

TRAILBLAZER

February - March 2016



*Supporting Oregon Ridge Park
and Nature Center for 32 years*



WHAT'S GOING ON AT OREGON RIDGE?

Working for Forest Health

**Written Collaboratively by
Ted Martello, Mary Jane Shanks, and Jim Curtis
Council Board Members**

If you are one who regularly enjoys hiking through the woods and meadows at Oregon Ridge Park, you may be asking yourself, "What the heck is going on?" There are trees disappearing, pipes stacked high, new roadways popping up, areas of a meadow turning to stone, some trails closing, and new plants taking over in places where trees once grew. Just what is happening at Oregon Ridge?

The answer is *much*! You may know from reading previous issues of the *Trailblazer* that a major project has begun in Oregon Ridge's forest interior — the expansion of the Columbia Gas pipeline. You may not know that a County led tree-thinning project to promote the regeneration of oak trees is also occurring simultaneously with the pipeline activities. Together these two projects have created a classic scenario of *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* at Oregon Ridge.

Let's start with *The Good*. Both projects were launched with good intentions to help either humans or populations of native species, both plant and animal. The pipeline expansion will bring better services to many Maryland citizens. The tree thinning is a result of a 2007 forest assessment that showed the oak tree population disappearing from the forest due in large part to overcrowding by other, less beneficial trees. Thinning will hopefully allow oak regeneration.

As often happens, two nasty cousins, *The Bad and The Ugly*, are shadowing *The Good*. *The Bad* is that both projects have created problems for Oregon Ridge. The pipeline comes with some expected problems, several of which are temporary: the loss of many healthy, mature trees, inconvenience to hikers

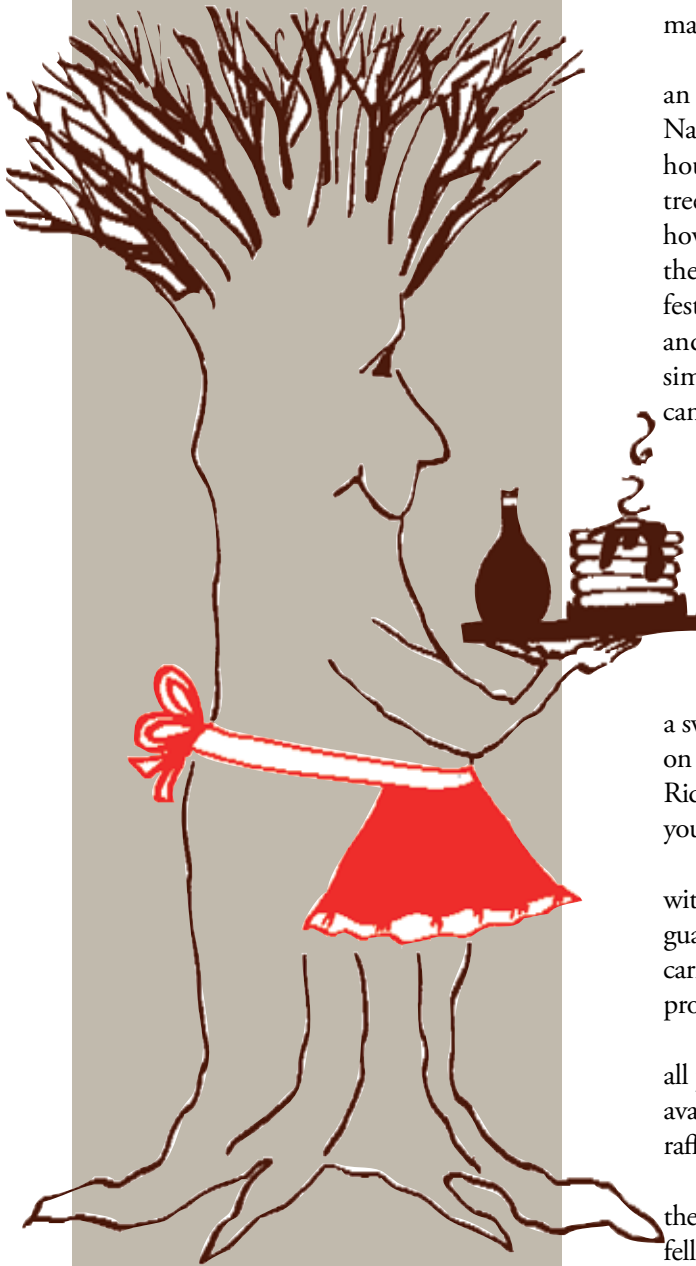
(continued on page 6)



