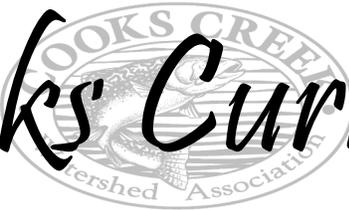


# Cooks Current



*"To protect, preserve and improve the quality of water, land and life in the Cooks Creek Watershed"*

Volume 18, Issue 4

Newsletter of the Cooks Creek Watershed

Fall 2021

## 2021 Events

### Regular Board Meetings:

Check our website for details

### Springtown Fire House- 7:30PM

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month except Nov. and Dec. which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday; Nov.18 (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday), Dec.16 (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)

### All Events: Please check our website!

**Nov 13, Fall Clean-Up, 9-Noon**, meet at Old Philadelphia Rd. & Rt. 212 & Gallows Hill Rd.



See back for details!

**We're on the web!**  
[www.cooks creek pa.org](http://www.cooks creek pa.org)

Cooks Current is a publication of the Cooks Creek Watershed Association.

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**President:** W. Scott Douglas

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Lois Oleksa

**Marketing and Public Relations:** Lois Oleksa

**Layout & Graphic Design:**  
Ellie Scheitrum

### Additional Members:

Sarah Snider, Stephen Smith, MD,

## From Across the Board...

Sadly, I have to report that Covid-19 messed up our fall schedule pretty badly. No community days and no fall dinner. Let's hope this is the last year for this and we can get back together again next year. The costs for this pandemic have been high, and I don't think we have a good way of accounting for all the damage done to our community, but the damage is real. I just found another reason to hate the pandemic, with its increase in virtual interaction, and that is retail. Now I don't like throw away consumerism anyway, but was horrified to learn that the increase in virtual buying is dramatically increasing waste. Did you know that 25% of all on line purchases are returned, and that the majority of that merchandise is NOT returned to "store" shelves? It makes sense when you think about it, the goods have to find their way back through a system that is designed to be one-way. It's not like it goes into a shopping cart for some employee to put back on a shelf. In many cases, the products are



A chub caught in an upper tributary of Cooks Creek by the new generation of fishermen...catch and release! Picture by Lois Oleksa

either resold to a discount retailer, or they are actually just thrown away. This goes for both hard and soft goods. This problem is aggravated by the new trend in "bracketing" an online purchase with different sizes and colors with the intent to send back all but one. Think about this the next time you, or more likely a younger friend or relative, goes on a virtual shopping spree.

Despite the dreaded virus, we continue on. I attended the Fry's Run event on September 18 and hosted an abbreviated version of Mini-Monsters. A dozen

or so kids spent time looking at the invertebrates I collected from the stream. I took the opportunity to talk to their parents about the damage caused by stormwater runoff and we played with the watershed model. The power of stormwater and the importance of stormwater management, especially riparian buffers, was driven home when I pointed out the damage all around the site caused by Hurricane Ida.

I'd like to give a shout out to the Springfield EAC who hosted an e-waste pick up on October 16. I

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The process of stratification takes the seeds and prepares them for germination. Some seeds need cold, some need fire, some moisture and others require dryness. The stratification/sowing directions of individual seeds can be garnered from seed companies like PrairieMoon or Jelitto, a German seed catalog. Just as in your planting of vegetable seeds, certain conditions need to be met in order for the seed to germinate before it grows into a mature plant. Seed catalogs usually list the factors necessary for germination. Seeds can be germinated by planting in flats or pots, but covering or not covering the seeds is important. Again, looking at the requirements listed will indicate the depth of planting. Surface sowing is the most common as native seeds in the wild are not dug into the soil and covered with lots of soil but most fall on the surface of the earth and then germinate in their natural fashion. Seeds that need cold and surface sowing can be seeded on the surface of snow either early after gathering them or in the early spring. If you want to sow the seeds indoors in a flat, choose a "deep 50" flat where the cells are deep for root growth. Sow the seeds placing 1-4 seeds per cell. Don't over sow.

Some tips on planting sedges, wood poppy and ginger were offered. They need to be planted/sown immediately, usually in May just after collecting the seeds. Also, when collecting oak acorns, remove the caps as weevils get into the acorns and destroy the seed. Then disperse the acorns. Squirrels are the greatest dispersers of the oaks.

