



The Potomac Appalachian

The Newsletter of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna, VA 22180-4609

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Cuddly Wildlife—I Don't Think So!

Being prepared for wildlife encounters is like wearing a seatbelt. You'll never know when it's going to come in handy—and perhaps even save your life. Now I haven't hiked nearly as much as some of my fellow Club members, but I have still managed to have encounters with the big three: snakes, deer and bear.

First, let's start with the easy one—snakes. The Appalachians are prime snake country, and you may come upon one if you're hiking the trails. Be extra watchful if you're rock-scrambling. Another time to keep a lookout is when rainfall has been scarce and you're hiking near a water source. Rattlesnakes like to wait near trickling streams for easy meals.

Even if the trail is heavily used, you may still run across a poisonous snake. While hiking in Great Falls Park one day, I almost trod on a rattlesnake stretched across the trail in a patch of sunlight. I thought it was a stick until I heard the rattle. Here's a simple rule: Snakes have the right-of-way in any trail encounter. Give them space, and leave them alone. Be

familiar with first aid for snakebites, which primarily consists of getting out of the woods and into the nearest hospital as soon as possible for treatment. (See Wil Kohlbrenner's article on snake encounters on page 15 for more information about snakes.)

The next animal that you want to be careful with is a deer. Don't feed or pet a deer. They may appear docile, but at the last minute, they may kick or bite. I was horrified last August when I saw a parent, for the sake of a photo opportunity, encourage his young daughter to approach and pet a black-tailed deer at the Hurricane Ridge picnic grounds in the Olympic National Park. There are deer at Hurricane Ridge that regard the Visitor's Center as their home turf, but the ranger on duty warned people that the deer were still wild. A general rule of thumb for any prospective wildlife encounter is to keep wildlife at a distance.

Of course, compared to deer, bear are completely different animals (pun intended!). All my bear sightings have been through my car windows.



Photo by Fred Mohr

It's usually not advisable to get this close to bears! Natural History Hike, August 1993.

One such sighting happened last summer when a lone cub crossed the road in front of my car as I rounded a curve on Skyline Drive. I thought, "How cute." And I was prepared to drive on until I noticed in my rearview mirror the station wagon of young women behind me who had seen the cub too. They pulled over, and so did I. Jumping out of my car as fast as I could, I ran to the station wagon as the women were preparing to take their cameras and follow the cub into the woods. I said, "Don't follow that cub into the woods

See Cuddly Wildlife, page 4

WILDLIFE ISSUE

They're Out There-You Just Have to Look!

One way to increase the amount of wildlife you see is to practice being a better observer of wildlife. Often when we hike along the trail, we become so focused on watching for projecting rocks, tree roots, and other hazards that we forget to look around us. Take time to observe your surroundings, and you will find that there is more wildlife around you than you may have thought. Here are five tips for being a better wildlife observer while hiking:

Research before you hike.

Take time before you hike to find out more

about the kinds of wildlife you are likely to find in the area you are planning to hike. Make a quick stop at the closest park headquarters to the trail you plan to hike and look at the brochures they have available. Ranger stations frequently have displays about local wildlife inside. Browse the bulletin boards or displays. If a park ranger is available they can often give you more specific information, but remember that they may be busy and not have time to recite a whole book of accumulated knowledge. Some of our own Club members have

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Council Fire

The Council held its regular meeting on January 12, 1999 at the Club headquarters. The meeting was attended by 22 Council members, 2 staff, and 3 Club members.

The PATC membership stands at 6,509. There were 155 new members registered in December. Over the last year the net membership increased by 13%; however about 27% of the members have been in the Club for less than 1 year.

The Council agenda has been reorganized so that related topics are discussed contiguously. Other additions to the agenda are a Member Comments period at the beginning of the meeting and a report by the Director of Administration. Internet Services, Trail Lands Maintenance, and Tuscarora Trail Special Committees were made Standing Committees that now have a vote in Council.

Charlie Graf presented a special report on the Maryland AT Management Committee. In Maryland, the PATC committees that are responsible for the Appalachian Trail (Trails, Trail Patrol, Shelters, Corridor Management) meet every six weeks together with representatives of the Department of Natural Resources, Appalachian Trail Conference, Appalachian Trail Parks Office, Trust for Appalachian Trail Lands, South Mountain Recreation Area, MATC and others to discuss issues and conduct business.

Several items were discussed but not acted on. There was a concern about unbudgeted year-end volunteer recognition events in various committees. The discussion supported the importance of volunteer recognition but was tempered with fiscal responsibility for the

activities of the committee. There was also a concern about the purchase of alcoholic beverages for such events.

No leader has been found for the Dogwood Half-Hundred. This led to a discussion about the difficulty of obtaining volunteers for major projects.

The replacement of the Hemlock Hill Shelter was discussed. The Shelters Committee must concentrate on rebuilding and improving the condition of present shelters, before embarking on new construction. On the other hand, the construction of a new shelter has been discussed for some time and a project plan is now before the Council. A project leader has been actively planning the shelter, which is to be built off-site, dismantled, and moved to the site.

The Maps committee will present an agreement with four of the five developers of AT Maps and Guidebooks to allow publishing of a CD-ROM version of those products.

Warren Sharp has been working on a local AT management plan, required of all trail maintaining organizations. He distributed a statement of the more than thirty policy statements contained in the plan, which will come up for Council approval in the next two months. □

—Gerhard Salinger,
Recording Secretary

Let your voice be heard. Come take part in discussions of the Club's business. Council meetings are the second Tuesday of each month, beginning at 7pm at PATC HQ. Call Wilson Riley if you'd like time on the agenda.

The Appalachian Trail Conference has compiled a listing of trail skills workshops offered by trail maintaining organizations. Workshops are usually free and open to all volunteers but require registration. Topics include Basic Trail Maintenance, Rock Work, Leadership Skills, Corridor Monitoring and Boundary Maintenance, and Chainsaw Use and Certification courses.

March classes include Corridor Monitoring/Boundary Maintenance, offered March 13 (sponsored by the Mountain Club of Maryland) and March 20 (this is a PATC event!); and Chainsaw Use and Safety, offered March 27 by the Adirondack Mountain Club.

For more information and a listing of courses, see their website at <http://www.atconf.org> and follow the Trail Maintainers' Training Opportunities Link, or write to the ATC, P.O. Box 10, Newport VA 24128.

Walt's Notes: Who Are We And Where Are We Going?

The Futures Group has taken off the blinders. The Futures Group is exploring many questions in order to determine how we may successfully meet the challenges of the future. The Group will also review the Club's objectives and organizational structure. Should the PATC objectives be changed? Do they reflect what the Club wants to do? How should we be organized to accomplish the objectives? Should we hire an Executive Director and more employees, to meet the needs of a growing organization?

As the organization grows in membership (last year at an annual rate of 13%), should PATC have stronger chapters that carry more responsibilities and receive more resources? Do we need more chapters, creating additional "PATC communities", as the organization gets larger? For example, should the members living in DC be able to organize a local chapter, perhaps sponsoring Saturday picnics in Rock Creek Park while overseers work there on the trails, thus combining social and work needs?

There are many other questions. If you are interested in affecting the future of your Club, then I invite you to join us at the Vienna Headquarters on the third Tuesday evening of each month. Further information on meetings for The Futures Group is contained in the Forecast Section.

Club Secures New Land in Northern Virginia

In November, the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) went to settlement on a tract in Northern Virginia that abuts the Appalachian Trail (AT) corridor near Rte. 606. The property, known as the Oliphant Land Joint Venture, was owned by John Oliphant and his brothers for many years and adjoins the PATC Glaser Cabin tract. It contains about 60 acres, more or less, and is two-thirds slope and one-third relatively flat, covered with immature forest. A road that leads to the Myron Glaser Cabin is now mostly unused.

The land was first offered on the open market by the Oliphants for \$130,000 without success. Eventually, the Oliphants decided to offer it to PATC, which eventually made a

When Should We Rattle?

One very hot, August day, I was hiking along a trail on Great North Mountain when I noticed that my right boot was about to step on a rattlesnake, almost hidden in the grass. Skipping twice with my left foot, I moved safely over the snake. It made a feeble attempt to shake its rattles after I had passed. It rattled too late.

I was surprised at the lazy action of that rattlesnake. During all previous encounters on the trail, rattlesnakes had alerted me in advance of my reaching their location. Those snakes had rattled in plenty of time to avert contact.

But some rattlesnakes seem to know when not to rattle at all!

One lovely June day during rattlesnake mating season, while preparing a morning cup of tea by one of my favorite spots just off the Half Moon Mountain Trail, I discovered that I was intruding on two rattlesnakes. Not that they seemed to mind, as they were all curled up in a circle. They were as quiet as church mice. But it did seem to me that I should put a distance of greater than the four feet between us, so I moved my tea a bit.

In between trail maintenance chores, I continued to observe the rattlesnakes, which always turned their heads toward me when I appeared but made not a sound. I returned to the site the following month and noticed

one of the young ones, with a parent, basking in the sun. The parents were still there in August, in the same place down below the ledge—curled up, side by side, enjoying the warmth of the day. Not once during that summer did I ever hear a rattle from that family! Such discernment thought!

When Is It Important?

Those of us on Council sometimes wonder when should we rattle? The answer was quite clear last year when a proposal was announced to construct a high communication tower very close to the Appalachian Trail in the vicinity of route US 50. A meeting among the PATC District Manager and the Trust Coordinator for the Trust for Appalachian Trail Lands, and the applicant, as well as opposition from local property owners, was sufficient to avoid that intrusion on the trail, at least for the time being.