MS. MAPLE INVITES YOU TO MAPLE SUGARING 2016

**MS. MAPLE IS READY
TO SERVE YOU!**

*One stack or two?
Don't forget seconds
on the sausage!*



MAPLE SUGARING WEEKENDS **An Oregon Ridge Spring Tradition**

February 20, 21, 27 and 28
10 AM - 4 PM It's FREE

The tapping of maple trees is a rite of passage from winter into spring. Gray days, snow, wind, ice and freezing rain are coming to an end. Trees are preparing to bud, the sun is shining brighter, and people are coming outdoors. Here at Oregon Ridge, maple sugaring is a time-honored tradition. The staff is anxious to get outside to collect that sweet something called *sap* from our maple trees and transform the watery substance into sticky, sweet syrup!

Two weekends in February are dedicated to taking public groups out on an adventurous hike to the sugar bush, a woodland area filled with Mother Nature's maples. Hikes begin at 10 AM, and then subsequently on each hour until the last leaves the Sugar Shack at 3 PM. Each group hike includes tree identification, tapping demos, sap collection, and demonstrations on how syrup is made. If we're lucky, there will be demonstrations of "sugar on the snow" (maple taffy) at 12:30 and 3:45 PM at the Sugar Shack. Other festivities include face painting, movies, animal encounters and maple syrup and candy sales. Bring family and friends to learn about the amazingly simple, yet prolonged, process of making maple syrup. Techniques shown can be used for backyard tapping!

ORNC COUNCIL'S 30TH ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

March 5 & 6, Lodge, 8 AM – Noon
Adults \$7, \$4 for Children Age 2-8

Oregon Ridge's Annual Pancake Breakfast provides many supporters with a sweet way to give back to their favorite park and nature center, while feasting on pancakes smothered in pure maple syrup. The breakfast supports the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council and its mission to support all of those things that you love to see and do at the Nature Center.

This marks the 30th year the Council has served breakfast to our supporters, with nearly 200 volunteers doing so much more than flipping pancakes to guarantee a festive dining event. Each dollar raised goes to making better trails, caring for animals, creating new and interactive exhibits, maintaining gardens, promoting new events, and keeping costs low or free for your favorite programs.

No reservations are required; pay at the door. Please bring cash or check for all purchases. Your plate of pancakes will include grilled sausage (veggie option available) and a choice of orange juice, milk, coffee or tea. Music, face painting, raffles, maple syrup sales and more add to the festivities.

We hope to see you there, but if you can't attend, consider supporting the Council with a \$30 donation for their 30 years of providing community fellowship. Behind the scenes, the Council is busy making plans to renovate the library and construct a future pavilion that will come to fruition in 2016. And, there is so much more to come! (*Donations by check to ORNCC or via credit card on our web site at oregonridgenaturecenter.org/Donations.html.*)

ORNC COUNCIL SPEAKER SERIES

RESTORING THE OREGON RIDGE FOREST

By Donald C. Outen, AICP

March 21 at 7:30 PM, Free Admission

Don Outen, Baltimore County's Natural Resource Manager for Forest Sustainability, will present the past, present and future efforts to improve the sustainability of the forest ecosystem at Oregon Ridge Park. Based on a detailed forest health assessment conducted in 2007, a management plan was developed to assure future forest health. Don will share the results of the assessment that precipitated the need for forest management, primarily the dire decline of the oak population throughout the Park. Don will also describe the continuing program to manage the Oregon Ridge forest to protect water quality, provide for native habitat, and enhance recreational experiences for citizens in the face of not only oak decline, but of Gypsy Moths and other pests, invasive plants, and deer herbivory.

Don Outen, a Baltimore native, earned his B.S. from TU and M.S. from Johns Hopkins in Geography and Planning. Don has worked in land use planning and environmental management in Maryland since 1973. He is a Charter Member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Since 1987, Don has helped develop and manage environmental

programs for Baltimore County's Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, including assessment and project management for forest health at County parks. He's a member of the Core Group of the national Sustainable Forests Roundtable, and is a member of the Governor's Sustainable Forestry Council. Don received the 2015 Chesapeake Forest Champion, Life Time Achievement Award from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the US Forest Service.