John then addressed getting a meadow going and getting more diversity into our meadows. Starting out with a field full of invasives takes some planning, effort and time. Flowers and flower seed should not be introduced until the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Years 1-3 are years to just mow to 6" to establish root systems and control stilt grass. This mowing knocks back the non-natives by not letting them go to seed. Small areas can be easily handled but in large open areas, don't give up. Start with taking out just one thing like the giant invasive ornamental grasses. Clear out a bare spot of soil at the invasive and plant a patch of native seeds. If planting plants that you have grown or purchased, don't disturb the soil when planting, just stab a small area equal to the root ball. Any amount of soil disturbed turns up more non-native seeds which will germinate very quickly. There are "aggressive pioneer" plants such as Black-eyed Susans, Agastache, Vervain and of course the grasses. Meadows should consist of 60% grasses and 40% other plants such as flowers. These flowers should be introduced in the 4<sup>th</sup> year with grasses introduced in years 1-3. Starting meadows in agricultural land requires an agricultural crop first like rye which will die back and then seeding as per the previous sequence.

John and Victoria brought plants such as *Carex laxiculmis* which can be added into woody sites as it works well with ferns and wood poppies and is evergreen. Available were also Pawpaw trees which are native. From seed they need to be planted in deep containers as the root develops first. Three

seeds per pot are planted as at least three trees need to grow together to produce fruit and later more seeds.

The Workshop was concluded with a walk around Peppermint Park observing the Purple top and Indian grass along with golden rod and milkweed.



## Back to the Past: Gruversville, Springfield Township

From: The Villages of Bucks County, a guidebook by the County Commissioners – Carl F. Fonash, Chairman, Lucille M. Trench and Andrew L. Warren, Bucks County Planning Commission and Contributing Staff. “Extinct Villages of Bucks County”. Located in the Riegelsville Public Library.

*A column highlighting the natural history of the Watershed.*

Today, it is hard to imagine that four mills and a distillery once operated in this quiet wooded stream valley. Gruversville was settled very early by the Gruver family, who owned all of the surrounding land in the area. This Pennsylvania German family built the first mills along Cooks Creek in the early 1700’s.

Upon his death in 1850, John Gruver bequeathed a grist mill to his son John, a sawmill to his son Peter, and a farm to his only daughter. The farm was located in the middle of the estate, with the sawmill to the north, and the grist mill to the south. A fierce family feud between the two sons ensued soon after their father’s death. Although the details of the disagreement are unknown, the argument resulted in Peter building a grist mill next to his saw mill and John building a saw mill and a distillery next to his grist mill. What John Sr.’s daughter must have thought, living in the middle of this crazy competition, would be interesting to know. The feud apparently ended with Peter’s death. Peter’s son, Josiah, inherited the mills and subsequently sold them in 1856. The surviving son also quit the mill business and sold his property.

Gruversville was home to a small church founded by dissenters from the nearby Pleasant Valley Evangelical Congregation. The brick church building was constructed in 1861 on a lot donated by John Gruver, Jr. Eventually, the congregation lost all of its members and the church was abandoned. For many years the old church buildings stood slowly crumbling into ruins, an open bible in place on the altar. The mills are also long gone and even the stream which once powered the water wheels is only a fraction of its former size. Over the years, the village of Gruversville has virtually disappeared, leaving almost no evidence of the small, but thriving community.



## Update on PennEast Pipeline and Adelpia Gateway Pipeline

### The PennEast Pipeline crossing through Durham.

On September 27, 2021 the PennEast Pipeline Company announced it would abandon plans for the fossil gas pipeline in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. “PennEast has ceased all further development of the Project,” the company said in a statement that cited lack of necessary permits as the reason. The company’s decision came three months after a ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court affirming PennEast’s right to condemn state-owned land to build the pipeline. But without permits from NJ state authorities to build the pipeline in areas protected by New Jersey’s stringent environmental regulations under the Clean Water Act, the Court ruling was not enough to salvage the project.