But another decision was not quite so clear to me when I was apprised of a controversial expansion of the Beaver Creek Quarry in Maryland, located in the valley two miles or so from the Black Rock view along the AT. Some hikers thought it would spoil the view, others weren't so bothered. I drove up to the quarry site to see for myself. The site of the Black Rock overview seemed a long way off. And, as I thought of how the valley is filling in beyond our control with housing, commercial, and industrial developments, it seemed to me that we had better pick our battles carefully, especially when the object of contention is not on the ridge itself.

As we continue to make such judgments in advancing trail conservation interests, may we have the wisdom of Solomon and the discernment to rattle at the right time.

The Bear and the Fox

While out on the trail, I have noticed how effectively the animals can communicate with each other. Can we learn something from them? For example, have you noticed how the sow gets her cubs to move quickly out of the way of danger? I observed such a family for a few moments one spring. As soon as the mother noticed that I was near, she uttered a simple, soft grunt and her offspring immediately left

counter offer that was accepted. PATC's cost was about \$96,000. Money came from the dwindling Lands Fund, which receives a small annual infusion from the PATC Endowment Fund, enough to purchase only about two parcels a year.

Corridor Land Acquired

John Oliphant is a former PATC President and was instrumental in getting much of the AT corridor land preserved by his own personal purchases. He also foresaw the demand for development in Northern Virginia. As a result of those personal purchases and the formation of a PATC Land Acquisition Committee in the early '70s, much of that land was acquired by PATC and then later turned

See New Land, page 17

See Walt's Notes, page 5

Look, from page 1

an abundance of knowledge about local hiking areas that they willingly share.

If you have time before the hike, visit your local library, especially if you are planning a hike outside your normal hiking area. Many of the books written about the Appalachian Trail, as well as about our national and state parks, have information on wildlife found in the area. You can also look for information in books about the state where you are going hiking. Sometimes you can find articles written about the area you are planning to hike in magazines such as *Backpacker*.

Pause frequently.

This allows you to catch your breath and is a good time to view your surroundings. You do not have to wait until you reach the crest of a hill to stop, and it does not need to be a long rest break. When I am climbing a hill or walking through a particularly rocky area, I pause frequently. After I have secured a balanced stance, I take time to look around. I look where I am going as well as where I have been. I also listen. Since my feet are not making any noise I can often hear subtle noises like leaves rustling under a chipmunk's feet or the squeak of two twigs rubbing as a bird hops from branch to branch inside a bush.

“Take a moment to take a closer look, and use all of your senses.”

Look for ecosystems.

There are many different ecosystems. Notice changes in tree types, the dampness of the ground, the amount and type of low growing shrubs, the amount of sunlight reaching the ground. Each of these changes can indicate an environment suitable for a different species or group of species adapted to live in that area. Even if you cannot see the leaves in the trees clearly, you can establish something

about the ecosystem by observing what types of fallen leaves, shrubs, and herbaceous plants are present. Even open areas, such as rocky outcrops, have animals adapted for living in them.

Observe all three levels.

Generally, our forests grow in three levels: the overstory or canopy, the middle or understory, and the ground level or floor. The overstory is usually defined as the growth above approximately 20 feet and includes large deciduous and evergreen trees. Look for birds of prey, woodpeckers, vultures, and squirrels. Large trees provide food, such as nuts, and nests for squirrels and some birds. Due to the height to which they grow, close observation is difficult.

The understory includes the smaller trees and shrubs that grow beneath the larger trees. Some people divide this level into a small tree layer and a shrub layer, but for our purposes this is not necessary. The understory provides

a large number of nesting spots for birds and most of the vegetative matter eaten by large mammals. For example, deer browse this level and bear eat

berries from this level. It also provides cover for many animals.

The ground level includes wildflowers, herbaceous plants, low-growing vines, rocks, and fallen trees. The floor is home to most of our reptiles, small mammals, and some insects. Look for hiding spots beneath logs and rocks. You will see an abundance of insects if you take a moment to look closely. The floor has many indicators of what wildlife is present. It is here that you find animal droppings or scat, footprints, lost feathers or tufts of fur, and many animal dens. This level also includes water resources such as streams and ponds. Each has its own web of associated life.

it wants to have its picture taken with your spouse. Back away from the animal slowly. Never run. Chances are that the bear will leave the area as soon as it spots you. It doesn't want to interact with you any more than you should want to interact with it.

Remember that a safe wildlife encounter is the best wildlife encounter!

—Aimee Kratts

editor's note: This article has been read and approved by National Park Service employees.

Five tips for observing wildlife while you hike:

1. Research before you hike.
2. Pause frequently.
3. Look for ecosystems.
4. Observe all three levels.
5. Take time for a closer look.

Take time for a closer look.

During breaks take a moment to take a closer look and use all of your senses. Look for movement and signs of life such as nests, footprints, and broken twigs. Listen for noises such as bird calls or rustling leaves. Use your sense of feel to lift objects. Even your sense of smell can detect scents such as wildflowers and rotting wood. When you find a body of water, look for signs that animals have been using it as a source of water. It may require going off the trail a short way or even getting wet, but the knowledge gained can be exciting.

The understory is often full of rustling noises that can help you find the inhabitants. Look for movement in the branches. With practice you may even observe signs of deer browse or ruts. In damp or muddy areas, check the ground level for tracks. In drier areas, look for disturbed fallen leaves and crushed vegetation. Explore the ground level by physically probing. Try moving rocks, lifting logs, or overturning leaves. Remember, however, to be careful of disturbing snakes or spiders as many areas include poisonous species. This goes back to researching the area you plan to hike. It is important to know what you are likely to encounter. If you observe something you do not recognize, make some notes, sketch a picture, or take a photograph, and research it when you return from your hike.

Binoculars are an added weight to carry, but they can be useful for closer observation. If you carry a 35mm camera, you can use a zoom lens or telephoto lens to get a closer look. You may even see something worth photographing! □

—Lynn Gulley

Walt's Notes, from page 3

the area with her, crashing through the mountain laurel. Oh, that we PATCers could achieve such results with one word. Of course, one word spoken that softly would probably not achieve the desired effect if you were warning of a new tower being built along the AT. However, there is another animal that better illustrates how to warn noticeably.

I was camping near the Tom Floyd Wayside one June evening, and sound asleep after a day of trail work, when I was awakened about two o'clock in the morning by a loud screech! It sounded like someone with a high pitched voice was being murdered within about twenty yards of my tent. I grabbed my flashlight to investigate, but there was nothing that seemed strange anywhere in sight. The sound

had come from ground level. The following morning I looked again, but there were no clues. Upon returning home I consulted my animal references, and there was the answer. The fox lets out a terrible-sounding scream at that time of the year when it discovers danger and wants to alert its young back at the den. It is more petrifying than the sound of a bobcat. Now this sound would be an excellent communication for getting attention. But perhaps it is not the best sound to use when the situation calls for something more subtle, something more like the gentle sound of the sow.

Perhaps observations along the trail can help us to communicate with more effective discernment.

See you on the trail,

Walt

Bats—Misunderstood Creatures of the Night

As you hike, bike, or otherwise wend your way along the trails of our region, you may want to pause a moment and contemplate that cave or abandoned mine pit you just passed. What lurks within? Could a colony of bats, those much-maligned denizens of the dark, be using the place as a “hangout”?

Perhaps it's that the bat lives in such places—that it stays unseen in the light—that has earned it such a dark reputation. Other attributes add further mystery: its strange appearance, its uncanny ability to “echolocate,” (it navigates by reading the echoes of high-pitched frequencies it emits), or that it's the only mammal that can truly fly. Or maybe it's simply that most of us can't relate to a creature that spends its days in cold, dark caves, hanging upside down.

Though some still regard the bat with a mixture of fear and disgust, this misunderstood animal's image has gradually improved as facts have replaced mystery. Contrary to accepted wisdom, bats are no more likely to carry rabies than any other wild animal. They aren't blind, and they don't want to become entangled in your hair any more than you want them to. In fact, they don't attack people at all, unless of course they feel threatened, which is the rule with any wild creature. Finally, it's only the vampire bat, not native to the U.S., who makes a habit of sucking blood.

Not only do most bats keep blood off the menu, their other dietary favorites should

endear them to the farmer, the outdoor enthusiast, and just about everyone else. Each night, bats leave their roosts and go out to feed on insects. MANY insects. A large colony of bats may in one night consume, quite literally, bugs by the ton.

Some bats also play a role in plant pollination and seed dispersal. Species that feed on the nectar of particular plants become covered with pollen, which they carry on to the next plant. Their hairs also pick up seeds, which dislodge and scatter during flight.

Though the benefits bats provide have begun to be more clearly understood, their populations, which have been declining since the last century, continue to dwindle. As it is with many animals, they suffer mainly from the loss and degradation of their habitat. When mines are sealed and caves are tampered with, bat numbers go down. Some mines, when sealed in the interest of safety, have entrapped thousands of bats, killing off entire colonies at a time. Other encroachments upon caves can harm bats as well. Vandalism, especially the setting of fires in caves, can be devastating to the bats within. Also, if the cave structure is changed or if additional entrances are opened, it may affect the cave's internal temperature, which must remain constant for the success of bat maternity. Even momentarily waking a bat during hibernation can cause its death—in a few moments it can burn up to two months' worth of the fat it lives on while dormant.

See *Bats*, page 14

Animal Trivia

1. Where do spotted skunks live?
2. How do bats navigate for long distances?
3. What are the three major predators of the white-tailed deer?
4. What Mid-Atlantic animal has poison glands, and will its bite kill a person?

See page 16 for answers.



Photo by Blanca Menendez

Was this a conditioned deer looking for hand-outs? The deer nudged my mother-in-law while she had her back turned then took off while I tried to focus. Skyline Drive, fall 1996.

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Winter Stresses On Animals And Plants: Part II

This month we look at how reptiles, birds, and mammals deal with the winter months.

