar

We can't wait to see you on the trails this November!

Help Wanted for November

Cabin Volunteers

Lee Howard, lhoward@patc.net

Maintainer at Meadows Cabin ~ Map 10
Co-maintainer at Old Rag Cabin ~ Map 10

HQ Maintenance Maintainer -Vienna VA

Rush Williamson, rwilliamson@patc.net

Shelter Volunteer

Henry Horn, patcshelter@comcast.net

Paul Gerhard Shelter ~ PATC map F

Glen Tsaparas, poppaglen@verizon.net

Co-maintainer at South River Maintenance Hut

Ashby / Possums AT & Blue blazed [Rte. 50 to SNP] ~ Map 8, 9

D_ASHBY_POSS@patc.net

Jon Rindt, jkrindt@comcast.net

Maston Gray, graymn9@gmail.com

AT ~ Davenport Meadow Parking Area to Whiskey Hollow Shelter Road (1.3 mi)

SNP North District Blue blazed ~ Map 9

D_SNP_NO_BB@patc.net

Tom Moran, twmoran19@gmail.com

Jeremys Run Trail (middle) ~ Co ~ 8th Ford of Jeremys Run to junction

Knob Mt. & Neighbor Mt. Trail (2.7mi)

Knob Mountain Cutoff ~ Knob Mountain Trail to Jeremys Run Trail (.5 mi)

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

SNP Central District Blue blazed [north] ~ Map 10
D_SNP_CEN_BBN@patc.net

Patrick Wilson, "Buz" Groshong, Josh Fuchs

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

Hannah Run (upper) from Pinnacles Overlook to Hannah Run (1.9mi)

Leading Ridge Trail ~ (Co-maintainer)- Jewell Road to West Park Boundary (1.3mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [south] ~ Map 10
D_SNP_CEN_BBS@patc.net

John Hedrick, jhedrick@erols.com

Matt Murray, mattmurray1910@gmail.com

Cat Knob Trail ~ (Co-maintainer) ~ Laurel Prong to Jones Mountain (.5 mi)

Jones Mountain Trail ~ (Co-maintainer)- Cat Knob Trail to Fork Mountain Fire Road (.5 mi)

Jones Mountain Trail ~ (Co-maintainer) -Sag to Cat Knob and Cat Knob Trail (1. mi)

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

D_SNP_SO_AT@patc.net

Bob Pingry, bobpingry@gmail.com

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

AT ~ Trayfoot Mountain Trail to Blackrock Gap (1.4mi)

SNP South District Blue blazed ~ Map 11

D_SNP_SO_BB@patc.net

Jeff Landis, knobred-muddled@yahoo.com

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

D_PENN@patc.net
Brown, Pete & Trone, David -yankeeclippers@patc.net,

Firme, Chris - bncfirme@innernet.net

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

D_TUS_CEN@patc.net

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

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)

Massanutten North ~ Map G

D_MASS_NO@patc.net

Steven Parsley, mbspeak2000@gmail.com

Zoe Sollenberger, 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

D_MASS_SO@patc.net

Paul Boisen, paulboisen@hotmail.com

Massanutten South Trail ~ Rt 211 Parking Lot to New Market Gap Picnic Area (2.1mi)

Great North Mountain ~ Map F

D_GNM@patc.net, Mike Allen

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

D_NORTH_RIVER@patc.net Lynn & Malcolm Cameron, slynncameron@gmail.com

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

Prince William Forest Park

D_PWF@patc.net

Dennis Calhoun, Carl Nicholson

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

Birch Bluff Trail~ Laurel Loop Trail to Laurel Loop Trail (1.7mi)

South Valley Trail ~ Scenic Dr 3rd Int to North Orenda Rd (1.mi)

Seneca Creek State Park & Monocacy Natural Resources Mgt. Area

D_MONOCACY@patc.net

Jeffrey Clyman, 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 ~ Route 118 to powerline (1.4mi)

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