This announcement came on the heels of an announcement in late August that it would not complete the acquisition of rights of way “for some time”. Their attorney in PA indicated that the company would dismiss all condemnation suits. The suits would be dismissed in a way that would allow them to be reopened at a future date. The company continues to express confidence in the project but stated, “Given the uncertainty on timing to resolve the remaining legal and regulatory hurdles, PennEast believes it is not prudent to complete the acquisition of rights of way in the pending actions in Pennsylvania, as it might not be necessary for some time.”

Are they still going to try to take a run on the Phase 1 Project in PA?

Phase 1 could very well still be in the works. Phase 1 is planned to connect to the Adelpia Gateway Pipeline project. We’ve seen this pipeline project transform for years now - it’s no time to let our guards down! FERC has not yet rescinded or nullified the project certificate. This isn’t over yet, folks...

### The Adelpia Gateway Pipeline crossing in Springfield.

The Adelpia Pipeline crossing through Springfield is an old pipeline dating back to the 1970’s. It was used for oil and then converted to natural gas consisting of the “North Section” providing natural gas to fuel the power plant at Martins Creek. With the Adelpia plan, this North Section will have increased pressure to increase the flow of gas and the “South Section” being reopened and going through Bucks County will terminate at Marcus Hook. What has been added to this old pipeline system is a compressor station in our neighboring West Rockhill and Richland Township. Adelpia’s own plan states that the compressor could release over 25 tons per year of Nitrogen Oxide gases into the air. Formaldehyde, methane, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide are also released. This will foul the air that we all breathe and there are concerns as to how well release levels are monitored. Regulatory bodies within the industry hold a different standard than medical and toxicologist findings in the community. This is not just a local issue to the residents of West Rockhill and Richland Township. It affects the area around Quakertown and wide areas into Bucks and Berks Counties. And, our concern is the age of this pipeline and the increased natural gas pressure planned to be passing through it.



**Botanical Focus: Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)**

By: David Oleksa

*This is the 21<sup>st</sup> installment in a series of articles on the flora of the Cooks Creek Watershed.*

Most of you have probably heard the old adage, “Shiny leaves three, let them be” in reference to poison ivy. But did you know that there is a corollary to that statement? “Shiny leaves five, let them thrive” refers to the quite similar looking Virginia Creeper. This fast growing, useful (to bird life), attractive plant may be found throughout an enormous range and is particularly evident in the Cooks Creek Watershed.



It is a native climber and is found in an extension of the grape family (Vitaceae). Although it tends to blend in with other foliage during the spring and summer months, it shows off a magnificent range of color in the fall when the weather turns cooler. I mentioned that it is found over a wide range and this includes the eastern half of North America from southern Canada to as far south as eastern Mexico and even has a presence in Guatemala. Even though one of its common names is “five-leafed ivy”, it is not closely related to true ivies which are classified in the genus *Hedera*. Virginia Creeper is also commonly known as “woodbine” and “five-finger”. Interestingly enough there is a closely related species which is also called woodbine (*Parthenocissus inserta*). The basic difference between these two plants is that the Virginia Creeper can climb smooth surfaces while the other cannot.

Although some people have purchased seed for Virginia Creeper and have planted it in selected areas on their properties as a decorative planting, most of us have become accustomed to see it in the wild. It can grow up telephone poles and trees especially along the edges of woodland borders and where there is nothing to climb, it spreads along the ground profusely covering areas like fencerows, abandoned railway beds, and on the banks of streams. For those people who choose to plant it for decoration, it can be grown in Zones 3 – 9, making it a suitable substitution for Boston or Japanese ivies which cannot tolerate the extremes of this range. When using the Virginia Creeper as a decorative planting, please bear in mind that it is a prodigious grower, spreading up to 20 feet in a single year and reaching over 50 feet at maturity. The plant has a habit of taking root wherever its stem touches the ground so it becomes difficult to eradicate once it is established.

