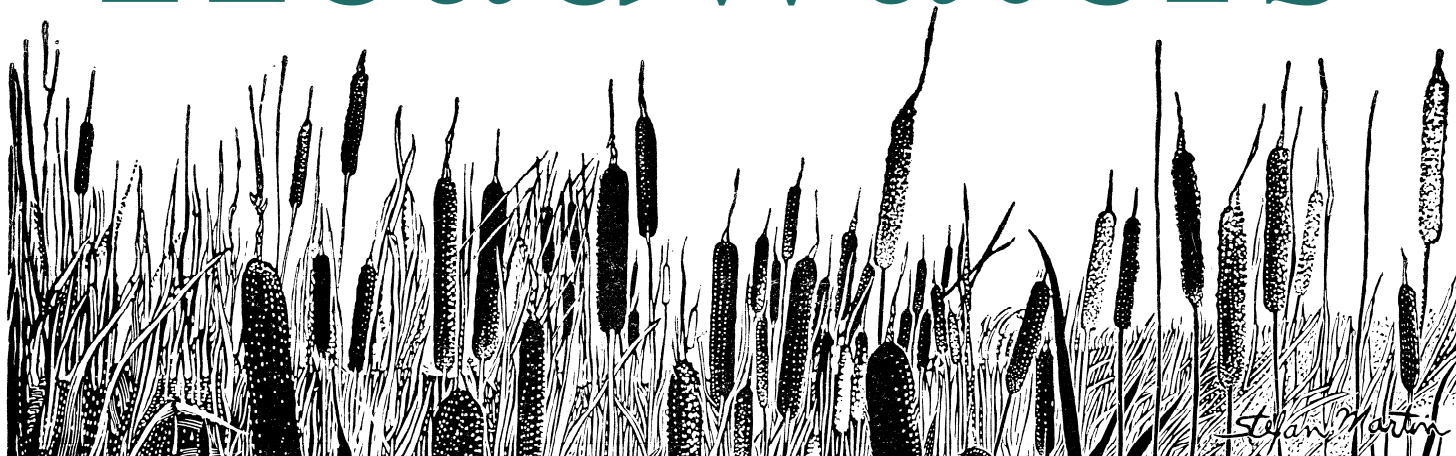


# Headwaters



## A Conservation Success - 30 Acres Preserved in Perpetuity

At the end of 2008, Albert and Anya Salama donated a conservation easement protecting 30 acres of pristine open space along Peapack's western border. This easement is contiguous with two other properties preserved by URWA, forming an environmentally significant 170 acre greenway.

The Salama's easement consists of open fields as well as forested areas. The fields will continue to be used for open field agriculture under terms that provide for the protection of ground-nesting grassland bird species. The hickory/oak forest sits on top of the Peapack Brook sub-watershed, protecting vital water supplies. In addition, the Salamas designated a six acre portion of the property as a bird refuge, a shrubby vegetated area containing wetlands that will be managed for the protection and enhancement of suitable habitat for numerous wildlife species including songbirds.

URWA is grateful to the Salama family for their generosity. Their contribution preserves essential natural resources and adds to an expanding greenway that is protecting vital water supplies, grasslands and forests in the Upper Raritan watershed.



*A conservation easement is a voluntary, legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust that permanently limits uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. The landowner continues to own and use the land and may sell it or pass it on to heirs.*

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Special Insert: Nature Day  
Camp Information!



Ensuring the protection of the natural resources of the Upper Raritan Watershed through education, advocacy, land preservation and stewardship.