TRAIL GUIDES SHARE ENTHUSIASM FOR NATURE

Training Set for February 2 - 4 and/or September 6 - 9, 10 AM to 1 PM

One of the oldest and best volunteer programs at Oregon Ridge is Trail Guiding. Oregon Ridge was the first to create such a group, and now all other Nature Centers have followed their lead. The program is designed for all those people who are still kids at heart and garner immense pleasure from exploring the woods, meadows, fields, and streams at Oregon Ridge. They perk with enthusiasm and want to share that very youthful feeling with the young. Trail Guides at Oregon Ridge lead small groups of visiting school children (along with their adult chaperones who enjoy the chance to be kids again) through the habitats at Oregon Ridge for a hands-on nature experience that no schoolroom can replicate.

If you are a nature enthusiast and enjoy sharing with children, join one of our Trail Guide Training sessions. Learn how to lead maple sugaring hikes and hikes to find snakes, turtles, birds, reptiles and amphibians, all sorts of plants, and more. Most days will include outdoor, hands-on learning.

First time volunteers donate \$20 when registering, which is refunded after leading a solo field trip. We encourage new volunteers to observe seasoned Trail Guides and staff before leading a hike on their own. All Trail Guides are invited to join us on our monthly *Trail Guide Field Trip* to other nature centers and parks to learn more about nature.

For more info or to register, contact ORNC 9 AM – 3 PM weekdays: (410) 887-1815, info@oregonridgenaturecenter.org.

WHAT'S COMING UP THIS SPRING?

BECOME A MASTER NATURALIST AND START FEELING GOOD

Training Set for April 4 - May 23



For quite some time now, long enough to safely proclaim its overwhelming success, the Master Naturalist program has been conducted in various nature facilities in Maryland and throughout the United States. It is actually quite an ingenious program that has elevated volunteerism and stewardship in the fortunate areas it touches. The program is appealing on so many levels of the human psyche — ego and all. First, it educates. People from all walks of life, who share a common interest in nature and the environment, have a chance to come together and learn about something for which they are passionate. At the end of the training, dangling out there like the proverbial carrot, is a title — MASTER NATURALIST. How cool is that! It's almost akin to earning a degree. Picture oneself at a party, talking to unfamiliar faces, and when the inevitable question is asked, answering, "I'm a *Master Naturalist*." The conversation suddenly shifts from small talk to something much more interesting.

But, there is a catch. To get the title, you must earn it. In addition to the 60 hours of training, you have to commit to 40 hours of doing something substantial that is good for your community and nature. Once that goal is achieved, you are a Master Naturalist. So, is that it? No. To remain a Master Naturalist, the 40 hour commitment continues yearly, but by then you're hooked! The title comes with new friends, a sense of belonging to a special group, a feeling of real achievement, recognition, and all that feels GOOD. It leaves most participants with an *I must have more of that!* incentive to continue doing what feels good and is good. Ingenious idea!

The spring Master Naturalist training is coming up, April 4th to May 23rd, from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. Training costs \$250. Drop by the Nature Center for an application, or visit the Master Naturalist web site:

www.masternaturalist.umd.edu.

**GET IN ON THIS
GREAT PROGRAM AND
DO SOME GOOD!**

BIRDS AND FUNGI ARE TOPICS FOR SPRING SPEAKER SERIES

The 2015/16 Speaker Series, hosted by the Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council, ends with two diverse topics:

On April 18, Carolyn Mathur, a retired York College biology professor turned photographer, will give a stunning presentation titled *Through the Looking Glass*. She will describe her journey into the world of birding and share her expertise in bird photography.

This year's Speaker Series ends May 16, with a look at the fascinating world of fungi presented by biologist Tovi Lehmann. It is simply titled *Fungus*.



There is a summer hiatus before the Speaker Series for 2016/17 begins in September. If you would like to be considered as a speaker, or if you know of someone you would like to hear at Oregon Ridge, please contact Michele Steinitz through the Nature Center. Watch for the new schedule in the fall issues of the *TRAILBLAZER*.

FOLLOW THE PIED PIPER -- MUSIC IN THE WOODS IS MOVING!