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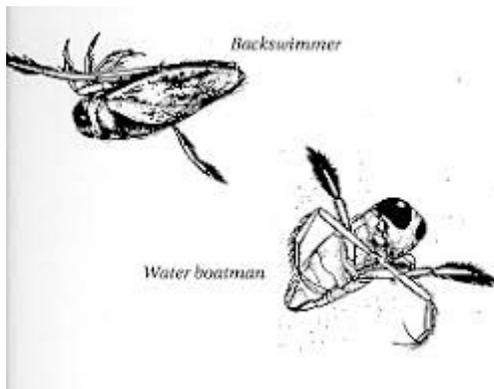
## Creature Feature: Water Boatmen and Backswimmers

By W. Scott Douglas

*This is the 58<sup>th</sup> in a series on the fauna of the Cooks Creek Watershed.*

Most of us who have or have had swimming pools are familiar with water boatmen and their relatives, the backswimmers. Both are true water bugs of the Order Hemiptera, and are common denizens of flat and slow-moving water. While both have a reputation as potential biters, the more common water boatman is benign, and in fact often a beneficial insect, whereas the backswimmer is a predator and known to inflict a nonpoisonous bite. While similar in appearance and size (0.5-15 mm) with short front legs and long

oar-like back legs, water boatman swim right side up, whereas backswimmers swim upside down.



Water Boatmen (Family Corixidae) are relatively common and abundant in most still waters and slow-moving rivers. They are primarily herbivorous, feeding on algae and other water plants by injecting enzymes and sucking up the partially digested material

with their specialized mouthparts. Some species consume mosquito larvae. Boatmen are mostly brown mottled with black spots or stripes on their wings. Their front legs are very short and end with paddle like scoops. Their rear legs are overly long by comparison, with the last segment covered in hairs. They use their hind legs to swim with oar-like strokes. The middle legs are used to grasp onto plants on the pond bottom.

Backswimmers (Family Notonectidae) on the other hand, while equally common, are strictly predators. They prey on other aquatic insects, and even small vertebrates like fish fry and tadpoles. They use their powerful front two pairs of legs to capture their prey while propelling their way with elon-



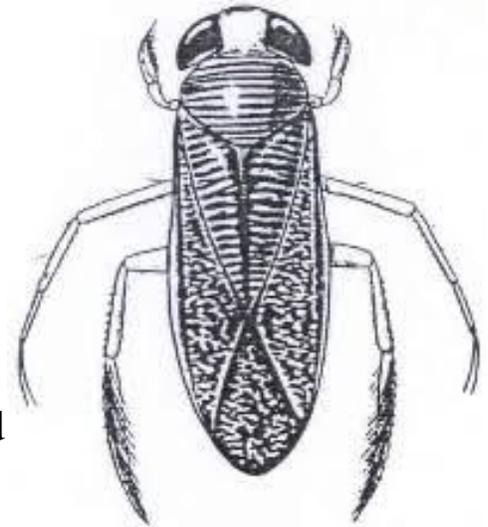
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gated rear legs fringed with swimming hairs. Backswimmers are more colorful than water boatmen, with their wings being green, brown or yellowish, and their undersides usually silvery. Their wings lack the mottling or striations that water boatmen wings show. Backswimmers are known to bite humans, piercing the skin with their tough proboscis. Like other aquatic bugs like the Giant Water Bug and the Water Scorpion, the bite can be painful, but it is not poisonous.

Both Water boatmen and Backswimmers have bumps on their faces and front legs that they can rub together to make a loud singing noise similar to a cricket or cicada. They use this song to communicate during courtship. The couples gather by the thousands over lakes and ponds all summer long. Eggs are laid in the water attached to submerged plants. Several generations may hatch in a single summer. While fish and birds are known to readily eat water boatmen, they seem to avoid eating backswimmers, presumably because they bite. Both boatmen and backswimmers do not extract oxygen from water, but must return to the surface to breath. This exposes them to predation, so they have adapted by collecting a bubble of air on the surface which is held close to the body by tiny hairs. They can remain underwater for as long as 6 hours.

You can easily see both of these interesting creatures in any body of water most times of the year when the water is not frozen. They can also be captured by sweeping a net through submerged vegetation. Both are attracted to lights and will come to a light suspended in front of a white sheet or if held over a still body of water.



You can check out more information on the web: [www.cookscreekpa.org](http://www.cookscreekpa.org)

## Children's Backyard: Why CHAR Wood?

By: Lois Oleksa

The first topic to address in answering this question is, "What is wood and what is it made of?"