UPPER RARITAN WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

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WATERSHED

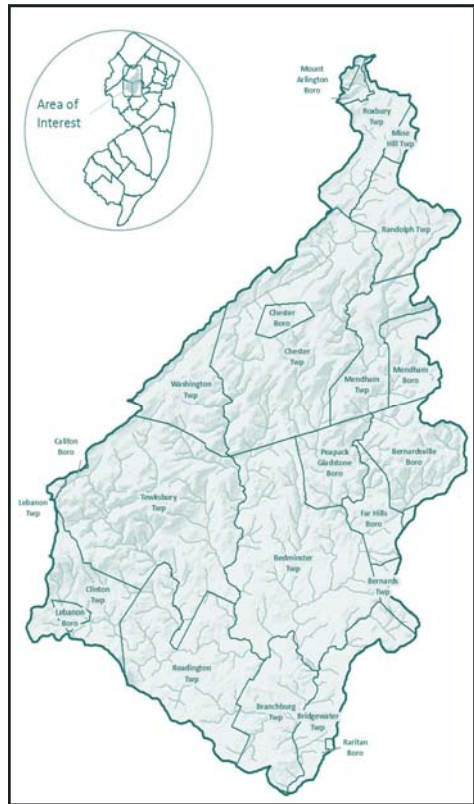


WATCHDOG

Out & About  
Across the Watershed

In recent weeks, URWA has...

- ◆ Recruited volunteers and partners for the Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, hosted a meeting of 30 Strike Team personnel and created an educational brochure/web page for citizens of the region.
- ◆ Met with the staff of the Great Swamp Watershed Association to share ideas and discuss ways to collaborate on projects of mutual interest.
- ◆ Participated in the 2009 Conference of the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education. Teachers, naturalists, and others gathered to discuss ideas, projects, new initiatives and techniques for getting kids out of the classroom and interacting with the environment.
- ◆ Traveled to Trenton to meet with Mark Mauriello, New Jersey's new Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection. Executive Director Cindy Ehrenclou talked with him about high priority issues to gain a better understanding of his positions.
- ◆ Shared ideas and resources at a meeting of GIS Managers from New Jersey conservation organizations. This group is working to facilitate the creation of a central data bank for GIS (mapping) information pertaining to preserved lands owned and managed by not-for-profit organizations in the state.
- ◆ Attended the winter WaterWatch meeting sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. WaterWatch is a network for people involved in the state's volunteer water monitoring program. Topics of discussion included quality assurance and the development of procedures to match new research and sampling criteria.
- ◆ Established a partnership with the Equine Science program at Centenary College. Students in the program are learning about best management practices (BMPs) for equestrians, and we are working with them on two important projects. The students will prepare an educational "Best Management Practices" pamphlet for equestrian facilities and trail maintenance.
- ◆ In addition, they have begun environmental restoration projects which involve planting native vegetation on Fairview Farm and in an area subject to erosion at the Equine Center in Long Valley.



Upper Raritan Watershed

# For Your Consideration...

Cindy Ehrenclou, Executive Director

## Looking Back... A Decades-Long Project to Protect the Watershed

January 7, 2009... the headline reads “100M\$ Pact Settles Cleanup at Landfill... Combe Fill South.” For many readers, the name Combe Landfill is unfamiliar, but for longtime URWA folks, the headline represents one more chapter in a story that began nearly three decades ago.

In this year of reflection, I thought it important to flesh out some of the facts about this notorious landfill, the focus of so much of URWA’s work in the early 1980’s. My research began with a phone call to my predecessor, Dave Peifer, who told me firsthand the details of the Association’s involvement. Dave recounted tales of the battle to close the egregious landfill... tales that sounded more like a compelling espionage novel than an environmental protection project!

There was outright theatre in the battle to close the site: URWA’s fourth Director Daryl Caputo was arrested for trespassing while trying to collect water samples, angry mobs rallied at the Morris County courthouse chanting “No Love Canal in our town,” garbage trucks were backed up for miles while citizens laid down in the road to block their passage. Hearing Dave’s passion, I could only think that those must have been exciting times for an environmentalist, working on the frontier of uncovering abuses that had never before been defined as such.

The following is a summary that doesn’t begin to describe the dedication and hard work that URWA committed to protecting the watershed from this hazardous landfill. Beginning in 1980, URWA took the lead in identifying the source of the pollution that was leaching into Chester’s surface and ground water supplies. The Association first became aware of the situation while reacting to a fish kill in Trout Brook, a tributary that flows into the Black River. We raised funds for water testing and worked with Chester and Washington Townships to develop a monitoring network. URWA interpreted the lab results and educated citizens, putting out public statements. We took the test results to the NJDEP and the Division of Solid Waste. When the state looked the other way, we formed a citizen’s group, started a letter-writing campaign and met individually with legislators.