New Date: June 4, 2016

New Time: 2 to 8 PM

Music in the Woods and our *Annual Picnic* are now one. We've decided to combine two fun programs to make one fantastic day of musical merriment. The best of both will take place throughout the day on Saturday, June 4th, beginning with music, animal encounters, crafts, and tasty treats at 2 PM and ending at 8 PM with roasted marshmallow s'mores around the campfire. Admission is still free.

Watch for the upcoming April-June newsletter for more information about Music in the Wood 2016.



EACH TEEN RIDGE RUNNER AT ORNC IS UNIQUE

MADDIE ROZICS: A Versatile Ridge Runner



Maddie Rozics was looking for a volunteer opportunity that connected with her lifelong interest in animals and nature. She had attended some of the Oregon Ridge camps as a kid, so it's not surprising that she came here to find just such an opportunity as a member of the teen Ridge Runner program.

Maddie has put her past experience to work by helping out at summer camps, which has become her favorite Ridgie job since it means being outside all day. She says she loves working with the kids because "...they really look up to you and can always find a way to make you laugh." She also loves that being a Ridgie allows her to have a "...huge group of people surrounding you that have the same interest in nature as you do."

Among her indoor chores, Maddie especially enjoys caring for the gray tree frogs. "I love putting them on my fingers and feeling their webbed toes. I honestly wish there was a giant room filled with them where you could just walk inside and they'd just stick all over you." Maddie's love for animals began at home. She has two miniature pinchers named Tyson and Chocolate, a ferret named Slinky, and an albino corn snake named Casperetta that really belongs to her sister. There are also five painted turtles living in her pond.

Maddie is a versatile individual, with diverse interests. She is most moved by music and easily picks up on new instruments, including guitar, piano, and ukulele. She is a good student at Hereford High, where she is a junior with a 3.95 GPA. She doesn't have much time to read, but when she does, she enjoys murder/crime mysteries and non-fiction books about the workings of the mind. In fact, her favorite subject is psychology, and she hopes to one day earn her MBA in Criminal Psychology. Before beginning college, however, Maddie wants to go backpacking out west. She says her favorite pastime is being outside and photographing nature.

Maddie has a funny outdoor, Ridge Runner story to share. It should be titled 'Rooster Ruckus.' Her account: *Recently I brought my sister and her friend into the Nature Center, since they are interested in becoming Ridge Runners once they're old enough.*

We were taking care of the rooster, and he ended up escaping and rummaging through the woods. It ended up taking me, another ridge runner, and two other staff members to catch him! I never thought it'd take so much energy to outsmart a rooster!

Maddie thinks being a Ridge Runner is "...a great opportunity to get a hands-on experience working with animals, to socialize and make friends with a lot of people you work with, and also to meet new people who come to the nature center, events, or camps." If you or someone you know loves animals and nature, call Naturalist Jessica Jeannetta during weekdays to set up an interview.

TRAILBLAZER STAFF

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Articles/graphics for April - June issue due Feb. 29
Color versions of the *Trailblazer* are on our web site.

**Become a Member of a
Great Team of Teens!**

Become an ORNC Ridge Runner!

due to trail closure, unsightly staging areas for equipment, and some concern over the effects on the Park's pristine streams. The tree thinning has created an unintended and more challenging problem, which is *The Ugly*. The aforementioned forest assessment did not predict or account for the growth of very ugly Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*). Increased sunlight in the first thinned area produced fertile ground for these tough, invasive grasses. The stiltgrass is not easily eliminated and is smothering new oak and other native plants. It may take years to eliminate the stiltgrass in this area, but there is still time to prevent this invasive from taking hold in the recently thinned areas.

A little history and education will be helpful to understanding what is happening in regards to forest management. Oregon Ridge forest is Baltimore County's premier public forest. Back in 2007, the Baltimore County Department of Environment hired Westminster based Mar-Len Environmental to perform a forest health assessment and to draw up a management plan for Oregon Ridge's 895 forested acres. This plan was guided by the main objectives of conservation of forest health and regeneration, and structural and biological diversity. Stated in the plan, it "provides recommendations for silvicultural (forest growing) operations that may be implemented to sustain natural oak regeneration without diminishing the functional value of the forest for water quality, wildlife habitat, passive recreation or forest health." Further, the plan states the following: "In order to sustain an oak dominated forest, environmental threats currently present such as pests and diseases (e.g. Gypsy Moth), invasive plants, and the high deer population must be controlled. Forest health and vitality will also be improved by reducing environmental stress caused by over crowding."