Wood is a plant material. Did you ever wonder how plants can stand up tall without bones to hold them up? Plants get their shape and support from the cell walls that surround their cells. These cell walls are mostly cellulose but also lignin. Cellulose is a carbohydrate which is a food reserve for the plant. Lignin is a strengthening material that occurs together with cellulose and other sugar chains (carbohydrates), in the plant cell walls, that are found in woody plants like trees. This structure keeps trees upright. Lignin accumulates in the secondary walls of the xylem elements. You may have heard of the combination, xylem and phloem; these are the paths or transport systems for the moving of water, sugars, and other important products around in the plant. You've heard of "sap" and that is moved around by the plant in its xylem and phloem system. Xylem tissue is used mostly for transporting water from roots to stems and leaves but also transports other dissolved compounds. Phloem is responsible for transporting food produced from photosynthesis from leaves to non-photosynthesizing parts of a plant such as roots and stems.

A plant's life is complex but think of wood as being made up of two components – cellulose and lignin. When a tree is young and flexible as a sapling, the shoots and leaves are primarily made up of cellulose. As the tree gets older, lignin gets deposited and the tree's branches and trunk becomes harder, tougher and brittle. The lignin contributes to the ability of a tree to "stand" upright.

Now, what about CHARRING? Charring is partial burning, especially so as to blacken the surface; or to scorch. The burning of wood results in char, the black carbon material that is left after the burning. If wood is completely burned, ashes are the result.

Controlling the fire while burning wood results in charcoal. Charcoal is a product of charring wood.

Fire has preserved plant materials and seeds of grain. These are studied by environmental archaeologists to determine ancient civilizations.

Charring of the inside of oak barrels is done before storing liquor. The charring results in a smoky flavor and when the cellulose of the oak barrels is burned (this cellulose is called hemicellulose) at approximately 300 degrees Fahrenheit, the hemicellulose breaks down into wood sugars. The inside of the barrel is caramelized. The lignins in the wood give the contents a vanilla flavor. The more a barrel is charred, the more the lignin yields flavors of spice and smoke.

Charring was done by the Native Americans and primitive humans while making wood spear points. It was thought that fire was used to harden the wooden spear points. Fire hardening spear wood does slightly harden it, but makes it much weaker and more brittle. See, Ennos, Antony Roland; Chan, Tak Lok (2016). ["Fire hardening' spear wood does slightly harden it, but makes it much weaker and more brittle"](#). *Biology Letters*. The earliest known wooden tool, the Clacton spear was found preserved in the UK; but it was found broken. It was assumed that the fire hardening process made it able to penetrate animal hides more easily. But in the study cited, fire was used to see if fire hardening really hardened wood spear points. Results from the test showed that heat treatment did increase the hardness of the spear rods but the difference in hardness was small. However, strength was lost and the tip was weakened and made more brittle. What is possible is that fire may have been used to help sharpen the spear tip. When the tip of the spear point was charred, the carbonized (burned) layer could be removed quickly cutting down on the time to manufacture the spear point. The Clacton spear point, actually broke off *because* it had been fire hardened.

(Continued on page 11)

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Shou Sugi Ban is an old Japanese method that has become the rage in the West. This old tradition was used to preserve wood by charring it. Shou Sugi Ban is known for resulting in a jet-black color. Heating wood to make it fireproof? Yes, burning wood burns the cellulose in the wood and the wood becomes fireproof just like trying to start re-burning a charred piece of wood from the camp fire. Charring wood also makes it undesirable to insect pests and resistant to rot. The charred layer also repels water and prevents sun damage as well. And, it's a natural not toxic chemical way to preserve wood. Traditionally the method used to char the wood was to take three cedar boards and tie them together lengthwise to form a triangle tunnel and set fire to the interior and the charred surface cooled with water. Afterward the wood was oiled and it lasted for 80-100 years. Or more, as the Horyu-ji Temple has stood for 1,300 years and is one of the oldest wooden buildings in the world and listed as a UNESCO world heritage site. Kilns are now used to make Shou Sugi Ban, the jet-black wood being used for outdoor application and also interior furniture.