In the meantime, when the Combe Land Fill Corporation was moving to expand into a wetland, we stopped the development plans. The landfill was placed on the federal National Priorities List of Superfund sites in 1983 and URWA partnered with Chester and Washington Townships to get the project moved up to number 1. We continued to work with the NJ Geologic Survey to create water monitoring points, Dave Peifer testified at public hearings held by the NJDEP to challenge the remediation plans, and for years after the closing, URWA continued to watchdog the cleanup.

So, the headline of 2009 comes at the end of a very long story. Irresponsible waste haulers and corporations will pay their just dues, but it is a shame that local officials who have worked hard to balance their municipal budgets are now going to have to dig deep to pay for damages that they inherited.

### About the Combe Landfill South

- The 115 acre site is located on Parker Road in Chester Township
- Operating from the 1940s until 1981, the landfill accepted an estimated 200 tons of municipal wastes, sewage sludge, chemicals & waste oils on a daily basis
- After closing in 1981, contamination was detected in on-site ground water monitor wells & in nearby Trout Brook
- Several neighborhood residential wells were determined to be contaminated with volatile organic compounds
- Tests revealed radioactivity, heavy metals & 36 volatile substances including known carcinogens, benzene, chlorethane, ethylbenzene & toluene
- In 1986, the EPA & NJDEP began work to cap the site & install a massive system to continually pump out contaminated groundwater
- In 1997, construction work was finished & a 30 year remediation plan went into effect
- In 1998, federal & state authorities filed suit against the companies & towns that used the dump to pay for the mounting costs of the cleanup
- In January of 2009, the state Attorney General announced a \$100M settlement to reimburse the government, naming 200 third-party defendants, including local municipalities, to share the costs of the cleanup

Although laws and policies are now in place to prevent another Combe Landfill, the fact is, New Jersey is still producing more than 18.9 million tons of solid waste each year. That waste is placed into landfills or incinerated, and as it breaks down it enters our natural systems – the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil in which we grow our food. Each of us should be thinking about the environmental impacts of our consumption choices and at the very least, make a personal commitment to recycle, reuse and ask those around us to share the responsibility.

This year, as we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of URWA, we would like you to join us for a special celebration at the lovely Ellistan Estate in Peapack on Saturday, June 6th! URWA would not exist if it were not for some forward thinking conservationists who, in 1959, sprang into action to form URWA.

Our Dinner Dance, *Portraits of URWA ~ Celebrating Our Legacy*, will pay tribute to our founders and their families. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us on June 6th, as we celebrate URWA’s rich history and as we look toward the next 50 years of protecting the Upper Raritan Watershed!



## Focus on Preservation

### Burnt Mills Floodplain Preserve

The Burnt Mills Floodplain Preserve was established on December 21, 1989 when Ken & Yvonne Schley and Anne & Floyd Stradling deeded three parcels of land totaling 11.32 acres to URWA. The parcels had been in the Schley family and were bequeathed to Ken and Anne in 1944 upon the death of their father, Kenneth B. Schley. A grist mill was built on the floodplain shortly after the Civil War, and was taken down by Mr. Schley after he purchased the property in 1928. Its ruins still sit on the site today, adding historical interest to the preserve.

The site, on the Lamington River near the confluence of the North Branch, supports diverse wildlife including great blue heron, long-tailed salamanders, red shouldered hawks, barred owls, and freshwater mussels, including the threatened triangle floater (*Alasmidonta undulate* — learn more about this mussel in the “Creature Feature” on URWA’s web site at [www.urwa.org](http://www.urwa.org)). Each spring, under a canopy of sycamore, black cherry and ash, Virginia bluebells carpet the forest floor – it is a sight not to be missed!

Unfortunately, another plant also awaits springtime visitors – the Lesser celandine, a small yellow buttercup-like flower, is an invasive plant that is spreading across the site. Lesser celandine

spends much of the year underground as thickened, fingerlike tubers or underground stems. During the winter, leaves begin to emerge and photosynthesize in preparation for flowering. Flowering occurs from late winter through mid-spring, and afterwards, the above-ground portions die back. The plant spreads primarily through abundant tubers and bulblets, each of which is ready to become a new plant once separated from the parent plant. The tubers of Lesser celandine are prolific and may be unearthed and scattered by the digging activities of some animals, including well-meaning weed pullers, and transported during flood events. It is difficult, but not impossible, to control invasive plants like Lesser celandine, and URWA is committed to stopping its spread.