Reptiles

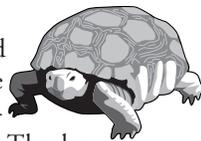
Reptiles generally seek underground locations below the freeze line and hibernate. Perhaps the best known example of reptilian hibernation is the hibernaculum of dozens to over a hundred overwintering rattlesnakes, using the same sites for presumably hundreds of years. Often copperheads and black rat snakes can be found in the same hibernacula, sharing the warmth of these pit vipers.

Box turtles overwinter by burrowing into the soil under leaf litter when the weather gets cold. The turtle burrows rear end first (to protect itself from predators) and will pause for days or weeks, half submerged, even exiting on warm days, until finally it will disappear below the surface at the advent of the first prolonged cold period.

Many species can survive at body temperatures of 28 to 30 degrees by supercooling, which they achieve by remaining perfectly still. If the animal is touched or moved in any way, it will instantly freeze. Reptiles, like amphibians, also have the ability to accumulate glucose and glycerol and dehydrate cells and organs.

The box turtle, painted turtle, and garter snake are the record holders of reptiles for cold tolerance. The box turtle can tolerate temperatures as low as -25 degrees for three days and survive the freezing of 58 percent of its body fluids (thus, the shallow nature of its burrows). The painted turtle, our northernmost turtle, found in southern Canada, has survived -24 degrees for 24 hours with 53 percent of its total body water as ice. These extremes could not be survived by our Maryland and Virginia populations, since ours have not needed to adapt to, or be subject to, such limits. Studies have shown such tolerance is lost after the first year.

Garter snakes have survived six hours at -26 degrees with 36 percent body ice content. Garter snakes are easily aroused and can be found out and about every month of the year in Virginia.



Birds

Since birds have wings, migration is a feasible option for dealing with winter's stress. Migration is the avian solution to the problem of a disappearing food supply. Most insectivores, such as thrushes, orioles, tanagers, warblers and flycatchers, leave our temperate forests to warm tropics where insects are plentiful (the extremely small insectivorous kinglets are a notable exception). Other birds, such as grackles, blackbirds and juncos, migrate from higher western elevations to warmer eastern coastal habitats.

My count in the Shenandoah National Park includes 46 year-round resident species, with a total of 80 migratory bird species (64 summer-only residents and 16 winter-only visiting species). A listing of common birds in Washington, DC, identifies 22 permanent residents and 18 migratory visitors (15 summer nesters and three winter visitors).

In fact, only 15 percent of the world's bird species migrate. So why do so many birds tough it out and remain here over the winter? One reason is that migration involves the stress of travel and associated high energy required to be consumed to complete the round trip. And, of course, being here puts the species ahead of the game of finding suitable nesting sites. The only trick is to survive the winter.

Birds have numerous methods of compensating for winter's cold. Blackbirds and tree swallows, both insectivores in the summer, turn to fruit and seed eaters in winter. Robins eat 10 percent fruits in summer and 90 percent in winter. In the case of grackles, the tongue develops a ridge and the gizzard toughens, enabling them to convert from insects to winter fruits and seeds. Some birds increase the length of their intestines to more efficiently remove all the nutrients from the ingested food (wrens grow as much as 22 percent more intestines).

Lowering metabolism by going into a torpor (a short-term form of hibernation) is another method—chickadees can drop their body temperature by 18 degrees. Shivering to produce heat (as much as 5.5 times as much heat as normal) or grouping in "troops" in tree cavities to conserve heat are common practices. Reducing movements, which humans may interpret as "acting tame," also re-

duces energy requirements. Many birds add 25 to 30 percent more feathers for their winter molt. Grouse develop more feathers on their feet for cold protection.

Finally, different species will flock together. Winter flocks often include chickadees, titmice, downy and hairy woodpeckers, and nuthatches. Such alliances provide for the proverbial safety in numbers, which will allow not only better individual protection but also more time to spend on feeding (less on looking for predators). Larger groups will also provide more scouts for more food supplies.

Mammals

Mammalian adaptations to the stresses of winter generally take on three different strategies: migration, hibernation, or continuing in a greater or lesser level of winter activity by developing mechanisms to minimize the impacts of both the stresses of the cold and lack of food sources.

Migration

Migration and hibernation are costly strategies. In the case of migration, a large amount of energy must be consumed to make the trip south and the returning spring trip back north. And, of course, migration to warmer latitudes is a feasible alternative only to those species capable of long-distance travel. With the exception of marine mammals, our only migratory mammals are three species of bats that inhabit our insect-laden deciduous forests.

These bats—the red, hoary and silver-lined—travel to southern regions of the Eastern United States and Mexico and then normally will hibernate. However, some of these species will stay in their Northern summer ranges and hibernate there in protective locations. To make the distinction between migrating and hibernating species more ambiguous, all species of bats have some individuals that will migrate, with individuals of many species migrating 100 miles, more or less, before hibernating.

Hibernation

Hibernation, in the truest sense, is only practiced by woodchucks, bats, jumping mice and ground squirrels, none native to our Eastern forests. This strategy is costly because the animal needs to store an adequate amount of energy in the form of brown fat—full of mitochondria, the engines in cells that convert food

into energy and whose only function is to generate heat—that will fuel the body's system over the duration of the winter season. This strategy is only suitable in mid-latitudes, since more Northern habitats preclude animals from safely sleeping through the winter without freezing or running out of stored energy.

Woodchucks are the textbook hibernators, with the oldest—and fattest—entering the burrow first, in late October. In autumn, after increasing its summer weight by 30 percent, mostly in the form of a half-inch layer of brown fat stored over much of the body, especially the back and shoulders, the groundhog will line its hibernaculum with grass and leaves and then plug the entrances to maintain constant temperatures and to keep out curious visitors before curling into a ball. They will awaken about every two weeks throughout the winter to defecate. They will emerge having lost approximately one-half their fall weight.

All bats of the Eastern United States are capable of hibernation in winter, and they will also reduce metabolism and enter torpor during cool days as an energy-saving mechanism. Brown bats store energy as brown fat. As do all true hibernators, bats will occasionally awaken during winter to prevent muscle atrophy and defecate and may even change caves.

Jumping mice are profound hibernators. Meadow jumping mice put on a substantial layer of fat (about 6 grams—increasing in total body weight from 15 to 21 grams) and wake every two weeks to stretch and defecate. Woodland jumping mice put on 7 to 8 grams, from 20 to 28 grams total weight. The woodland jumping mice will spend from October to April or May in deep torpor in underground moss, grass and leaf nests.

Whether other animals, like bears and chipmunks, hibernate or not depends on your source and definition. There is a continuum of sorts between the true hibernation of ground squirrels and woodchucks, in which all bodily functions are greatly slowed, and the deep sleep of raccoons, opossums and gray squirrels.

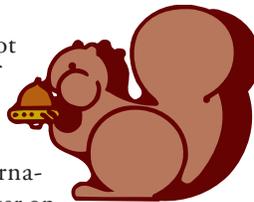


Bears are said not to truly hibernate, because although their bodily processes are slowed,

they are not suppressed to the extent found in the deep hibernators. Their metabolism drops by half, and their digestive system tightens into a knot, with the limited waste products reprocessed into the bloodstream in the form of proteins. This adaptation allows the sow to bear its young while still asleep during this period of dormancy. They can exhibit continuous dormancy for up to about seven months without eating, drinking, defecating or urinating. In the Shenandoah National Park, bears enter their dens around Dec. 1, and emerge in mid-April.

Most hibernators wake periodically, but bears do not wake during winter unless disturbed. If they are disturbed, they will rouse readily. The ability of bears to recycle urea and to desist urinating, defecating, eating or drinking during the entire denning period is unique.

Chipmunks do not develop a layer of brown fat as does a true hibernator.



Unlike true hibernators, who overwinter on the brown fat alone, chipmunks must wake occasionally to eat from their caches. They will go through periods of torpor of variable length and frequency during periods of stressful weather. During these periods of torpor, their body temperature drops, and their heart rate and respiration slow for several days.

Sticking it Out

By far, most mammals “stick it out” in winter using various adaptive methods. Development of brown fat is not uncommon. Winter grouping allows for mutual warmth sharing, allowing a further northern range. Raccoons are known to den together in winter communal dens of up to 23 individuals. Female skunks and their young will also den together.

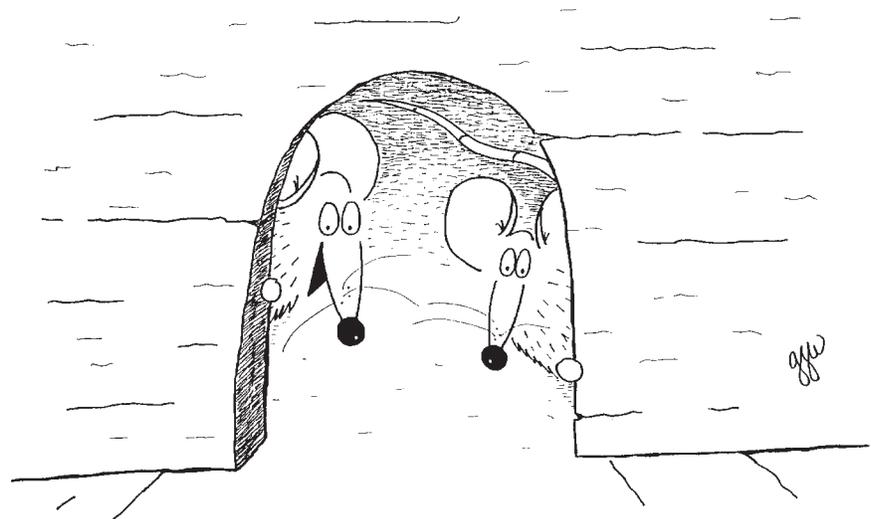
Thicker winter coats, or pelage, provide further cold protection. For example, the winter coat of the mink is highly prized and is much thicker and heavier than its summer coat. White winter coats, such as those of weasels and snowshoe hares, do not contain the pigment melanin and contain more air spaces within the hairs, thus providing greater insulation.