### Children's Backyard Activity: Make a Shou Sugi Ban board

Gather the wood for this project. This technique involves open flames and **extreme caution is required**. Have a fire extinguisher close by and stay away from all other combustibles except the wood for the project. A propane torch, wire brush and a finishing oil are required. The wood grain of different woods creates different effects. And, the moisture content of wood varies also giving different effects.

Hold the torch 12-18 inches above the wood as you burn it. Char the wood as if you're painting with fire. Five to ten seconds should be enough to create the black burnt layer. Be sure to torch in a well-ventilated area. Light charring of the wood will allow you to later stain the wood and deep charring will give you the "alligator skin" effect. Liking the grain in ash, and there's plenty of ash around as the ash trees are dying from ash yellows disease and emerald ash borer insects, I chose a plank of ash wood to char. After charring the wood, wire brush, with the grain, to remove the loose flakes and charcoal dust. Use a damp cloth to remove the dust. Wait for it to dry. Finally, an oil finish is applied. My sou sugi ban board became a decorative board.



### *Renew Your Membership for 2021/2022*

**Cooks Creek is an important resource for our community. Don't forget to renew your membership and stay up to date on issues concerning our Watershed.**

Do you have an interesting topic to write about for our newsletter?

**Contact a board member with your article, or send it to [info@cookscreekpa.org](mailto:info@cookscreekpa.org)**

If you want to get more involved, come to a meeting and share your talents and interests!

## **AGlyphosate In My Backyard**

By: Jim Orben

I live in the limestone valley of the Cooks Creek watershed on a quiet road that allows me to walk or ride my bicycle through forest and field and watch the annual play of nature's seasons. Right now, the oaks, poplars, beech and other broad-leafed trees are shedding their leaves and carpeting my path in shades of yellow, orange, red and brown. It is beautiful. The corn and soy have been harvested and the spring wheat is growing bright green in striking contrast. In the corn fields all that is left are the dry crumpled cornstalks with the ears removed, nothing else. The soy fields are much the same; all that remains are the gray-brown husks and stems of the bean plants. In the wheat fields there are only the green wheat plants, not a weed in sight. This seems like magic. In my gardens there are many plants that come unbidden. Plants that I pull or cut so that the chosen few I propagate can grow and bear the fruits I desire. It was once that way in commercial agriculture too. Crops were planted in rows far enough apart to allow physical cultivation that inhibited the weeds.

In 1974 Monsanto introduced a new weed control method that would increase crop yields by planting rows much closer together. Cultivation would no longer be needed. They called this chemical weed control tool "Roundup". Roundup is a weed killer whose active ingredient is glyphosate. Glyphosate kills most plants by inhibiting growth. It interferes with the production of essential aromatic amino acids that are not used by members of the animal kingdom. This seems like the perfect way to control weeds and not harm the human applicators or any incidental animals or insects that may be exposed. To prove this, glyphosate is tested on laboratory animals. Rats, mice and dogs are fed different concentrations of glyphosate, and rabbits and guinea pigs are used in standard eye and skin irritation studies. Glyphosate has passed all the tests and been certified safe when used as directed. Glyphosate has again been certified by the USEPA and remains on the market. (1)

Roundup has not changed in the years since its introduction but the corn, soy and wheat that it is sprayed on have changed quite a lot. Monsanto has used genetic engineering to create Roundup resistant varieties of these crops and the use of Roundup before planting, during growth and before harvest has increased to nearly 140,000 tons per year. To expedite the harvest of wheat Roundup is sprayed on mature wheat fields killing the plants and making the wheat berries ready for harvest and leaving a residue of glyphosate.