The preserve has been part of New Jersey’s Green Acres tax exemption program since 1990, and as is the case with all of URWA’s preserves, the Burnt Mills Floodplain is open to our members and the public for passive recreational purposes. The preserve is used by fishermen, photographers, walkers, kayakers and people who simply enjoy observing the natural world. On Sunday, April 19th, we’ll host a walk through the preserve – we invite all of URWA’s members and friends to join us to explore the site.



### Did You Know?

We are running out of places to put our garbage, and we must all therefore take steps to reduce the amount of waste we generate. We can, and should:

- s Refuse to purchase products that are over-packaged: snack packs with segmented plastic trays that are covered with plastic wrap and an outer cardboard shell, sealed plastic bottles of vitamins, deodorants and the like that are enclosed in cardboard boxes, fresh fruits and vegetables that are packaged in shrink wrap or Styrofoam trays instead of being sold loose, mail-order goodies that come from shipping houses who place already-boxed items into yet another box.
- s Buy reusable products: rechargeable batteries, refillable wine bottles and reusable containers are just a few examples.
- s Stop throwing things out! We need to recycle everything we possibly can, from foods and landscaping materials that can be composted in our own yards to all of the items that our waste haulers will accept to clothing and other household items that we no longer want but can be reused by someone else.
- s Buy recycled items.

Speak out whenever you see waste – talk to your governmental leaders, school and religious leaders, colleagues and neighbors. Help them understand the fact that the 4.6 pounds of trash we each typically generate every day really adds up, and persuade them to join you in reducing your contribution to landfills and incinerators!

# 2009 Spring Program Schedule

## Mid to Late March

### Stream Monitor Training Session for New Volunteers

Saturday, March 14th, 9:00 a.m. to Noon  
Fairview Farm Wildlife Preserve, 2121 Larger Cross Road, Bedminster  
Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.

To expand our monitoring sites in the watershed, volunteers are invited to adopt a stretch of the Black River in the Pottersville/Bedminster area. URWA staff will show volunteers how to collect macroinvertebrates, small critters whose presence indicate stream health. The data will be used to support water quality protection in the watershed.

### Take a Walk!

Sunday, March 15th, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Bray's Hill Preserve, 1225 Route 31 South, Clinton (Meet at the Municipal Building. We'll carpool to the Preserve.)  
Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.

The 94 acres of Bray's Hill Preserve was originally Simko's Farm, and its preservation is essential to the protection of the watershed. This area of mature woodland and endangered species habitat is adjacent to the watershed protection land of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, and may soon be incorporated into the Columbia Trail system.

## April

### Wake Up Call Breakfast: Water for Our Future

Wednesday, April 1st, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Limestone Café, 89 Main Street, Peapack  
\$15 per person.

Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.  
Ken Klipstein, Director of Watershed Protection Programs for the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, will talk with us about the state Department of Environmental Protection's proposed new Water Supply Plan.



### Second Sunday Program:

Sunday, April 12th, 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Fairview Farm Wildlife Preserve, 2121 Larger Cross Road, Bedminster  
Join us for a scavenger hunt that will lead you across many of the trails to some of the really special places at Fairview Farm. Come alone or bring your whole family for an afternoon of fresh-air fun to see how spring is unfolding at the preserve this year!



### Take a Walk!

Sunday, April 19th, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
URWA's Burnt Mills Floodplain Preserve, County Road 641 (Cowperthwaite Road just south of Milnor Road in Bedminster)  
Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.  
Bluebells will be in bloom as we walk along the Lamington River and through the riparian forest. We will search for spring ephemerals, native plants and migrating birds including Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. This path is not stroller friendly, and may be wet and muddy, so please wear boots.

## May

### Wake Up Call Breakfast: Integrated Pest Management

Wednesday, May 6th, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Limestone Café, 89 Main Street, Peapack  
\$15 per person. Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.  
Kris Holmstrom of Rutgers University will share interesting information about IPM.



### Second Sunday Program: Mother's Day Open House

Sunday, May 10th, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Fairview Farm Wildlife Preserve, 2121 Larger Cross Road, Bedminster  
Visit Fairview Farm to check out what's new along our Children's Trail, hike around the pond to see what the aquatic critters there are doing and spend some time in our Bird and Butterfly Garden to get inspired about the gardening projects that await you at home this year!