So what was learned about the health of the Oregon Ridge forest? While a healthy oak forest is comprised of a diverse age and canopy structure as well as a floor covered in sprouting acorns, they found inadequate regeneration in all random sample plots selected within 22 forest stands in Oregon Ridge. Due to an even edged, closed canopy forest, very low light levels are reaching the forest floor, retarding seed germination. Additionally, the plan reported that as a result of deer browsing, 54% of the field plots sampled lacked oak generation, as well as regeneration of any other native species. Have you noticed while hiking Oregon Ridge's trails that you can often see quite far when peering through the woods? Evident here is a visible browse line from the ground up to about 5 feet — a telltale sign of whitetail deer.

The County has taken a multi-step approach to improve the forest health. To control the deer population the County has implemented three deer culls in the last four years. There has also been some limited pest and invasive plant control. However, the most extensive and observable effort has been in the forest thinning operation. The thinning of the forest canopy has occurred in different portions of the forest referred to as Stands 1, 2, 3, 4 and 12 at Oregon Ridge (*see map*). The thinning of 37 acres comprising Stand 1 was completed in 2013, resulting



These photos chronicle what has been happening in the forest at Oregon Ridge.

- The top photo shows a fenced area that has prevented deer from browsing. Notice the striking difference in understory/ground growth from one side to the other.
- The middle photo shows Stand 1 after thinning took place in 2013.
- The bottom photo shows the rapid spread of Japanese Stilt Grass in the same stand since 2013.

These grayscale photos are not the best. Please visit our web site to see more clearly in the color version of this article.

in the unexpected growth and spread of the ugly Japanese stiltgrass. Stands 2, 3, 4 were thinned in 2015, and Stand 12 is scheduled for Spring 2016.

You may wonder why we are so in favor of oak species in our forests. The oak species are considered the most ecologically important species in the Chesapeake Bay Region's forests. They are known as a *keystone species*. Without keystone species, the ecosystem would be dramatically different or cease to exist altogether. Oaks are critical for maintaining high stream water quality. In addition to functional benefits related to water quality and the soil food web, nearly 100 species of mammals and birds depend on acorns as an essential high-energy food source, especially during the scarcity of winter. In the spring, young oak foliage is consumed by more than 530 species of moth caterpillars, which in turn are fed to the hatchlings of over 150 species of resident birds and neo-tropical migratory birds. This far exceeds the number of species supported by maples and other trees.

Recently an independent group commissioned Brian Knox, President of

Sustainable Resource Management, Inc., to assess the tree thinning that has taken place to date. Among other observations, the report confirms what onlookers have seen, and states that in Stand 1 Japanese stiltgrass now covers nearly 100% of the area, deer browsing continues to suppress successful regeneration, and the canopy was not opened enough for successful oak regeneration. The report contains recommendations to kill the invasive grass, which requires the use of manual and chemical suppression over multiple years.