Glyphosate was not originally developed as a weed killer; it was designed as a manganese chelant. This means that glyphosate in even small quantities will absorb and remove manganese from organic systems. This fact becomes relevant when we realize that manganese is a vital nutrient in the human body and its lack is associated with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, autism, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, osteoporosis and other neurological diseases. The increase in the incidence of these diseases parallels the increase in the use of Roundup in the production of our major food grains. (2)

In 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) declared glyphosate "probably carcinogenic". On August 10, 2018, Monsanto lost the first decided court case when Dewayne Johnson, who has non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (lymphatic cancer), was awarded \$289 million. By October, 2019, there were 42,700 plaintiffs who claimed glyphosate caused their cancer. While these revelations were happening Bayer Pharmaceuticals bought Monsanto and the Roundup brand for \$66 billion in cash, assuming any legal liabilities. Bayer recently announced that it will stop selling Roundup with glyphosate to consumers in the United States in 2023. There will be a new, glyphosate free formula. Commercial agriculture will continue to spray Roundup with glyphosate on our

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bread flour, our animal feed, and our Quaker Oats. Meanwhile, Bayer has appealed the Johnson decision and it will eventually be decided by the US Supreme Court. (3)

So, what does this all mean to me? I don't use Roundup and don't plan to start. Friends and family members have died of Alzheimer's disease and of Parkinson's disease. I know too many people on the autism spectrum. What an irony it would be if many of these illnesses could have been prevented. I thought I was buying organic foods mainly to protect the farm workers who were doing the planting, tending and harvesting work in the fields. I see now that I need to double down on my food purchases to protect myself and everyone else who eats the food I buy.

References:

Williams Gary, et al. "A Review of the Carcinogenic Potential of Glyphosate by Four Independent Expert Panels and Comparison to the IARC Assessment" *Critical Reviews in Toxicology*  
 Seneff, Stephanie, and Anthony Samsel. "Glyphosate, Pathways to Modern Diseases"  
 Sears, Al, MD CNS, [www.alsearsmd.com](http://www.alsearsmd.com), search "Roundup"



*Monarch Caterpillar*

## **A Green Tip #52: Creating pupation sites for caterpillars**

Fall is the time of the year that leaves fall and cause problems for home owners. But, did you know that raking up all the leaves can be detrimental to our ecological system? We all like seeing butterflies and moths, but by removing the leaf litter, the cocoons made by the butterflies and moths while they were eating leaves all summer which subsequently fall to the ground along with the falling leaves, removes those caterpillars which are in their overwintering state and gets rid of the next generation of the butterflies and moths for the following season. Raking up the leaves and removing them from our properties or burning them or putting them in the trash removes the life that was just created. Keep your leaves, like we are being told to keep our stormwater on our property, creating rain gardens. Leaves are a valuable asset.

Nutrients from the decaying leaves nourishes our plants' roots. Leaves are the perfect mulch; use them rather than buying bark mulch. When leaves fall, create a bed around each of your trees. These leaf beds will smother weeds and still allow the spring ephemerals to come up through the leaf mulch. Leaf mulch beds keep the soil moist under them and that is where most organisms live rather than in the soil above. Leaf litter is SO important. That's where the caterpillars will metamorphosize and the caterpillars are so important to the birds for food for both young and adult birds. That's where the spiders, mites, bees and millipedes live. All these critters recycle and break down the leaves if you just let them be. So, save the leaves and create pupation sites for caterpillars.

Pictures by Lois Oleksa

# Current Matters



Our neighboring watershed, Fry's Run, welcomed Scott as a presenter. Kids in Fry's Run above.



Many of the dead trees sprouted mushrooms this fall.

Hurricane Ida floods roads, does damage in Durham and floods the Watershed.



## Schedules of Local Government Meetings

**Springfield Township:**  
[www.springfieldbucks.org](http://www.springfieldbucks.org)  
 610-346-6700  
 2320 Township Road

**Supervisors:** 4th Tuesday @ 7:30 PM  
**Planning Commission:** 1st Wed. @ 7 PM  
**Environmental Advisory Council:**  
 2nd Thurs. @ 7:30 PM  
**Open Space Committee:**  
 As required  
**Historic Commission:**  
 2nd Wed. @ 7:00 PM

**Durham Township:**  
[www.durhamtownship.org](http://www.durhamtownship.org)  
 610-346-8911  
 215 Old Furnace Road

**Supervisors:** 2nd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM  
**Planning Commission:**  
 1st Tues. @ 7:30 PM  
**EAC:** 3rd Tues. @ 7:30 PM

**Lower Saucon:**  
[www.lowersaucontownship.org](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org)  
 610-865-3291  
 3700 Old Philadelphia Pike