A change in diet also provides necessary energy supplies. For example, red foxes consume primarily insects and fruits in summer and fall and then rodents in the winter. Most carnivores, such as bobcat and mountain lion, assume a larger home range to ensure an adequate food source. Some animals will cache food for the winter. For example, red squirrels cache their food supplies in “middens,” while gray and fox squirrels prefer to store their acorns individually.

Practically all mammals lie low to minimize energy loss during extremes of winter cold and food scarcity.

See Winter Stresses, page 20

Tails from the Woods by George Walters



“Wow MARTHA!... THAT PURPLE FLEECE JACKET SURE WOULD MAKE GREAT NESTING MATERIAL!”

FORECAST

Chapters

Charlottesville Chapter

The Charlottesville Chapter hikes every Saturday, summer, winter and in between. Hikes are about 8 miles. Trail maintenance is usually done on the last Saturday of the month. Meet at Sprint parking lot, 2307 Hydraulic Road at 9 a.m. with food and water for the day. We hike trails in the Southern, Central and occasionally Northern Districts of Shenandoah National Park, and in George Washington National Forest. INFO: Jere Bidwell 804/295-2143, John Shannon 804/293-2953 or Lois Mansfield 804/973-7184.

North Chapter

The North Chapter of PATC conducts monthly trail work trips on the Maryland and Pennsylvania sections of the Appalachian Trail (AT) and on the Pennsylvania sections of the Tuscarora Trail. We also lead hikes on these and other trails. Maryland AT work trips are generally held on the first and third Saturdays—contact Rick Canter (southmountaineers@yahoo.com), 301/824-4942 for information. Pennsylvania work trips are generally held on the AT on the first Saturday and on the Tuscarora on the third Saturday—contact Charles Irvin at 301/447-2848. Pennsylvania AT work trips also include an optional Saturday night stay at the Gypsy Springs cabin. Dinner, breakfast, and camaraderie available. For information on upcoming hikes, contact Chris Firme at

(bncfirme@innet.net) 717/765-4833. For general chapter information, contact chapter president Steve Koeppen (patcnorth@iname.com) 410/756-2916.

Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter sponsors hikes in national and state parks and forests in the Shenandoah Valley vicinity, open to the public, on a monthly basis except during the winter. Hikes are posted in the *Forecast*. Other activities are in the NSV Chapter Newsletter. For further information contact to Martha Clark (mclark@visualink.com) 540/665-2101.

Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter

See *Forecast* for work trips and hiking events sponsored by the Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter. Most trips meet in Harrisonburg at the Cloverleaf Shopping Center at 8:00 a.m. Hikers from the DC area should allow about 3 hours to get to our region. INFO: in Harrisonburg, call Suzanne 540/269-4341; in Staunton or Waynesboro, call Vernon 703/886-9218, or Doris 540/885-4526.

West Virginia Chapter

Chapter meeting at Highacre on the first Wednesday of the month; see *Forecast* for up-coming activities. For further information on chapter activities or to receive the chapter newsletter contact Jane Thompson 301/865-5399.

Ski Touring Section

The Ski Touring Section has served since 1974 to introduce Washington area residents to cross-country skiing and to provide cross-country skiing opportunities to experienced skiers. The Section sponsors winter weekend ski trips for all levels of skiers to nearby mountains in Maryland, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, as well as periodic social events year round. INFO: Katherine Stentzel 703/781-3249.

PATC Midweek Hikes

PATC's **Vigorous Group** hikes 8-10 miles at a fast pace; and the **Easy Hikers** hike 5-8 miles on trails with little elevation change. See below for scheduled trips; check the weekly tape (703/242-0965) on Thursday or Friday for any changes or additions.

Other Clubs' Hikes

Capital and Wanderbirds hike on Sundays, traveling by bus and leaving from downtown, with suburban stops as well. Center Club, Northern Virginia Hiking Club and Sierra Clubs hike on both Saturdays and Sundays using carpools, which often leave from a suburban Metro stop. Schedules are available at PATC Headquarters and are published in area newspapers on Fridays.

KEY to Forecast Activities

All events are marked for easy identification. Late changes or cancellations are listed on the weekly information tape (703/242-0965), which is updated on Wednesday evening for the following seven days. The *Forecast* can also be found on PATC's Web site at <http://www.patc.net>

 Hiking Trips

 Backpacking Trips

 Trail Work Trips

 Cabin/Shelter Work Trips

 Special Events

 Meetings

 Cross-Country Skiing

Note to all hike leaders: Please ask nonmembers on your hike if they would like to join PATC, then get names and addresses so a club volunteer can send them information packets. Thanks!

March

1 (Monday)

DEADLINE - April Potomac Appalachian Headquarters, Vienna, VA

5:00 p.m. All items for the next issue of the PATC newsletter must be submitted on disk if possible to headquarters, or via e-mail or e-mail attachment to bianca@moon.jic.com. Allow one week for postal service delivery.

2 (Tuesday)

 **MEETING - Trail Patrol Headquarters, Vienna, VA**

7:30 p.m. Trail Patrol volunteers are PATC's good will trail ambassadors to the hiking public. They provide a visible, reassuring presence on the trails, educating the public on good hiking practices, minimum impact hiking and camping ethics. Patrol members are trained in land navigation, emergency procedures, radio communications and personal equipment. All patrol volunteers are also expected to become certified in a recognized basic first aid course. Some equipment and uniform items are provided upon completion of training. INFO: MickeyMcDermott 703/866-0928 or see PATC's website (<http://www.patc.net/patrol.html>).

2 (Tuesday)

 **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**

Vigorous midweek hike. Classic Old Rag Mt. and White Oak Waterfalls 16 mile circuit hike with two long climbs. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

3 (Wednesday)

 **MEETING - West Virginia Chapter Harpers Ferry, WV**

7:00 p.m. at Highacre. Terry Cummings, who continues to be PATC's chairman of Public Affairs and is

now Membership Secretary, will talk about the PATC—who we are, what we do and the benefits of membership and volunteering. INFO: Jane Thompson 301/865-5399 before 9:00 p.m.

3 (Wednesday)

 **HIKE - Easy Hikers Lake Accotink, VA**

We will hike from the Wakefield Park recreation center to Lake Accotink, around the lake and return for a total of 5 to 6 miles. Meet near the recreation center at 10 a.m. Bring lunch. INFO: Bill or Helen Bryant 703/379-1888.

3 (Wednesday)

SLIDESHOW - Climbing Maine's Icy Crown: Winter Ascent of Mt. Katahdin REI, Baileys Crossroads, VA

7:30 p.m. Rising steeply to over 5,000 feet, Mt. Katahdin is a hard hike in the summer. In winter it becomes a technical ascent with ice axe, crampons, and rope. It takes everything you've got to keep warm, and all the skills you've mastered to reach the summit. REI's Chris Lundeen will recount his recent ascent and discuss gear and skills for successful winter backpacking and mountaineering. INFO: REI 703/379-9400.

4 (Thursday)

SLIDESHOW - Climbing Maine's Icy Crown: Winter Ascent of Mt. Katahdin REI, College Park, MD

7:30 p.m. See previous event (03/03) for details. INFO: REI 301/982-9681

4 (Thursday)

 **MEETING - New Members Headquarters, Vienna, VA**

7:30 p.m. Curious about the Club? Want to learn more? The best way is to attend a New Members Meeting (but you don't have to be new to qualify).

Attend the meeting and find the mysteries of PATC revealed in full. Refreshments will be served. Take Route 66 to Nutley Street, exit at Nutley, North, toward Vienna. Turn right on 123. Turn right on Park Street. PATC HQ is just on your left on Park Street. INFO: Terry Cummings (TCIVP@aol.com) 410/489-4594.

5 - 7 (Friday - Sunday)

SKI TRIP - Ski Touring Section Crystal Lake, PA

X-C ski weekend. Stay at the cozy White Pine Cabin and ski out the door on the camp's well-maintained trails in the snowy Endless Mountains of Northern PA. Cost of \$90 covers lodging, breakfasts, Saturday night dinner and the trail fees. INFO: Dave Holton 202/364-7055.

6 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cabin John Trail Cabin John Regional Park, MD

Come join the Maryland Metrolites for work on the Cabin John Trail. Bring lunch and water. We meet at the Cabin John Park tennis court parking lot off Democracy Blvd. at 9:00 a.m. INFO: Liles Creighton 410-573-0067.

6 (Saturday)

HIKE - Signal Knob Massanutten Mountain, VA

Signal Knob hike is a moderate 10.6 mile circuit hike with 1600' elevation change in George Washington National Forest. Good views. INFO: Judy Smoot (dew@mnsinc.com) 540/667-2036.

6 - 7 (Saturday - Sunday)

SHELTER WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

THIS PRIVY WORKSHOP ANNOUNCED IN FEBRUARY PA, HAS BEEN CANCELED. All interested persons should call Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

6 - 7 (Saturday - Sunday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter Appalachian Trail, PA

Meet at US 30 and PA 233 at the parking lot of Caledonia State Park. Departure 9:00 a.m. sharp. INFO: Charlie Irvin, 301/447-2848.

6 - 7 (Saturday - Sunday)

CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin Shaver Hollow, VA

If you have been wondering how our ancestors built those beautiful log houses now is the time to find out. We are building Tulip Tree Cabin using the same tools and methods they would have used. We have all the antique tools and we know how to use them. You can learn how too! Old Man Winter has been very kind to us so far but who knows what March will bring? Regardless of the weather the Tulip Tree Cabin Crew will be hard at work. There are lots of floor joists to be made and put in place and a couple more wall logs. We still need rafters too, so there are a few more trees to cut down. Join this hard working, fun loving crew! INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

7 (Sunday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Poccosin Hollow Trail Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Join the Timberwolves on the Poccosin Hollow Trail as we clean waterbars, install some new ones and check the trail for blowdowns from this past winter. INFO: Bill Beckett (bbeckett@sprynet.com) 540/374-1706.