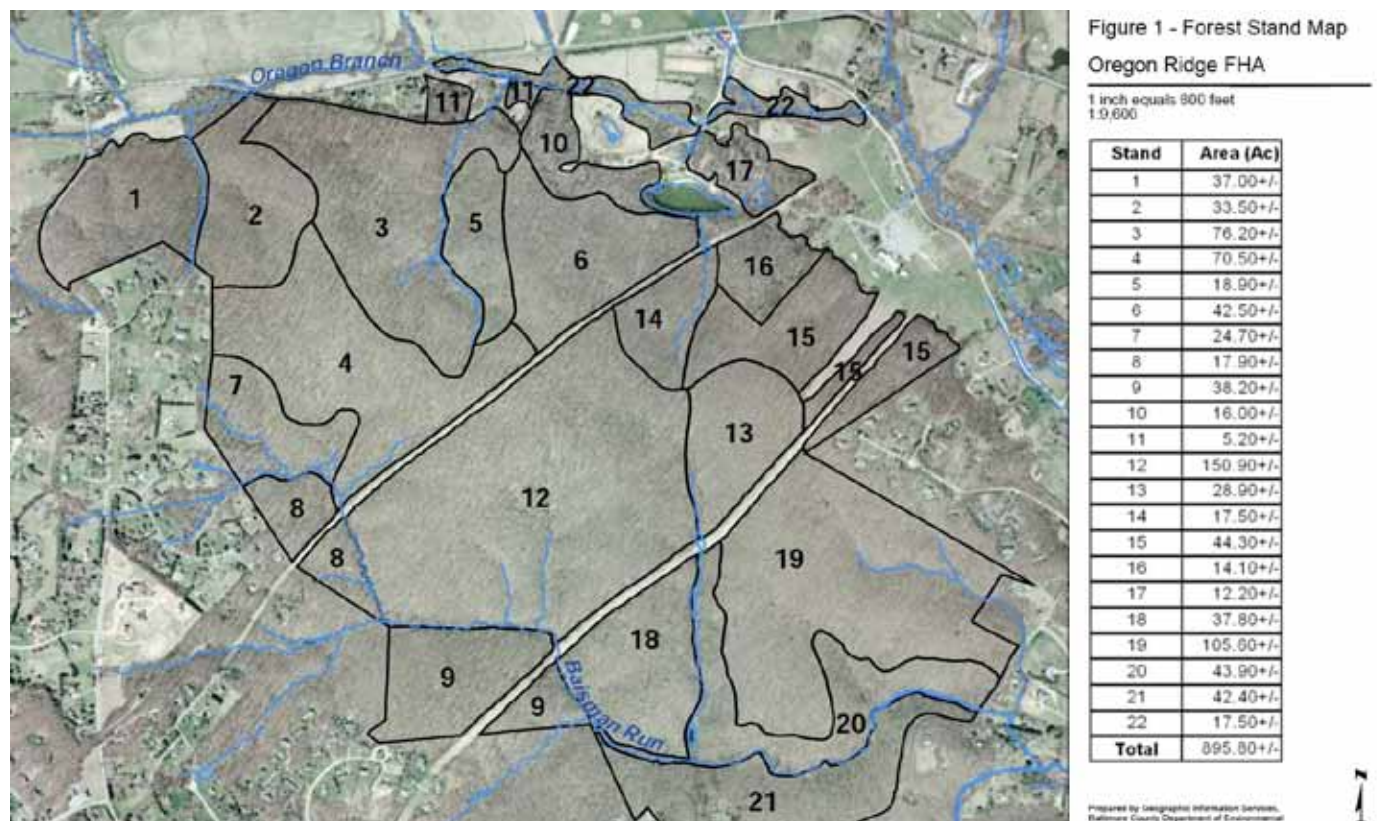
Fortunately, the people involved with these projects are now aware of *The Bad* and *The Ugly*. *The Good* will hopefully reign with the County's response to the invasive grass and deer problems, as well as corrective measures being taken by Oregon Ridge volunteers, especially those working with the Trailblazer Team and the Habitat Team. The Trailblazer team is already making plans to introduce beneficial trees to affected areas and help the County attack the Japanese stiltgrass. You, too, can help by joining one of these teams. Contact the Nature

Center and ask for a calendar of upcoming events. You can also help by providing feedback and observations to our public land management agency: Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability.

For a chance to learn more and ask questions, please attend the March 21 Speaker Series to hear Don Outen's presentation *Restoring The Oregon Ridge Forest* (see article on page 2). Don Outen is Baltimore County's Natural Resource Manager for Forest Sustainability. You can obtain more detailed information about the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability - Forest Health Assessment and Forest Management Plan for Oregon Ridge Park by visiting the following link:

<http://resources.baltimorecountymd.gov/Documents/Environment/forestandtrees/orpplanmain130308.pdf>

(Photos for this article by Jim Curtis. The front page photo is one of the beautiful oaks in Stand 3.)



OWLS GIVE A HOOT

By Naturalist Winny Tan, ORNC Director

Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all? is the vocalization that we describe for the hooting sound from the barred owl. The Nature Center just acquired a barred owl from a Virginia wildlife rehabilitator in late summer of 2015. This owl was hit by a car and no longer has the vision that it once had, making it difficult for the owl to hunt. Thus, it was deemed non-releasable and the Nature Center staff will now care for it while using it for educational programs. The new barred owl is becoming one of our most popular live animal ambassadors, as people are connecting educational facts with conservation value of these magnificent birds of prey.

