

# BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

Spring 2019

www.bluemountainwildlife.com

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**THE PRESERVATION  
AND CONSERVATION OF  
THE WILDLIFE AND  
WETLANDS ALONG THE  
SCENIC SCHUYLKILL  
RIVER IN NORTHERN  
BERKS AND SOUTHERN  
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**



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## SEASON OF REBIRTH

The spring of Two Thousand Nine-teen arrived almost with the anticipation of Christmas or a birthday. We all knew something interesting was going to happen and we had a good idea as to what that something was, but the mystery surrounding what it all would look like when it was done was why we were collectively holding our breaths.

The one thing that did happen was the Wetlands Mitigation Project. The project kicked off in late March and was in full swing by the end of the spring.

The other thing, the one that didn't happen, was the removal of the New Kernsville Dam. The project stalled

with a negative review from the PA Museum and Historical Commission over PA DCNR's plan to remove all man-made structures from the Kerny. The meeting with a number of stakeholders in April that was to determine what structures should stay to honor the history of the Kerny was not attended by PA DCNR. So nothing was resolved. As far as BMW knows, the project is on hold until that issue is resolved.

To see the many good things that have happened at the Kerny this spring, just open this newsletter and enjoy!

## AMY BROWDER RETIRES

Amy Browder stepped down from the BMW Race Committee at the conclusion of the Run to the Rock Trail Races in June. Amy, a Lifetime Member of Blue Mountain Wildlife, started running the Northern Berks QUAD Games in 2009 and joined the Race Committee for the 2010 Northern Berks QUAD

## GREGG ADAMS

Games. In her ten seasons on the Race Committee, she proved herself a valuable member of the Committee and one of the greatest cheerleaders for Blue Mountain Wildlife and the Kerny. She will be missed. Blue Mountain Wildlife wishes the best of luck to Amy and her family, Hugh, Meredith and Will.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS—FALL 2019

Thursday November 14, 2019...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library  
Thursday December 12, 2019...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library

## 2019 EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP

GREGG ADAMS

Blue Mountain Wildlife’s annual Earth Day Clean-Up was as traditional as they came. Saturday April 20th dawned cool and damp, with no wind and low-lying clouds that looked threatening. But the threatening weather did no more than threaten, allowing the Clean-Up to continue unhindered. About forty volunteers showed up to give the Kerny a good cleaning and do a little maintenance. The bags of trash rolled in, but everyone reported that there seemed to be less trash out there than in previous years.

Besides the trash collection, volunteers Jim Turner and Kane Dries did some maintenance and repair work on the Information Kiosk.

But the big event for the morning was the dedication of the three benches along the DS Trail near the Monument Parking Lot. Sheila

Schmidt donated the funds for the three benches in memory of her brother Roger Shupe, who enjoyed visiting the Kerny and being out in nature. The dedication marked the final chapter of the multi-year effort to bring Sheila's dream to honor her brother to fruition.

As the morning became afternoon, the wind picked up, clearing the skies. Kay Greenawalt’s Girl Scouts once again provided a free lunch and some much-needed refreshments to those volunteers remaining or arriving later. During the afternoon, the trash collection dropped off and volunteers were replaced by visitors to the Bartram Trail and the Switchback. When the wind decided to pick up one of the canopies and roll it into the Parking Lot, it was time to call it a day. All in all, another good Clean-Up for the Kerny.





# THE "BARTRAM BREEZE" KICKS OFF THE 2019 TRAIL RACE SERIES

GREGG ADAMS

The Bartram Breeze 10K, 5K and 2K Trail Races kicked off the 2019 BMW Trail Race Series on a cool and damp April 13th morning. Eighty-four runners registered, making this the second-best Bartram Breeze on record. BMW volunteers got everyone registered and ready to go while DJ Brett spun the oldies. When 9:00 rolled around, everyone lined up at the start, received their safety briefing and were sent on their way.