8 (Monday)

MEETING - Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. New members meeting. INFO: Martin Juenge (mjuenge@rpihq.com) 703/255-5034 then press #5.

9 (Tuesday)

MEETING - PATC Council Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. - sharp. The PATC Council meets the second Tuesday of every month to conduct business of the Club. All members are welcome, but members wishing to address the Council should call two weeks prior to the meeting in order to be included on the meeting agenda. INFO: Wilson Riley (wriely1226@aol.com) 703/242-0693 x11.

9 (Tuesday)

HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Vigorous midweek hike. 18 miles circuit south from Rt. 55 on the VA/WV border to Waites Run, then north on Tuscorora Trail along ridge of Great North Mt. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

10 (Wednesday)

MEETING - Mountaineering Section Headquarters, Vienna, VA

8:00 p.m. Second Wednesday of every month. INFO: Tony Sanders 202/362-3819 or see PATC's website (http://www.patc.net/mtn_sect/).

10 (Wednesday)

HIKE - Easy Hikers

Seneca Creek State Park, MD

Easy hike in Seneca Creek State Park. Meet at 10:30 a.m. in parking lot of boathouse. Directions: From I-270, take Exit 10 (northwest) on Rte 117 (Clopper Rd). Go about two miles to park entrance on left. Pass through park attendant's booth, turn right and follow signs to boathouse. Hike is a four-mile circuit on a wooded, mountain-bike trail around beautiful Clopper Lake shore. Trail is mostly flat, with some uneven terrain. Hike will not proceed if inclement weather is forecast. Bring lunch if desired. Please call if you plan to attend. INFO: Dawn Carlisle 301/924-4765.

11 (Thursday)

HIKE - In-between Hikers Great Falls, VA

A scenic 9 mi. hike at a moderate/fast pace. Meet at Great Falls Visitor Center at 10:00 a.m. \$4 vehicle fee. Hank Comeau (hankcomeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

13 (Saturday)

HIKE - North Chapter Link Trail, PA

Come join us while we take a break from the Tuscorora/Appalachian Trail Series hikes and hike the 1000 Steps — the pride of the Link Trail. This will be a difficult 8.2 mile round-trip hike with the highest point at an elevation of 2321 ft. on Jacks Mountain — an elevation change of 1723 ft. Wow! The climb to the top will give us some fantastic views of the Juniata River and its valley below. We will get to see what it was like to hike these steps like our ancestors did in their early years while quarrying the mountain. For those who purchased steps to help preserve this part of the Link Trail, let's go and check them out! There are still more steps available for purchase so if you don't own one, come out with us and find one that you like. INFO: Chris Firme 717/765-4833 after 6:00 p.m.

13 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - Massanutten Crew Massanutten Mountain, VA

Call 5 days ahead. INFO: Wil Kohlbrenner 540/477-2971.

13 (Saturday)

HIKE - DC Metro Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

Kick off the 1999 Rock Creek Park work trip season with a pleasure hike in the park. Leave the work gloves at home. We plan to amble 4 to 6 miles, depending on our mood, along the Valley and Western Ridge Trails. This is an easy to moderate hike, but boots should be worn despite the urban setting. Bring your lunch and water and meet at 9:45 a.m. at Pierce Mill, off Beach Drive in the park. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718.

13 (Saturday)

HIKE - Massanutten Mountain Massanutten Mountain, VA

A moderately paced, 10-12 mile hike suitable for active hikers in good health. Come on out and look for signs of spring. Details to be determined by March 1. RSVP/INFO: Janet Dombrowski 703/243-4232 (before 10 p.m.).

13 (Saturday)

CLASS - Corridor Monitoring and Boundary Maintenance

Location - TBA

Skills covered in this corridor monitoring and boundary maintenance workshop include map and compass navigation, understanding survey maps and boundary line specifications, and effective corridor monitoring techniques for protecting the Appalachian Trail system. Bring your compass and sturdy boots. Sponsor: Mountain Club of Maryland. Instructor: Cara Gentry, ATC. INFO: Jesse Dobbs 410/442-5144.

13 (Saturday)

TRAIL WORK TRIP - South Mountaineers Appalachian Trail, MD

This is the "kickoff" event for our 7th season. We will perform erosion control, getting our hands dirty, somewhere along the AT in Maryland near Myersville. Bring a lunch, water, gloves, and boots. Tools provided. INFO: Mark (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

13 (Saturday)

CLASS - Using the GPS (Global Positioning System) REI, College Park, MD

10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Increase your land navigation skills by learning to use the Global Positioning System. The class will cover the technology of the system, capabilities of the receiver, and operation of a typical receiver. Participants are urged to bring a compass, water and snacks, and dress for the outdoors. All other materials will be provided. The class fee is \$35. Registration and INFO: REI Customer Service 301/982-9681.

13 - 14 (Saturday - Sunday)

CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

Blackburn continues to grow and change before our eyes. Will you lend a hand to make this the most memorable Trail Center along the Appalachian Trail? Already we have built a new kitchen and bunk room, replaced the old roof, added huge sun-loving windows, and replaced the old porch roof. Still needed are stone work, porch extension and re-screening, the installation of crimped-metal roofing and much, much more. No special skills are needed; we offer on-the-job training. Just bring a lunch, work clothes and work gloves, your sleeping bag (if staying the night) and

FORECAST

lots of enthusiasm. We provide the Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast — the meal cost is shared, and is usually between \$7 and \$10 per person. Please be sure to call by Wednesday prior to the trip so we can tell the cook to buy your portion too. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

13 - 14 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew Shockeysville, VA

Shockeys Knob. Last time we prepared the trail tools and checked the trail. This time we're going to work! We're still making our way across the rock patch on the side of Shockeys Knob. Come on out and help! As a bonus, come see Fran Keenan lift car-sized rocks with one hand and place them gently by the side of the trail. Overnight at a local cabin. Bring a lunch and water for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Please call by March 5 to let us know if you're participating! INFO: Fran Keenan (frannanc@erols.com) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 703/573-2261.

13 - 14 (Saturday - Sunday)

CLASS - Wilderness First Aid Alexandria, VA

This sixteen-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$125. Registration is limited to 25 people. See course description and print registration from <http://wfa.net/>. INFO: Christopher Tate 703/836-8905.

15 (Monday)

👉 MEETING - Conservation Committee Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. INFO: Mary Margaret Sloan 703/807-0746.

16 (Tuesday)

👉 MEETING - The Futures Group Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. (third Tuesday of each month). Meets to research, develop, and recommend to membership changes to PATC organization, constitution, and by-laws in order to meet challenges of the next century. PATC members welcomed. INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visuallink.com) 703/242-0693.

16 (Tuesday)

👉 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Vigorous midweek hike. 22 miles up the AT from Rt. 55 to Dickey Ridge and then mostly down to Front Royal. Opportunities for bailout on last half as we parallel Skyline Drive. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

17 (Wednesday)

👉 HIKE-Easy Hikers Theodore Roosevelt Island

We will hike about 5 miles on the Mount Vernon Trail and Roosevelt Island including the new boardwalk. Meet at 10 a.m. in parking lot for Roosevelt Island. Non-drivers may take a short walk from Rosslyn Metro Station via pedestrian bridge over George Washington Parkway. INFO: Henry Shryock 202/479-4130 or Pauline Le Marie 202/484-2966.

18 (Thursday)

👉 MEETING - Section Leaders with Club President

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. Section Leaders and Club President meeting to provide input for the Futures Group. INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visuallink.com) 703/242-0693.

18 (Thursday)

👉 HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter Kennedy Peak, Massanutten Mt., VA

The view from Kennedy Peak is perhaps one of the best views in the whole area. Join the Midweek Stompers of NSVC on a ten-mile circuit hike up a new trail to Kennedy Peak on Massanutten Mountain. This very late winter hike should provide great views and clear weather before the Spring foliage appears. Leader/INFO: Lee Sheaffer (thumpers@visuallink.com) 540/662-1524.

20 (Saturday)

👉 HIKE - Tuscarora Trail Series #11 Siler, VA

A moderately paced 18 mile hike northwest of Winchester, VA over Shockeys Knob and Dresel Wayside Sections between Hampshire Grade Road and Gainesboro, VA. Elevation gain is 600 feet. A car shuttle is required. PATC map L. Meet at Vienna Metro, Nutley Street North at 7:30 a.m. INFO: Jack 703/339-6716 or William 703/256-6735.

20 (Saturday)

👉 HIKE - Natural History Hike North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Join Bob Pickett and Steve Bair, Resource Management Specialist with the SNP, on an 8.2 mile loop along Little Devil's Stairs and Piney Branch Trail. This is a moderately difficult trail, ascending 1500 feet, and involves several small stream crossings and walking over wet/icy rocks. Cultural resources, woody plants, mammals, and geology will be discussed. Steve Bair's newly approved SNP backcountry camping regulations will also be discussed. INFO: Bob Pickett 301/681-1511.

20 (Saturday)

CLASS - Corridor Monitoring and Boundary Maintenance Bears Den Hostel

Bluemont, VA

Skills covered in this corridor monitoring and boundary maintenance workshop include map and compass navigation, understanding survey maps and boundary line specifications, and effective corridor monitoring techniques for protecting the Appalachian Trail system. Bring your compass and sturdy boots. Sponsor: PATC. Instructor: Cara Gentry, ATC. INFO: Tom Lupp 301/663-6644.