As children, we learn that an owl hoots. Different owl species hoot differently, and not all owls give out a hoot. Each bird species has a unique language to find one another in the immense tree landscape, but most necessarily so in the vastness of the dark night. Each owl uses different vocalizations to communicate. Owls hoot, but also whistle, bark, snore, buzz, screech, cough, hiss and snap beaks to relay messages, such as fear, and to display aggression, defend a territory, find a mate, and call to parents for food. A screech owl utters a whinnying sound, while the barn owl lets out a rasping screech that sounds like terrible screaming. The great horned owl stakes out its territory with a low, syncopated hooting. Biologists compare the various hooting sounds to Morse code - the repeated song phrases range from simple and short to long and drawn out so that each species of owl can distinguish their own kind easily.

The majority of owls in Maryland are nocturnal, though some are more crepuscular (active during the early hours of dawn and dusk). Since these raptors cannot see in absolute darkness, they must adapt to be skilled hunters and are well equipped to use whatever light is available. A barn owl has visual sensitivity at least 35 and possibly up to 100 times better than humans, helping it avoid trivial branches and obstructions as it flies. Owls also have big, forward facing eyes, though not true “eyeballs.” Their tube-shaped eyes are completely immobile, providing binocular vision that fully focuses on their prey with well-developed depth perception. To make up for the lack of eye movement, owls will bob and pivot the head to take in several viewpoints. Owls can rotate their necks 270 degrees and have a blood-pooling system that allows brain and eye functions to occur when the neck movement cuts off circulation.

To augment the difficulty of seeing at night, owls have acute hearing. Many owl species have asymmetrical ears to pinpoint the location of sounds in multiple



dimensions. The ear openings, called apertures, are hidden by the array of feathers behind the eyes. The facial feathers are arranged like a radar dish, collecting sound waves and funneling the sound into the ears. An owl's brain creates a mental image of the space where the sound source is located. Once the owl has determined the direction of its prey, it flies toward it, keeping its head in line with the direction of the last sound the prey made. If the prey moves, the owl is able to make corrections mid-flight.

I am lucky to be able to enjoy many *owl* moments as part of my workday. I am grateful to be in a profession that provides so many opportunities to enjoy nature while learning and working. During campout programs, I have heard the barred owl call over and over, always around 1 AM. It is amazing to experience this succinct timing on each campout. I saw snowy owls while attending a birding workshop as part of my yearly continuing education. The sight was breathtaking and worth the trip to Assateague. The first time I saw a barn owl was while driving into work as the morning sun was starting to come up. I also rescued a baby great horned owl that fell out of its nest, and watched it perform its head bobbing and fanned-out wing display to intimidate me. It was a precious moment. Even in my personal life, awaking to a great horned owl's distant hoots drifting through my open bedroom window excites me enough to rouse my kids so they can hear it, too!

Working with an owl is amazing. Their powerful, sharp talons can seize prey, killing it instantaneously; nevertheless, they can gently grasp my gloved arm as a perch. When peering into those immense eyes, which seem to see and understand everything, one can comprehend the myths and superstitions that have surrounded owls for centuries. Seeing an owl in the wild is even more breathtaking and never fails to astound the lucky onlooker graced to be in the presence of these kings and queens that rule the forest at nightfall. Owls are so highly adapted to night that no other predator is a worthy opponent. Owls are definitely something to hoot about!

COME AND SEE OUR NEW AND IMPROVED EXHIBITS!



If you are not a regular visitor to the Nature Center, there are some surprises in store for your next visit. The Exhibit Committee and the ORNC staff have been very busy in 2015.

Upon entering the Nature Center exhibit hall, the first new exhibit you'll see is the *Conservation Kiosk*. This iPad display includes numerous topics on conservation and ecological issues. The exhibit offers personal and practical solutions towards meaningful improvements in the environment, reminding us that everyone can make a difference by the actions they choose. The kiosk will be changed and updated to keep it current with ongoing exploration in conservation.

In the animal room, you'll find a beautiful mural depicting the native flora and fauna that can be seen around our Park. This mural provides a complimentary backdrop to the reptiles, amphibians and insects that live within that space.

The Nature Center has also renovated the *Woodpecker Display*. Realistic color illustrations of native woodpeckers are accompanied with audio species identification and authentic sample sounds, tapping and calls. Next to the *Woodpecker Display*, near the windows overlooking the deck, is a new *Lift and Learn Bird Exhibit*. This beautifully rendered panel invites you to explore and discover the birds that are indigenous to the Piedmont region. It depicts the natural habitat in which these birds are found. This exhibit will also change periodically, so be sure to check it out each time you visit.