### Take a Walk!

Sunday, May 17th, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Teetertown Preserve, Pleasant Grove Road, Lebanon Township  
Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.

Join us for a walk through this 686 acre preserve which holds the headwaters of Spruce Run Creek. The densely wooded area serves as habitat for a variety of wildlife, including rare birds such as the Bobolink. We'll meet at the visitor center on Pleasant Grove Road.

### Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team Workshop

Wednesday, May 20th, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Duke Farms, Hillsborough  
Please register by emailing [melissa@urwa.org](mailto:melissa@urwa.org).  
This training will include a demonstration of the ED/RR technique, a review of data collected in the 2008 field season and field session on plant identification. New volunteers are invited!

## June

### Wake Up Call Breakfast

Wednesday, June 3rd, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Limestone Café, 89 Main Street, Peapack  
\$15 per person. Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.  
Please visit our web site at [www.urwa.org](http://www.urwa.org) for details about our program topic and guest speaker.

### Second Sunday Program: Bioillustration

Sunday, June 14th, Noon to 3:00 p.m.  
Fairview Farm Wildlife Preserve, 2121 Larger Cross Road, Bedminster  
Please call (908)234-1852 to register.  
Tap into your creative side and practice right brain exercises that will let you see your surroundings in a new way. Using various media and drawing techniques, you'll learn how to create accurate illustrations of nature. Instruction will take place from noon to 1:30 p.m. An open sketching session will follow from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### Take a Walk!

Sunday, June 21st, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Hedden County Park, Reservoir Avenue between East Randolph Avenue & Blackwell Street, Dover  
Please call (908) 234-1852 to register.  
Join us for a walk through this 380 acre park which features a six-acre lake and trails along the Jackson and Wallace brooks, which are trout



rosebay rhododendron

## Go Native!

Invasive species are wreaking havoc across the earth. In fact, plants and animals that spread outside their native habitats and displace native species are the second leading cause of loss of biodiversity worldwide, second only to habitat destruction.

Our Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team is working to remove invasive plants, and we need your help. The only way to stop invasive plants is to get rid of the seed source. PLEASE do your part – destroy any invasive plants that are growing on your property and replace them with native plants. DO NOT purchase invasive plants!

## 3 Easy Steps to Rid Invasive Plants From Your Landscape

### 1. Do not purchase invasives

It is legal for nurseries to sell invasive plants, even though they are causing great damage to ecosystems. If the public demands invasive plants, the nurseries will keep selling them. If the public demands native plants, they will become more readily available.

### 2. Remove them from your property

Identify the plants on your property that are invasive. They may be planted in your landscape and/or sprouting up as “weeds.” Common landscape invasives include Japanese barberry, linden viburnum, purple loosestrife, Chinese silver grass, burning bush, English ivy and Japanese wisteria. Common invasive weeds include Garlic mustard, narrowleaf bittercress and Japanese stiltgrass.

Techniques to remove invasive plants:

- ☼ Small plants & weeds can be pulled & burned or you can mulch them heavily.
- ☼ Larger shrubs & trees can be cut down. Allow each stump to re-sprout & spray the new leaves with herbicide. As an alternative, dig up shrubs & trees -- beware that small pieces of root can re-sprout.
- ☼ Check for re-sprouting. Some seed sources may survive up to 5 years.

### 3. Grow New Jersey Natives

There are lots of native plants to choose from, and there are a variety of online sources to help you learn about native alternatives to invasive plants. This list of commonly available natives will help you get started:

#### Trees

*Betula* (birch), *Cornus florida* (flowering dogwood), *Cercis canadensis* (redbud), *Amelanchier* (serviceberry), *Magnolia virginiana* (sweetbay magnolia), *Acer saccharum* (sugar maple), *Ilex opaca* (American holly)



sugar maple

#### Shrubs

*Viburnum dentatum* (arrowwood), *Ilex verticillata* (winterberry holly), *Vaccinium corymbosum* (blueberry), *Hamamelis virginiana* (witchhazel), *Rhododendron maximum* (rosebay rhododendron)



flowering dogwood

#### Flowers & Ferns

*Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly milkweed), *Penstemon digitalis* (beardtongue), *Monarda fistulosa* (bee balm), *Dicentra eximia* (fringed bleeding heart), *Iris versicolor* (blueflag iris), *Symphytotrichum novae-angliae* (New England aster), *Eupatorium* (Joe Pye weed), *Polystichum acrosticoides* (Christmas fern)