20 - 21 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ Irish TRAIL WORK TRIP - North District Hoodlums North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Come and help work on the Appalachian Trail in the North District of SNP on this first day of spring. It is rumored that leprechauns have scattered branches on the trails while hiding their pots of gold. We may try to catch one. Failing that, the crew will work on winter damaged trails or may even begin a short relocation. No experience necessary. Tools provided. Bring work gloves, lunch, and a smile. This month's theme meal will be Irish—all may contribute. Feast on Dublin corned beef and cabbage and 9-grain Guinness bread to the accompaniment of Celtic music. Overnight stay provided at either Range View cabin or Indian Run hut. Come for the day, stay the evening meal, or spend the entire weekend. The crew meets at 10 a.m. in the park. INFO: George Walters 410/426-2724.

20 - 21 (Saturday - Sunday)

👉 CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin Shaver Hollow, VA

Have you ever been walking in the woods in early spring and seen daffodils blooming in the middle of the wilderness? If so you have discovered the aban-

doned home site of some long forgotten former resident. If we are lucky the daffodils will be blooming around the Lamberts bear wallow, just below Tulip Tree Cabin. We don't know who lived there or exactly where the cabin was, but someone lived there in the past. Maybe their cabin was on the same spot as Tulip Tree Cabin. Maybe their spirits will occupy Tulip Tree Cabin when it is done. Come join us in completing this beautiful new cabin residence for the spirits of Shaver Hollow! INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

21 (Sunday)

✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - South Mountaineers Appalachian Trail, MD

A rare, Sunday event for South Mountaineer heathens. Tread work is likely, expect to hike up to 4 miles. We will get our hands dirty, of course. Bring lunch, water, gloves and boots. Tools provided. INFO: Mark (mdtrail@yahoo.com) 301/461-7048.

21 (Sunday)

👉 MEETING - Family Events Chevy Chase, MD

1:00 p.m. Meeting for family events. This is for folks interested in planning spring and summer family events. Directions and INFO: Bob Mathis (robert_mathis@fc.mcps.k12.md.us) or Tali Stopak 301/589-7539.

24 (Wednesday)

SLIDESHOW - Wildflowers of Virginia REI, Baileys Crossroads VA

7:30 p.m. Each spring, the mountains, meadows, woodlands and streambanks of the Mid-Atlantic erupt in wildflowers. Some truly beautiful plants can be found in our local parks and forests, if we just know where to look. David Lambert has been following the spring blooming season with his camera for years. David will discuss wildflower identification, habitat, and blooming seasons and provide tips on wildflower photography. INFO: REI 703/379-9400.

24 (Wednesday)

👉 HIKE - Easy Hikers Prince William Forest Park, VA

Come join us at 10 a.m. for a short hike in Prince William Forest Park, Virginia. Bring lunch (or go without, for I'm not going to give you any of mine). Go south on I-95 to exit 150-B; follow 619 west (1/4 mile) to park entrance on right. Once in park, take second road on left to first parking lot. INFO: David Whitmire 703/494-2682.

25 (Thursday)

👉 HIKE - In-between Hikers Fountainhead Regional Park, 10875 Hampton Rd., Fairfax, VA

A moderate/fast paced 9 hilly miles. Meet at first parking lot on right off entrance road at 10:00 a.m. INFO: Hank Comeau (hankcomeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

25 (Thursday)

SLIDES/LECTURE - Mid-Atlantic Off-Trail: The Fine Art of Bushwhacking

REI, College Park, MD

7:30 p.m. Some of the most beautiful spots in the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia can be reached only by venturing off the trail. Experience and solid navigation skills are essential, but the rewards of beauty and solitude are immense. REI's Mark Nelson and local photographer Ed Neville team up to take you on an evening's ramble to some fine off-trail destinations with a discussion on planning, preparation and suggestions for safe, enjoyable, responsible off-trail travel. INFO: REI 301/9829681.

27 (Saturday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter**
Tuscarora Trail, PA

For meeting place and other details, call Charlie Irvin 301/447-2848.

27 (Saturday)

⤴ **HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter**
North District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Fork Mountain Circuit, SNP. Join the NSVC for an early spring walk along one of the most picturesque streams in the Shenandoah area. We will hike up the lovely Piney Branch Trail and around the base of Fork Mountain in the Shenandoah National Park. Early spring flowers and wildlife will be visible and if time permits we will take a short side hike to the wonderful waterfall on Piney Branch. Leaders/INFO: Al & Toni Mitchell 540/459-4366.

27 (Saturday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP - DC Metro**
Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

8:15-11:30 a.m. A first ever (at least in recent history) March work trip in Rock Creek Park. We will pick back up on a trail relocation project on the Theodore Roosevelt Side Trail. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. (Please note that this is the first work trip of the year. Earlier plans to start the work trips on March 13 were altered. Come to the no-work-involved day hike scheduled on that date instead.) INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

27 - 28 (Saturday - Sunday)

⤴ **CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center**
Round Hill, VA

Blackburn continues to grow and change before our eyes. Will you lend a hand to make this the most memorable Trail Center along the Appalachian Trail? Already we have built a new kitchen and bunk room, replaced the old roof, added huge sun-loving windows, and replaced the old porch roof. Still needed are stone work, porch extension and re-screening, the installation of crimped-metal roofing and much, much more. No special skills are needed; we offer on-the-job training. Just bring a lunch, work clothes and work gloves, your sleeping bag (if staying the night) and lots of enthusiasm. We provide the Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast — the meal cost is shared, and is usually between \$7 and \$10 per person. Please be sure to call by Wednesday prior to the trip so we can tell the cook to buy your portion too. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

27 - 28 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew**
Big Blue/Sleepy Creek, WV

Come help us complete the trail over Beacon at Big Blue/Sleepy Creek. Overnight at a local campground. Bring a lunch and water for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Please call by March 20 to let us know if you're participating! INFO: Fran Keenan (frannanc@erols.com) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 703/573-2261.

27 - 28 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ **TRAIL WORK TRIP - Blue & White Crew**
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

We'll be opening our 1999 season with a major rehab project on the AT. Join us for a day or for the weekend (we'll be overnighing at a PATC cabin near the work site). Meals are potluck (Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast). INFO: Kerry Snow (kerrysno@sprynet.com) 301/570-0596 or Charles Hillon (hillon@mnsinc.com).

28 (Sunday)

CLASS - Land Navigation Class
Sperryville, VA

The first day of a three-day event featuring classroom study in the use of topographical maps and compass, with practical hands-on outdoor exercises using basic tools of land navigation. See course description and print registration from <http://webmentor.com/mwrop/welcome.html>. INFO: Mike Gingerich 703/590-3188.

30 (Tuesday)

⤴ **MEETING - Shenandoah Mountain**
Rescue Group

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. Meet in conference room. INFO: Martin Juenge (mjuenge@pihq.com) 703/255-5034 then press #5.

31 (Wednesday)

⤴ **HIKE - Passover/Spring Break Family Hike**
Central District, Shenandoah National Park, VA

Stony Man Mountain, Central Shenandoah. 5 miles. Pack your child. Suggested age is 6 months to 4 yrs. Pack lunch — eat at lookout. 2 miles per hour pace. Limit 12 participants. INFO: John Butler (JohnButler@msn.com) 301/263-0141.

31 (Wednesday)

⤴ **HIKE - Easy Hikers**
Silver Spring, MD

About 4 miles around Wheaton Regional Park and Brookside Gardens, ending with a tour of conservatory. Meet at 10 a.m. in the Nature Center parking lot on Glenallen Ave. Glenallen is off Randolph Road near the intersection with Georgia Ave. Paved paths and gravel paths. Bring lunch and water. INFO: Carol Niedzialek 301/439-1654.

April

1 (Thursday)

DEADLINE - May Potomac Appalachian
Headquarters, Vienna, VA

5:00 p.m. All items for the next issue of the PATC newsletter must be submitted on disk if possible to headquarters, or via e-mail or e-mail attachment to bianca@moon.jic.com. Allow one week for postal service delivery.

3 (Saturday)

⤴ **HIKE - Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter**
Shenandoah National Park, VA

Spring History Hike, or A Little Bit of Everything Bushwhack. Follow Jack Reeder as he leads us around several old historical sites in and around Pass Mountain Overlook in the Shenandoah National Park. Visit Frog Heaven Swimming Pool, Toy Farm, and other sites. From there, we will go to see a nicely preserved cemetery. Then over and around Pass Mountain to an old, but clearly visible farm near Beahms Gap, and a possible mine on the way. Return on the AT over Pass Mountain, to an old farm site with a Civil War story, and possibly a very small private cemetery in a nearby thicket. Bring lunch and water, wear good boots, carry raingear, and a compass. Hiking time: about five hours, unless our leader gets lost. Then it will take longer, but will be more fun! This hike is a hard five miles, but all takes place within a few hundred yards of Skyline Drive. INFO: Martha Clark (mclark@visuallink.com) 540/665-2101.

3 - 4 (Saturday - Sunday)

⤴ **CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin**
Shaver Hollow, VA

Spring is the most beautiful time of the year and the weather is perfect for the kind of strenuous work required for cabin building with primitive antique tools. Come out and enjoy the warm spring sunshine while you learn to create things of beauty with your hands. You have more skill than you knew. You will be amazed what you can do with a simple hand tool. INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

6 (Tuesday)

⤴ **MEETING - Trail Patrol**
Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. Trail Patrol volunteers are PATC's good will trail ambassadors to the hiking public. They provide a visible, reassuring presence on the trails, educating the public on good hiking practices, minimum impact hiking and camping ethics. Patrol members are trained in land navigation, emergency procedures, radio communications and personal equipment. All patrol volunteers are also expected to become certified in a recognized basic first aid course. Some equipment and uniform items are provided upon completion of training. INFO: Mickey McDermott 703/866-0928 or see PATC's website (<http://www.patc.net/patrol.html>).