Future plans include a habitat display that will visually explain the Piedmont region and its importance to the ecosystem. Efforts are also being made to improve the display of historical artifacts found in the region, which shows visitors how the past has affected the land. The Exhibit Committee strives to provide both visually pleasing and educational exhibits to be enjoyed by all who visit the Center. We are continuously working to enhance your experiences at the Nature Center and Park.



**Visit Often to See What's
New and Improved in 2016!**

PLEASE DONATE TO OREGON RIDGE NATURE CENTER COUNCIL'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

College bound high school seniors from Baltimore County and City, who are committed to the health of the environment and plan to earn degrees in environmental science and nature education, can start on the path to success with a scholarship awarded by the ORNC Council.

**This year we will support
at least two scholarships
up to \$3000 each.**

**YOU can help by giving generously to the
2016 Scholarship Fund.**

Your tax-deductible donations should be made payable to the **ORNC Council, Inc.** (specify *Scholarship Fund* on the note line) and sent to:

*Oregon Ridge Nature Center Council
13555 Beaver Dam Road
Cockeysville, MD 21030*

Donor's names will be published. If you would like to make a gift in another's name, please specify the name as it should appear on the list.

If you know a high school senior who may be eligible for a scholarship, information and application forms are available on our web site: www.oregonridgenaturecenter.org.

**Applications should be postmarked no
later than Friday, April 1, 2016.**

**Thank You for Helping Us Put
Our Future Environmental Leaders
on the Path to Success.**



HELP SAVE THE BAY AT TAX TIME: Check Line 35



If you are like most Marylanders, you love your blue crabs and you love the Chesapeake Bay. So it should be an easy decision for you to check Line 35 on your 502 tax form to help save the Bay by voluntarily contributing

to the *Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund*. (If you are filing out of State, check line 38 on Form 505.)

The proceeds from this check-off are split evenly between Bay restoration grants provided by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and rare species programs run by the Wildlife and Heritage Division of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. With fully 90% of the Trust's expenditures directed to Chesapeake Bay restoration and education programs, Maryland residents can be confident that their donations are leveraged appropriately. Whatever amount you donate this year is tax deductible next year.



Birthday Parties

at Oregon Ridge Nature Center

Party Animals!



**Celebrate your birthday
like a party animal!**

Engaging activities, games, and
live encounters with animals!

Parties are 2-hours long with
1-hour of fun and exciting indoor/
outdoor naturalist led activities
and 1-hour of self-led celebration
and cake.

Cost:

Members: \$225

Non-members: \$250

Booking now Open!



Oregon Ridge
Nature Center



For more information, contact the nature center at: 410-887-1815
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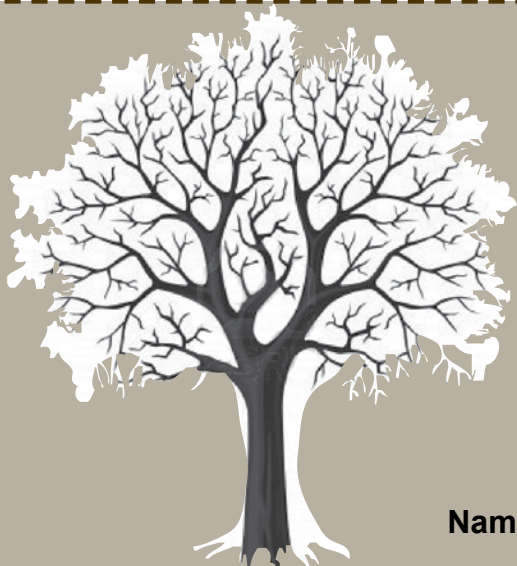


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DEPARTMENT OF
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RENEW NOW. SIGN UP A FRIEND, TOO!

**SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION
FOR MEMBERS BEGINS 3/1/2016!**

(Forms online. No phone reservations accepted.)

Many branches make a strong tree. Many members make a strong Council. **You can now join or renew online. Please visit: <http://oregonridgenaturecenter.org/membership.html>**

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

____ \$ 15 Individual
____ \$ 30 Family
____ \$ 75 Supporting

____ \$ 250 Sustaining
____ \$ 500 Lifetime
____ \$ Extra Donation



Checks payable to ORNC Council, Inc., 13555 Beaver Dam Rd., Cockeysville, MD 21030