Some non-native plants have the same common names as natives. When shopping, be sure to check the scientific name of the plant to ensure that it is native before you make your purchase!



blueflag iris

For additional resources, including local sources of native plants, and more information about the Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, please visit [www.urwa.org/stewardship/cjisst.html](http://www.urwa.org/stewardship/cjisst.html)

# Volunteer Spotlight

**Our sincere thanks** go to the many individuals, businesses and organizations that helped out with important stewardship projects, educational programs and membership activities this winter...

- ★ Trustee Heather Gracie-Petty and Teacher Suzzanne Mahoney of the Willow School lent their time and talents to lead "Second Sunday" programs about birds and trees at Fairview Farm.
- ★ "Wake Up Call" breakfast programs featured Margaret O'Gorman of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey, who talked with us about the important modifications being made to the New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan and Sister Miriam MacGillis, co-founder of the Genesis Farm, who led a very interesting discussion about community-supported agriculture.
- ★ The Marrero Family was instrumental in the success of our Family Campfire in December, as were a number of URWA Trustees and teenage volunteers!
- ★ URWA Stewardship Committee Members have begun organizing "Friends of the Preserve" groups for three of URWA's properties across the watershed. Suki Dewey is leader of the Friends of Fox Hill Preserve in Tewksbury, Chuck Elmen-dorf is leader of the Friends of the Helen Woodman Preserve in Far Hills and Randy Little is leader of the Friends of the Rolfes Tract Preserve in Bernards Township.
- ★ Students from the Purnell School, led by their faculty advisor William Warlick, sorted all the donations collected at Fairview Farm for the Martin Luther King, Jr. clothing and toy drive.



## The Slow Walker: Mud Time

Snow still covers the fields and the temperature is in the high 20s this March morning, but the flocked robins high in a fence-row maple facing the rising sun glimmer red like ripe apples. In the marsh nearby, I hear red winged blackbirds call. I've already seen sunlit bluebirds and flickers working bare south-facing fields this month. Friends report the courtship flight of the woodcock. Signs of approaching spring are all around. But the path I'm walking is treacherous - muddy where the sun has been, icy in the half-shade, still covered with four or five inches of snow deep in the woods. My feet are damp and cold and I'm cursing myself for not wearing my rubber-soled snow pacs. This is the in-between time that Robert Frost wrote about in wintry New Hampshire: "The sun was warm but the wind was chill. You know how it is on an April day. When the sun is out and the wind is still, You're one month on in the middle of May." But just let a cloud cover the sun and what felt like blossomy May becomes bitter March, Frost continued in "Two Tramps in Mud Time." Here in New Jersey's March, a stream leading sharply downhill is high with snowmelt and recent rain. White water clatters around mossy boulders and rotting logs, glissades over hidden rock shelves, hisses through rapids that bisect small islands. Water tumbles into eddying pools releasing clouds of air bubbles that swirl downstream like darting bait fish. Spray-formed icicles hanging from fallen trees and low-bending witch hazel shrubs resemble pipe organs, Indian clubs, smooth pendant earrings, ridged dagger-like stalactites. I sit on a low bridge above the turmoil inhaling the energizing oxygen smell of churned vapor. Ominous percussive sounds come from beneath the water. Pounded air pockets? Shifting underwater stones? The world around me feels chaotic; constant flux strangely undecipherable. But as I stare at the surging ripples below me, I suddenly realize every drop is obeying a grand organizing principle: Gravity. Also, the melting snow is simply responding to the vernal equinox. And the early blackbirds, risking cold and food scarcity to gain the edge of a favorable nesting site - they're impelled by the irresistible urge to pass on their genes. Some semblance of order restored, I decide the main illogic here is the grown man sitting and shivering in wet boots.