The 2K runners returned first. Rhonda Danenhower bested the field of sixteen with a time of 11:48. Gregg Yutko was the first male across the finish line with a time of 12:19.

The 5K Race was where the competition got hot. Kelly Trabosh topped the field of 40

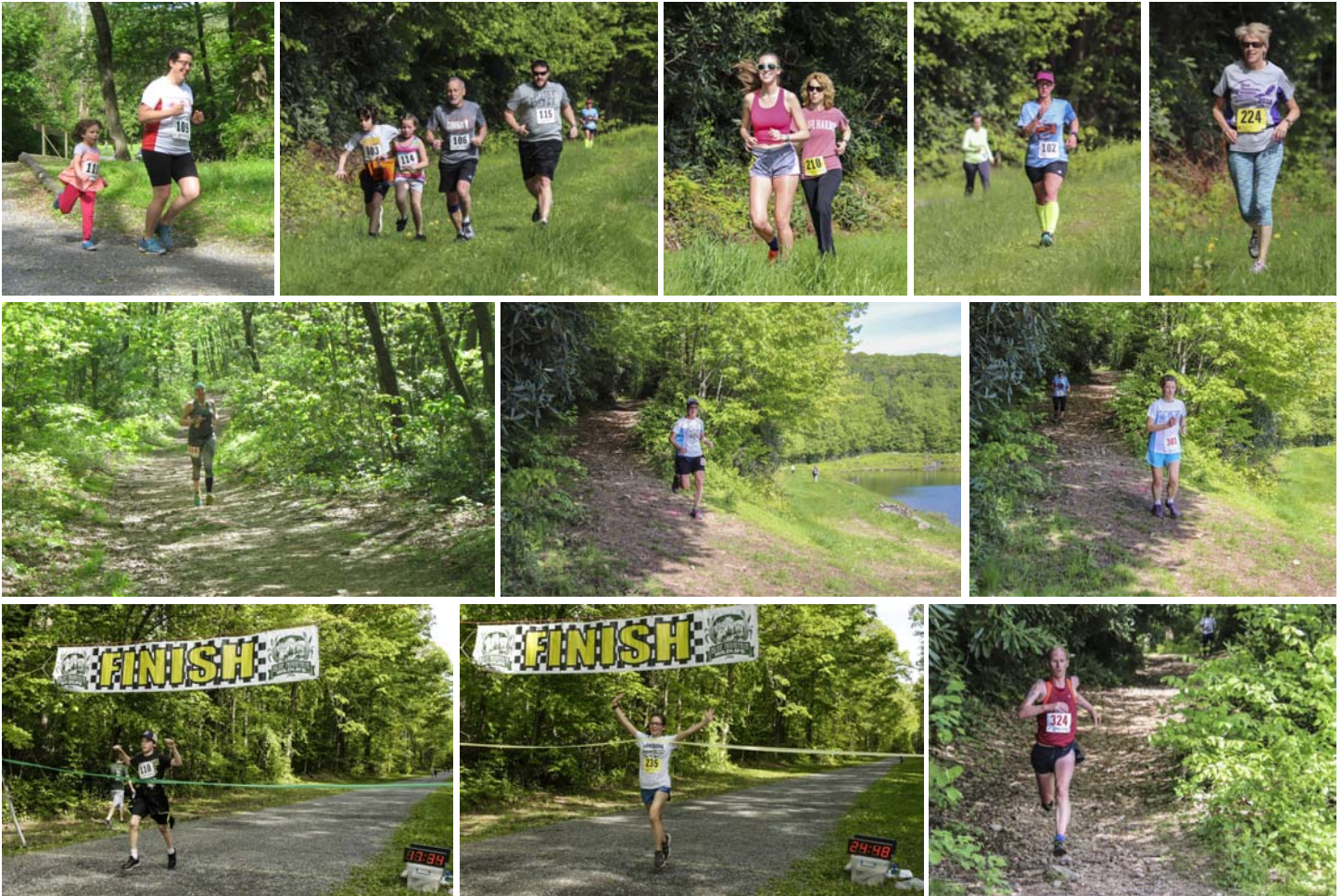
with a time of 24:17 (shaving 11 seconds off her 2018 Bartram Breeze time). Nick Hagan took Fastest Male with a time of 26:11.