6 (Tuesday)

⤴ **HIKE - Vigorous Hikers**

POSSIBLE hike in North District of Shenandoah National Park along Jeremys Run — Knob Mt. - Neighbor Mt. for 17 miles. Call day before to see if leader has out-of-town house guests. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

7 (Wednesday)

⤴ **MEETING - New Members**
Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. Curious about the Club? Want to learn more? The best way is to attend a New Members Meeting (but you don't have to be new to qualify). Attend the first meeting of the year and find the mysteries of PATC revealed in full. Refreshments will be served. Take Route 66 to Nutley Street, exit at Nutley, North, toward Vienna. Turn right on 123. Turn right on Park Street. PATC HQ is just on your left on Park Street. INFO: Terry Cummings (TCIVP@aol.com) 410/489-4594.

7 (Wednesday)

⤴ **HIKE - Wildlife Biology**
Shenandoah National Park, VA

Ima Ibbing, a noted wildlife biologist from the Smithsonian Institute will lead a hike to a secret location in the Shenandoah National Park where there is an active bear's den. The bruins should be just about awake from their long slow period during the winter. The hike is short, but it is all bushwhack through rough terrain; sturdy boots and clothing required. Note: no children or pets allowed; hike is limited to fifteen quiet souls. Leader/INFO: Ima Ibbing (ima.f.ibbing@imaginenet.com) E-mail only (no phone service).

7 (Wednesday)

⤴ **MEETING - West Virginia Chapter**
Highacre, Harpers Ferry, WV

7 p.m. Dr. Melody Roelke-Parker will discuss her work as a veterinarian studying lions on the Serengeti Plain of Africa. She discovered that a deadly epidemic was due to an outbreak of canine distemper virus. INFO: Jane Thompson 301/865-5399 before 9 p.m.

FORECAST

10 (Saturday)

✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - DC Metro

Rock Creek Park, Washington, DC

8:15-11:30 a.m. The Theodore Roosevelt Side Trail relocation will continue. Come see how much progress we've made and help catapult us forward. Meet at Rock Creek Nature Center. INFO: Mark Anderson 202/462-7718 or Ranger Ken Ferebee 202/426-6834 x31.

10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

🏠 CABIN WORK TRIP - Blackburn Trail Center Round Hill, VA

Blackburn continues to grow and change before our eyes. Will you lend a hand to make this the most memorable Trail Center along the Appalachian Trail? Already we have built a new kitchen and bunk room, replaced the old roof, added huge sun-loving windows, and replaced the old porch roof. Still needed are stone work, porch extension and re-screening, the installation of crimped-metal roofing and much, much more. No special skills are needed; we offer on-the-job training. Just bring a lunch, work clothes and work gloves, your sleeping bag (if staying the night) and lots of enthusiasm. We provide the Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast — the meal cost is shared, and is usually between \$7 and \$10 per person. Please be sure to call by Wednesday prior to the trip so we can tell the cook to buy your portion too. Reservations/INFO: Chris Brunton 703/560-8070 or Bruce Clendaniel 410/820-7550.

10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

🏠 HIKE - North Chapter Tuscarora Trail, PA

Tuscarora Trail series # II-10. Va. Rte. 340 to Va. Rte. 601. First 1999 overniter. First day: Matthews Arm Section. Rte 340 to Range View Cabin or Matthews Arm Campground. 10.8 difficult miles with an elevation change of 2800 ft. Second day: Gravel Spring Section. Range View Cabin or Matthews Arm Campground to Rte. 601 (PATC parking area). 15.3 moderate miles with an elevation change of 768 ft. Must bring tent, sleeping bag, food and dress according to the weather. INFO: Chris Firme 717/765-4833 after 6:00 p.m.

10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - North Chapter Appalachian Trail, PA

Spring cleanup. Come out and help us get the AT ready for the coming throngs of fair weather hikers. Meet at US 30 and PA 233 at the parking lot of Caledonia State Park. Departure 9:00 a.m. sharp. INFO: Charlie Irvin 301/447-2848.

10 - 11 (Saturday - Sunday)

✕ TRAIL WORK TRIP - Cadillac Crew Shockeyville, VA

We're climbing Shockeys Knob and relocating the Tuscarora Trail, so come on out and help! Overnight at a local cabin. Bring a lunch and water for Saturday noon. Community dinner on Saturday night. Please call by April 5 to let us know if you're participating! INFO: Fran Keenan (frannanc@erols.com) 703/938-3973 or Jon Rindt (jkrindt@erols.com) 703/573-2261.

11 (Sunday)

CLASS - Basic Trail Maintenance Scott Farm/Mid-Atlantic Training Center, Carlisle, PA

These workshops (04/25 also) will cover such topics as worker safety, use and maintenance of hand tools, clearing brush, blazing, clearing waterbars,

blowdown removal, overnight facility maintenance, and sanitation. Instructor: Karen Lutz, ATC. INFO: John Wright (jwright@atconf.org) 717/258-5771.

12 (Monday)

🏠 MEETING - Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:30 p.m. New members meeting. INFO: Martin Juenge (mjuenge@rpihq.com) 703/255-5034 then press #5.

12 (Monday)

CLASS - Backpacking

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

BACKPACKING 101—a course for BEGINNING BACKPACKERS. Learn how to enjoy overnight hiking in the backcountry safely, comfortably, and with minimum impact on the environment. Classroom instruction—Monday evening, April 12, 1999 at PATC headquarters. Practical instruction Saturday/Sunday (April 17-18) at Prince William Forest Park. Weekend outing—May 15-16, location TBD. INFO: Alexandra Lampros 703/719-7846.

13 (Tuesday)

🏠 MEETING - PATC Council

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. - sharp. The PATC Council meets the second Tuesday of every month to conduct business of the Club. All members are welcome, but members wishing to address the Council should call two weeks prior to the meeting in order to be included on the meeting agenda. INFO: Wilson Riley (wriley1226@aol.com) 703/242-0693 x11.

13 (Tuesday)

🏠 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

Vigorous midweek hike. Out and back hike along Tuscarora Trail north from Hawk Campground in WV. Nice trail through old, overgrown farm land out at west to Jemima's grave. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

14 (Wednesday)

🏠 MEETING - Mountaineering Section

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

8:00 p.m. Second Wednesday of every month. INFO: Tony Sanders 202/362-3819 or see PATC's website (http://www.patc.net/mtn_sect/).

15 (Thursday)

🏠 HIKE - In-between Hikers

Langley, VA

A taxing hike from Scotts Run Nature Preserve to Turkey Run Park and return. A moderate/fast paced 9 miles over varied terrain and a stream crossing. Hiking boots recommended. Meet at Scotts Run Preserve parking lot at 10:00 a.m. From I-495, exit 13 west (193), Georgetown pike for one half mile (2nd parking lot from I-495). INFO: Henri Comeau (hankcomeau@aol.com) 703/451-7965.

16 - 18 (Friday - Sunday)

CLASS - Leadership Skills

Camp Hebron, Halifax, PA

Leadership Skills for the 21st Century - A Comprehensive Workshop for Volunteer Leaders Ed Clark, founder of the Virginia Wildlife Center, will present this program on developing and enhancing volunteer organizations. Some of the topics include "Who are A.T. Volunteers and What Makes Them Tick;" "Leadership Style: Adapting Your Style to Meet your Followers' Needs;" "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Trail Club Leaders;" and "The Role of Staff in Volunteer Organizations," to name a few. Clark conducted a similar workshop in the ATC's southern region last year and presented

an abbreviated version at the ATC Club Presidents' meeting last June. Both received excellent reviews from participating club leaders. Instructor: Ed Clark. INFO: Karen Lutz, ATC 717/258-5771.

17 (Saturday)

CLASS - Backpacking Basics Arlington, VA

This course covers the most important aspects of backpacking. Topics include: Gear - boots & socks, fitting boots, clothing types and layers, packs, tents, sleeping bags & pads, raingear, stoves & fuel, and more. See course description and print registration from <http://webmentor.com/mwrop/backpack.html>. INFO: Ted Fryberger 410/312-2982.

17 (Saturday)

🏠 HIKE - Tuscarora Trail Series #12 Gore, VA

A moderately paced 18 mile hike west of Winchester, VA between Gainesboro, VA and Loman Branch, VA over the Devils Backbone Section. Elevation gain is 2600 feet. A car shuttle is required. PATC map L. Meet at Vienna Metro, Nutley Street North at 7:30 a.m. INFO: Jack 703/339-6716 or William 703/256-6735.

17 - 18 (Saturday - Sunday)

🏠 CABIN WORK TRIP - Tulip Tree Cabin Shaver Hollow, VA

April showers bring May flowers and they don't deter the Tulip Tree Cabin Crew. We will be in Shaver Hollow, come rain or shine, working on second floor joists and hewing rafters. At the end of the day we will retreat to our warm, dry summer kitchen for a delicious meal prepared by one of our crew members. We will bask in the glow of our accomplishments for the day and enjoy each others company. Some even come for just the day and make the long trek back home that evening. Whether you can stay just for the day or want to take full advantage of the weekend and camp over with us you are welcome. INFO: Charlie Graf 410/757-6053.

17 - 18 (Saturday - Sunday)

CLASS - Wilderness First Aid Arlington, VA

This sixteen-hour class includes classroom study, hands-on practice, and results in a two-year certification. The cost is \$125. Registration is limited to 25 people. See course description and print registration from <http://wfa.net/>. INFO: Christopher Tate 703/836-8905.

19 (Monday)

🏠 MEETING - Conservation Committee

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. INFO: Mary Margaret Sloan 703/807-0746.

20 (Tuesday)

🏠 MEETING - The Futures Group

Headquarters, Vienna, VA

7:00 p.m. (third Tuesday of each month). Meets to research, develop, and recommend to membership changes to PATC organization, constitution, and by-laws in order to meet challenges of the next century. PATC members welcomed. INFO: Walt Smith (wsmith@visuallink.com) 703/242-0693.