**Council:** 1st and 3rd Wed. @ 7 PM  
**Planning Commission:**  
 4th Thurs. @ 7 PM  
**EAC:** 2nd Tues. @ 7 PM

**Williams Township:**  
[www.williamstwp.org](http://www.williamstwp.org)  
 610-258-6060  
 655 Cider Press Road

**Supervisors:** 2nd Wed. @ 7 PM  
**Planning Commission:** 3rd Wed. @ 7 PM  
**Land Preservation Board:**  
 4th Tues. @ 7 PM

**Richland Township:**  
[www.richlandtownship.org](http://www.richlandtownship.org)  
 215-536-4066  
 1328 California Road

**Supervisors:** 2nd Mon. @ 7 PM  
**Planning Commission:** 3rd Tues. @ 7 PM  
**Preservation Board:** 2nd Wed. @ 7 PM

## Recycle! Local Information

### Durham Township Recycling Center

*Durham no longer has recycling. Check out Bethlehem or, paper and cardboard recycling at the Southern Lehigh Public Library. Also, check with your local trash hauler who may offer a recycling program.*

Contact the township building for more info. 610-346-8911

### Springfield Township

Cloth/clothes only at Springfield Fire company.

*Springfield no longer has recycling. Check out Bethlehem or, paper and cardboard recycling at the Southern Lehigh Public Library. Also, check with your local trash hauler who may offer a recycling program.*

See website: [www.springfieldbucks.org](http://www.springfieldbucks.org)

or call 610-346-6700.

### Blinderman & Son

Location: 1320 Whitaker St, Hellertown. 610-838-9221

Hours:  
 7:30AM – 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday

7:30 AM – 11:30AM, Saturday

Accepting cardboard and most metals.

### City of Bethlehem Theis/Cornfeld Recycling Center

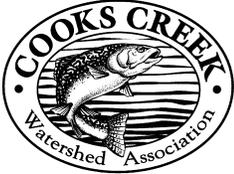
Web site: [www.bethlehem-pa.gov/recycle/services/theis\\_cornfeld.htm](http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/recycle/services/theis_cornfeld.htm)

Location: 635 Illick's Mill Rd., Bethlehem

Phone: 610-865-7082 Hours: Tuesday–Saturday: 10AM to 4PM, Sunday and Monday: Closed.

Open to the public.

Accepting glass, cans, plastics, newspapers, all books, magazines, catalogs, cardboard, mixed office paper, metals, textiles (clothing, shoes, etc.), large appliances (only those not using Freon). Call or go to the web site for specifics.



Cooks Creek Watershed Association  
P.O. Box 45  
Springtown, PA 18081  
www.cookscreekpa.org

If you hold precious the beauty that surrounds us in the Cooks Creek Watershed area and would like to be actively involved in its preservation, then consider joining our association as a member. Reach out to your community! We would love to hear from you! Please drop us a line at [info@cookscreekpa.org](mailto:info@cookscreekpa.org)

CCWA is a 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) non-profit organization.

Find us on Facebook



## Please Join Us... Cooks Creek Watershed Association-Membership Form

All of us who reside in the area enjoy the beauty of Cooks Creek.

Those of us who are fortunate enough to live here are dependent upon this watershed not only for the beauty of the creek but our wells, the wetlands, the wildflowers and all of the beautiful landscapes in our townships.

It's up to all of us to protect this treasure. The Cooks Creek Watershed Association asks that you become a member and help in the task of protecting this special resource.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other household members: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Interests: (circle)**

|            |             |                  |                     |
|------------|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Newsletter | Website     | Roadside Cleanup | Event Planning      |
| Membership | Fundraising | Stream Studies   | Wherever I'm Needed |

Individual Membership Fee: \$ 15.00 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership Fee: \$ 25.00 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Student Membership Fee: \$ 10.00 per year \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: to legal defense fund: \_\_\_\_\_

Total:

I wish my membership and donation to remain anonymous in our board minutes. Check box.

Please detach and mail to Cooks Creek Watershed Association, (CCWA)

P.O. Box 45, Springtown, PA 18081. **THANK YOU!**

Checks can be made payable to Cooks Creek Watershed Association.

CCWA is a 501 ( c ) ( 3 ) non-profit organization.