In the 10K, Felicia Haines led the field of 26 with a time of 48:01. Todd Snyder took Fastest Male with a time of 51:54.

After the races, the runners refueled with breakfast pizza from Louee's before the awards and door prizes were distributed.

A big thanks goes out to all the volunteers who showed up to help, all of our great sponsors (especially Hecky's Sub Shop and Stinkleberry Soap Company) and all the runners who participated. The Bartram Breeze was an auspicious start to the 2019 BMW Trail Race Series.





**THE “MAD DASH” CONTINUES THE 2019 TRAIL RACE SERIES**

**GREGG ADAMS**

After the soaking of the 2018 Mad Dash, Mother Nature decided to smile on Blue Mountain Wildlife and gave us a beautiful day for the 2019 Mad Dash. May 18th dawned sunny and warm and the runners came out to the Hamburg Reservoir to enjoy it. Eighty-four runners registered, making the 2019 Mad Dash the best attended since the original back in 2006.

Some BMW volunteers got everyone registered while other volunteers hiked up the mountain trails to make sure the course was in order, the turns marked and manned, and the water station ready to serve thirsty runners who made it to the top of the mountain. At nine o'clock, the runners lined up, received their safety briefing and were sent on their way up the hill.

Dylan Kressler was the first runner to cross the finish line. The eleven year old led the field of seventeen and took Fastest Male in the 2.5K with a time of 17:34. Graylea Knight was the second runner back. The

nine year old took Fastest Female in the 2.5K with a time of 18:50.

In the 5K, fifteen year old Andra Schell led the field of 31 and set a Female 5K course record with a time of 24:49. Fifty-one year old Rich Cory was took Fastest Male with a time of 27:39.

In the 5-Miler, Michael Daigeaun led the field of twenty-eight and posted a time of 33:52. Anna Kunkle took the Fastest Female award with a time of 42:03.

After the races, the runners enjoyed wraps and fruit salad from Red Robin and listened to DJ Brett spin the classics while waiting for the last runners to come off the mountain. After the last runner returned, the prize mugs for the winners were awarded and the many door prizes were given away. With two of the three races completed, it looked like it would be a banner year for the Trail Race Series. The Race Committee was looking forward to the final race, The Run To The Rock.

# A RECORD-BREAKING RUN TO THE ROCK

GREGG ADAMS

Saturday June 22nd dawned slightly cool and sunny, heralding perfect weather for the Run To The Rock. And the runners came out in droves. One hundred and twenty-seven runners registered, smashing last year's 100 registrations and beating the best BMW race to date (the 2006 Mad Dash) by seven.

Once again, the BMW volunteers set up the course and registered the runners while DJ Brett got everyone in the mood for a run. At a little after nine, the runners were shepherded to their start lines, received their safety briefing and were sent off onto the course.

The 2.5K runners hit the Finish Line first, with Kerryn Redcay leaping the green tape to finish with a time of 13:50. Kerryn led the field of twelve and set a new 2.5K Female

course record. Matthew Banas crossed the finish line next and took Fastest Male with a time of 14:33.

In the 5K, Fernando Roldan topped the field of thirty-seven with a time of 20:09. Kelby Brink took Fastest Female with a time of 26:58.

In the popular 10K, Michael Diageaun continued his winning ways by leading the field of sixty-four with a time of 39:58. Andrea Stevko took Fastest Female with a time of 46:17.

Overall, the 2019 Trail Race Series had 293 participants (59 more than last year!) and earned Blue Mountain Wildlife over \$4,100. A big thanks goes out to the volunteers, our great sponsors and the trail runners who come out and support BMW and the Kerny.