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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Ms. Natalie Baan  
Mr. & Mrs. Jose Barquin  
Mr. & Mrs. John Gilbert  
Ms. Virginia Johnston  
&  
Mr. Dan Crisci  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Krimmel, II  
Mr. Tomas LaCosta  
Mr. & Mrs. Gus Larson  
Ms. Maureen Robinson  
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Schaefer  
Mr. Bredt Stanley  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Thompson  
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Weber



Members of Bridgewater Boy Scout Pack 154 enjoy an outing at Fairview Farm with Watershed Ambassador Suzanne Skrzenski on a warm winter day.



### What's Your Water Footprint?

Check out this new concept in water conservation education.

Water footprint calculators have been designed to help us compare our water usage to that of our peers. Visit

[www.thegreenw.com/category/water/](http://www.thegreenw.com/category/water/) to learn more about the notion of water footprints and see where you stand.



# News You Can Use

## Think and Act Carefully When Using Pesticides!

It's safe to say that we've all been bothered by a pest or two. It could be household creepy-crawlies that prompt you to reach for the Raid, or weeds in your garden that trigger a RoundUp strike. Either way, knowing how and when to use pesticides is important. Large scale use of pesticides is regulated by federal and state governments, but it's up to unregulated homeowners to take the next step in pesticide control.

Pesticides are chemicals designed to repel or kill things that we consider pests. Pesticides include insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides, fungicides, wood preservatives, molluscicides and disinfectants. Household pesticides usually contain a small amount of chemicals designed to kill the pest, called active ingredients, and inert ingredients to enhance the effectiveness of the pesticide. All household pesticides have some degree of toxicity and the potential to harm human health and the environment.

The growing understanding of pesticide danger is evident in the organic food movement that is sweeping our nation. Products deemed "natural" and "organic" are often preferred despite their higher price tags – often for good reason. Studies performed by the Harvard School of Public Health and Duke University have proved that exposure to even low levels of pesticides almost doubles the risk of developing Parkinson's disease later in life. The exposure of a

Category	Signal word required on label	Approximate amount that can be fatal (based on ingestion)
I Highly toxic	DANGER; POISON	A few drops to one teaspoon
II Moderately toxic	WARNING	One teaspoon to one ounce
III Slightly toxic	CAUTION	More than one ounce
IV Not toxic	CAUTION	

Signal words are required on pesticide labels to warn consumers of the acute toxicity from inhalation, ingestion and skin absorption.

fetus to pesticides through a mother's diet can cause neurological, physical and behavioral problems in the developing child. Skin contact, inhalation or ingestion of a pesticide may affect the endocrine system or increase your risk for certain cancers. The recent onset of honey bee Colony Collapse Disorder is partly blamed on pesticide use.

Pesticides have been regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency since 1972. Since then, a pesticide can be marketed only if it has been registered by the EPA and contains certain information on the label. Signal words (DANGER, POISON, WARNING, CAUTION) are required on pesticide labels to warn consumers of the acute toxicity of pesticides from inhalation, ingestion and skin absorption. Beyond our own health, the environment is also at risk. When thrown away as trash or poured down drains, pesticides may be released into the air, soil, surface water or ground-

water. Pesticides applied to gardens and lawns can run off and contaminate streams, rivers and groundwater. While this can be lessened by properly disposing of harmful chemicals and by planting native grasses, shrubs and trees along stream banks, reducing our use of harsh chemicals to control pests is just as important.

Evaluating your problem is key to finding the appropriate response. Do you really need to get rid of every weed or insect? A lawn that contains a bit of clover will produce enough nitrogen to fertilize itself if clippings are left on it after mowing. Milkweed, despite its name, provides food for Monarch butterflies. Don't assume that you always have a pest problem. Inspect your garden every week (check under the leaves!) to see if you have a problem. Learn to identify common pests and gauge the amount and type of treatment needed to save time, energy, money and your health.

*(Continued on page 9)*

# News You Can Use

## Pesticides *(Continued)*

Prevention of infestations will reduce your exposure to harsh chemicals. Caulk or screen all entry points into your home and remove food and water sources that could attract insects indoors. Corn meal sprinkled around the outside of your home may protect it from insect infestation. Corn gluten applied to your garden's soil in early spring will prevent many weeds from germinating, and those that do emerge can be sprayed with a mixture of vinegar and water. A mixture of a little dish detergent and water can be an effective insect control. Use small scale crop rotation with garden and decorative plants to discourage persistent pest populations. By using a variety of methods, you'll decrease populations enough that you may not have to use chemicals and reduce the chance that pests will develop resistance to any one method.