## ON THE ROAD WITH BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

GREGG ADAMS

In the spring of 2019, Blue Mountain Wildlife took their show on the road to two of our favorite local Festivals to spread the word about the Kerny.

On Sunday June 2nd, BMW visited the Bear Creek Festival at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds and hosted by our friends at the Schuylkill County Conservation District. This was our thirteenth year at the Festival and another enjoyable visit. We had over thirty entries in the BMW Coloring Contest and had dozens of people drop by the stand to check

the Kerny and catch up on the goings-on there.

On Saturday June 15th, BMW visited Get Outdoors Day, hosted by our friends at the Army Corps of Engineers Blue Marsh. This was our seventh year at GO Day and the Festival was again blessed with great weather. BMW took part in the Festival Scavenger Hunt and lots of people stopped by the stand to learn about the Kerny and Blue Mountain Wildlife or to catch up on the latest news from the Kerny.



## THE FISHERMAN

JOE SWIDER

The weather forecast called for heavy rain, wind, thunder and lightning starting early in the morning. The river was already quite high and very muddy. My perfect kind of fishing day was going to take place. My vehicle was already packed. I was in a very good mood. Today I was a great warrior set to do battle with the elusive river monsters. I arrived at my destination around 5am. It hadn't started to rain yet and it was just starting to get light. I was armed with a very light nine foot rod and a six pound test line. I was using two and a half inch rubber worms on and 1/8oz jig head. On my first cast I hooked into a six pound plus walleye. This was kind of unusual for these fishing conditions. A few more casts and I was into another walleye. This one was quite large. I did get photographs of both fish. I have been taught over a period of time that a fisherman should always carry a waterproof camera. Then the inevitable took place. The Gods

pulled the zipper on the sky and unleashed their fury on me. I scooped up my gear and I ran up the hill to my car. I tossed everything in the back of my vehicle. I was in a safe dry place now. Watching the beauty and fury of nature. It only took me a moment to realize that sitting down watching something take place just wasn't me. What the hell. I was already soak and wet. I proceeded to take myself and my gear back to where I started. I hooked and landed eight more monsters before I left. My last monster was a twenty pound carp. This monster was so strong and ferocious that I really didn't know if I could bring it to net. A large carp caught on a lure. What a way to end my fishing day. I held this beautiful beast up to my face and I gave it a great big kiss and I wished it well. A wild creature just like myself and back where it belongs. With life comes infinite possibilities enjoy all of them.

### THE WETLANDS MITIGATION PROJECT GETS UNDER WAY

GERGG ADAMS

In late March, the I-78 Wetlands Mitigation Project got under way in the Desilting Basin. PennDOT, as part of the I-78 improvements project, will be destroying approximately 3/4 of an acre of wetlands in the Lenhartsville area. In order to compensate for the loss of that wetland, PennDOT has contracted to construct approximately two-and-a-half acres of new wetlands in the northern portion of the Desilting Basin.

The project involves the removal of some of the remaining coal dirt, the re-contouring of the land to create a series of stepped wetlands from north to south, the addition of topsoil in the beds of the new wetlands, and the re-seeding of the wetlands and planting of larger wetland vegetation. Since the informal "Cut-Off Trail" running east and west between the Cabela's Wetlands Trail and the Therman Madeira Switchback Trail occupied a portion of

the newly-designed wetlands, it has been removed and will be reconstructed to the south of its former location and will serve as a boundary between two wetlands.

A temporary construction road was built connecting the work area and a stockpile area at the south end of the Desilting Basin. At the end of the project, this road will be removed and the land restored to its original condition. The new "Cut-off Trail" will be finished, once again connecting the Cabela's Wetlands Trail and the Therman Madeira Switchback. The Monument Parking Lot will see some additional upgrades, including a realignment of some of the parking, an expansion on the northeast corner, a re-surfacing with gravel, the removal of some of the old railroad ties and the installation of bumper blocks.

The project is due to be completed next year, so watch as the new wetlands come to life!



April 1, 2019



April 1, 2019



April 1, 2019



May 11, 2019





May 16, 2019



May 16, 2019



May 31, 2019



May 31, 2019



June 4, 2019



June 4, 2019



June 25, 2019



June 25, 2019

## **ABRUPT DIGGER BEE PROJECT**

**KERRY GRIM**

It can be said that the Kernsville Dam Recreation Area is a Living Laboratory. The list of birds, mammals, amphibians, odonates (dragonflies and damselflies) is nothing less than astonishing.

The latest find is a species of bee called Abrupt Digger Bee, found several years ago.

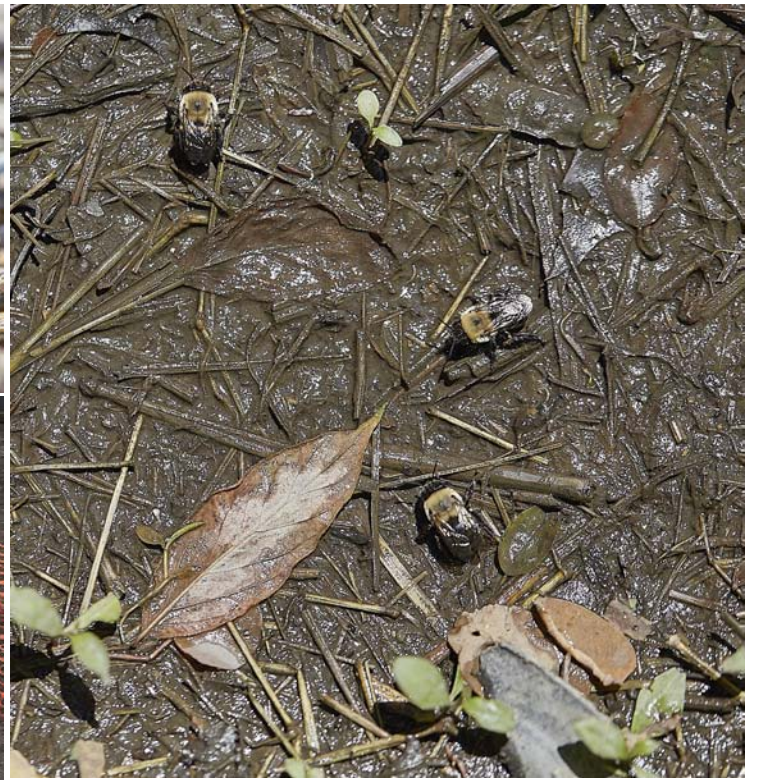
Mike Slater is the Go-To person in Berks County for anything insects. Coincidentally, Mike has been studying and documenting the local bees, but this was a new species for him. He quickly found that the species in question is a ground-dweller called Abrupt Digger Bee. There are currently only a few known locations in Pennsylvania. There is no organization monitoring bees. Thus the status is unknown.

The bees are a southern species, their range just barely extending to Pennsylvania. A warming climate likely will extend their range northward in the coming decades. They appear very similar to Bumble Bees but are much

smaller. The bees are harmless to humans. They do have stingers but likely too short to sting. They are capable of biting but may be approached for view as they are completely non-aggressive. They are pollinators, although living in a colony, each goes about their own business. There is no queen bee.

A Red Flag has come up as there will be future repairs on the I78 bridge over the Schuylkill River including additional lanes. The bees would not survive their current location. However, the State, with the help of Jerry Neal, is willing to do whatever they can to help. He and co-worker Levi Veppert have delineated the area with red fencing. Mike is attempting to lure the bees to foam containers filled with dirt in the hope of attracting the bees to burrow in the dirt and lay their eggs, relocate the bees, and then return to the same area after the construction work is complete. Mike has been in communication with bee experts throughout the county for advice.







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