If your problem calls for the use of a pesticide, it is important to properly use and store the chemical you intend to use. Always follow these practices when using and storing pesticides.

- ☞ Purchase only the amount needed for the specific pest you need to control.
- ☞ Keep pesticides in their original containers with the labels intact and mark your applicators clearly. Pesticides may lose toxicity when exposed to extreme temperatures or stored for too long.
- ☞ Always wear gloves and a protective mask.
- ☞ Apply only the amount recommended on the label. Using more won't necessarily mean increased insect protection, and it may leave harmful residues. You violate the law if you use a pesticide in any manner contrary to the label directions.
- ☞ Carefully target the area to which you apply the pesticide. Excess pesticide fumes or residue may threaten beneficial species in close proximity.
- ☞ Apply dusts and sprays **only** when the wind is calm.
- ☞ Pregnant women should avoid exposure to pesticides. Children and pets should not play on or near areas where pesticides have recently been applied.
- ☞ Avoid applying pesticides to blooming plants where pollinating insects are working, or to birds' nests.
- ☞ Use the product as directed completely before disposing of its container. Doing so will eliminate the risk that someone handling your trash could inadvertently spill a large amount in a concentrated area.

When you are finished using a pesticide product be sure to dispose of it, and its container, properly. There are drop-off events throughout the year in each county across the Upper Raritan watershed. The spring schedule for these events follows:

### Hunterdon County

March 14<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Hunterdon County Complex  
314 State Route 12, Flemington  
See [www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/solidwaste/cleanup.htm](http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/solidwaste/cleanup.htm) or call (908) 788-1110 for more information.

### Morris County

Program dates and locations are still being confirmed. See [www.mcmua.com/HazardousWaste/HHWDisposalDays.htm](http://www.mcmua.com/HazardousWaste/HHWDisposalDays.htm) or call (973) 829-8006 for more information.

### Somerset County

March 28<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Bernards Twp. Public Works Garage  
77 South Maple Ave., Basking Ridge  
*and*  
May 9<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Warren Twp. Public Works Garage  
1 Bardy Road, Warren  
See [www.co.somerset.nj.us/planweb/hazwasteday.htm](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/planweb/hazwasteday.htm) or call (908) 231-7021 for more information.

*Instead of reaching for a bottle of commercially prepared herbicide when you want to get rid of weeds, mix ½ cup salt, 1 cup vinegar and ¼ cup dish soap in a spray bottle. Spray the mixture to eliminate weeds in flower beds, between patio stones and in the lawn. The vinegar kills weeds, the salt stops them from regrowing and the dish soap holds everything in place until the job is done. Be careful when you apply the spray -- this natural herbicide can't tell the difference between a weed and your favorite dogtooth violet!*



Seeing is believing! The Bird and Butterfly Garden at Fairview Farm thrives each year without the use of commercial fertilizers and pesticides.





Spring, 2009



### Help Us Go Green

URWA members can receive newsletters (including our new monthly program update, which is available only via email) and other correspondence electronically. To request this service, send an email to [sbrookman@urwa.org](mailto:sbrookman@urwa.org) with "URWA News" as the message heading. Please be sure to include your full name. Rest assured — we will not share our list or overwhelm you with spam.



Upper Raritan Watershed Association  
P.O. Box 273  
Gladstone NJ 07934

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PAID  
Gladstone, NJ 07934  
Permit No. 26

## Join URWA Today!

It's easy to become a member, and your contribution will support URWA's work to protect and preserve the natural resources of the Upper Raritan watershed.

To join URWA, or to renew your membership (the renewal date for members is printed at the top of the mailing label), please visit [www.urwa.org](http://www.urwa.org) and submit your annual dues payment electronically through our secure website or mail your check to us at:  
P.O. Box 273, Gladstone, NJ 07934

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Student/Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Friend    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Benefactor        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Patron  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Steward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 Guardian        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 Life |  |

URWA is recognized by the IRS as a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization, and contributions are deductible for income tax purposes as allowed by law.