20 (Tuesday)

🏠 HIKE - Vigorous Hikers

A fast paced hike: Carderock to/from Georgetown along Tow Path. We'll buy lunch in G-Town and picnic along the Canal. 20 miles total. INFO: Cliff Noyes 703/451-5181.

BACKPACKING 101

A course for BEGINNING BACKPACKERS presented by the PATC Trail Patrol. Learn how to enjoy overnight hiking in the backcountry safely, comfortably, and with minimum impact on the environment.

Classroom instruction—Monday evening, April 12, 1999 at PATC headquarters.

Practical instruction—Saturday/Sunday, April 17 - 18, 1999, at Prince William Forest Park.

Weekend outing—May 15 - 16, 1999, location TBD.

For information, call Alexandra Lampros, 703/719-7846 weekdays, 7:00-9:00 PM.

Another Lesson in Bears

We got to our camping spot about 3:30 p.m. The first thing we did is set up our tents so we wouldn't have to do it later in the dark. A few of us put our backpacks inside our tents. I knew that was the wrong thing to do over night, but I certainly didn't expect a bear to come into our campsite within a half hour. Our tents were set up, so we headed back down the hill to get the rest of our equipment, leaving James to watch over our campsite. Just as we started down the hill, James called to us, saying a bear had arrived. We didn't expect the bear to do any damage and anyway, James could scare him off. How wrong we were! When we returned, James gave us the story. The bear had gone to one tent and didn't find anything of interest, so went it back the way it came. Then, apparently the wind was blowing in the right direction and it got a whiff of something. He came back directly to my tent, tore an L-shaped

hole in the door and screen and then tore the top of the screen door from its zippered stitching. It must have gone directly to the bottom pocket of my backpack where I had put a zip-locked plastic bag of dried fruit and another plastic bag of gorp. He tore a hole in the bottom pocket to get the plastic bags and took my cosmetic bag. And walked away with them. All the time James was yelling at the bear and banging pots, but the bear paid him no heed. The moral, of course, is to hang up your backpack immediately, especially if you have food in it! I searched every day for my cosmetic bag, and on the third day I got lucky. The bear didn't bother us after that, but I can imagine it having pretty bad stomach pains after eating all that dried fruit in one sitting. I've been told that bears can eat anything. I believe that, but I also think they can suffer from eating too much of the wrong food.



—Carol Niedzialek

News Watch: On January 12, President Clinton proposed \$1 billion in new spending to expand federal wildernesses and urban parks in what would be the largest one-year investment in preserving the nation's green spaces. The President called for adding hundreds of thousands of acres to America's network of protected lands, from Civil War battlefields to natural and scenic treasures such as California's Mojave Desert and Florida's Everglades National Park. The PA will continue to watch this story unfold and report on how it may affect our local area.

—Aimee Kratts

The "South Mountaineers" Kick Off 7th Season

Maryland's tread repair and trail maintenance crew, the South Mountaineers, have their first 1999 work event on March 13. Newcomers are welcomed to a nearby day event in the hills west of Frederick.

The South Mountaineers began doing tread repair exclusively in August, 1993. As the seasons went by, it was obvious that the Maryland AT could benefit from larger crew-type events. Weeds were overwhelming in some areas, rockpiles could be softened, and several relocations needed to be installed. The South Mountaineers have taken on all of these tasks and more. The light-hearted social atmosphere and variety in the agenda keeps volun-

teers coming back. Their resume includes some grip hoist (boulder moving) work south of Wolfsville Rd., clean-up and graffiti removal at High Rock, erosion control all over the Maryland AT, and the Turners Gap relocation in 1996. This relocation was soon followed by the Monument Rd. and Wolfsville Rd. relocations, and the Fox Gap relocation this past autumn.

Are you interested in joining us for an active, fun and rewarding day in the woods? Please contact Mark at 301-461-7048 or email him at mdtrail@yahoo.com. □

—Rick Canter

IN MEMORIAM

Frieda Kunze, a Fifty-Year Member (1943-1999), died Jan. 27 at age 90. Joining PATC as one of "The Meridian Hill girls", she became close friends with Anna Jespersen, "Bill" and Ruth Mersch and others. Although she participated in hikes and work trips in the first thirty years of membership, she never held a Club office or overseer position. Her special touch was in social affairs: the last such affair she hosted was the second of the only two autograph-signing parties for a PATC author. For the last few years, she has been a regular attendant at the luncheons of PATC women's Third Thursday Lunch Bunch.

—Paula Strain

Skunk in the Shelter

In November of 1982 I was backpacking in the Central District of Shenandoah Park with two college friends, Ray and Andy. We spent the first night at Bearfence Mountain Hut. We turned in shortly after eating due to the early darkness. About an hour later Ray was awakened by a cold wet nose on the back of his neck! He got his flashlight and spotted a small skunk walking around the shelter. He called for us to be cool as the skunk was now by my sleeping bag. I lay still as the skunk made his way back across the shelter and hid behind the caretaker's toolbox. Ray shined his light and shouted, and the skunk, which by now was tired of all the commotion, left the shelter. I never saw the skunk, but from Ray's description it was a spotted skunk. Virginia is the northern range of this species.



—Tom Lupp

PATC/Shenandoah National Park Trails Meeting

Pete Gatje, Heidi Forrest, and SNP district managers met with Park Service's Steve Bair, Shawn Green, and district crew chiefs in late January at PATC Headquarters to discuss a number of topics of mutual interest. The first order of business was a Park Service presentation of certificates of appreciation to the district managers for leading the PATC effort to clear damage from the February 1998 ice storm. Shawn and Steve then led discussions on current initiatives and plans for 1999.

The SNP Draft Backcountry and Wilderness Management Plan (available on the SNP web site) is currently under review. Some changes include a computerized backcountry permit system and revised backcountry regulations. One proposal involves development of tent sites close to shelters to accommodate and control overcrowding. The requirement for

backcountry tent campers to be out of sight of any trail may be modified. Overseers with trails in designated wilderness areas will be interested to know that a procedure is being developed to request permission to use chainsaws to clear blowdowns in extreme situations on a case by case basis.

Since Central District has more trails than either the North or South District, the Park Service is balancing the workload by assigning some of the Central District trails to the other district trail crews. There was some discussion, but no decision, on aligning PATC district managers with this new arrangement.

Several trail relocation projects needing clearance documentation were discussed. Included were relocation of the AT north of Jenkins Gap, the Hannah Run Trail and a steep portion of the Buck Ridge Trail. Fu-

ture projects being considered include a connector trail between the Pass Mountain Trail and the Buck Hollow Trail.

Joint activities were coordinated and some planning dates for 1999 are as follows:

Chainsaw Workshop—April 17-18

Central District Trails Workshop—June 5-6

North District Trails Workshop—

September 11-12

South District Summer Crew—August 1-13

Central District Summer Crew—August 15-27

North District Summer Crew—

August 29- September 10

Bernie Stalman ended the meeting by presenting Heidi a birthday cake. I won't mention the number of candles, but there was a significant rise in conference room temperature before she could blow them out.

—Jon Rindt

Bats, from page 5

Bats colonize in higher numbers than any other mammal, and this aspect of their behavior leaves them very vulnerable. As many populations are concentrated into large but relatively few colonies, the destruction of a single colony might mean the loss of a significant percentage of an entire species. In the case of the endangered gray bat, for example, only nine caves house 95% of the entire known population.

Even outside of their caves and mines, bats face increased threats. As the forests along their migratory routes are removed, bats undergo greater predation. Without tree cover and branches for roosting, they become easier pickings for owls and snakes, their natural predators.

Fortunately, conservation efforts have led to some successes. Organizations both public and private have, through education and direct protection, stemmed or even turned around the decline of some species. Educating the public about the benefits bats provide leads to greater support for their protection. When property owners are shown that much of what they thought about bats is untrue, they will more often remove unwanted bats by methods other than extermination.

Bats can also generate great press if given a chance. In 1980, when a bridge in Austin, Texas was renovated, the new design attracted about

a million Mexican freetail bats, who used the bridge's underside as a roost. Public clamor and newspaper editorials called for the extermination of the bats. At that point Bat Conservation International, a major bat protection organization, began an extensive education effort, and it succeeded in changing the public opinion. Now considered a major local attraction, the bats swarm out each night in a cloud of flapping wings, and by the time they return to the roost, they've devoured up to 27,000 pounds of local insects. Several area bridges that were later built were designed to accommodate bats.

In the area of direct protection, partnerships among conservation groups, mining companies, state officials and even caving organizations have resulted in the purchase or permitted protection of caves, old mines and the lands around them. The entrances to these bat habitats are carefully fitted with "cave gates"—heavy iron bars set in parallel lines. They keep people from entering while allowing the bats free movement in and out. In some cases, doors are built into the gates for the approved use of scientists or spelunkers.

Throughout the world, bats take flight through nighttime skies. With the exception of desert and polar regions, they range over virtually every country on the globe. They vary wildly in appearance and behavior, occurring in a stunning diversity of faces, wings and tails. That diversity is truly astounding—they account for a



full quarter of the earth's mammals, at nearly 1,000 known species. From this grand total, the United States plays host to 44 varieties, about half of which are now considered endangered. Here in the mid-Atlantic region, we can lay claim to eleven native species, including the endangered trio of the Indiana bat, the gray bat, and the Virginia big-eared bat.

Bats represent an unusual conservation situation. Relatively inexpensive to protect, they adapt well to man-made structures. Still, they lack the warm and fuzzy appeal of many other animals. Those who may feel bats deserve protection simply because they exist often find themselves making the case to others that they should be saved for the benefits they provide. If that case can be made however, in the long run we will all be better off—though Halloween may lose one of its favorite mascots.

For more information, contact Bat Conservation International at (512) 327-9721 or on the web at www.batcon.org. □

—Alan Hyams

Red And Gray Foxes

People have long admired and hated foxes. Man has used terms such as “clever as a fox” and “sly as a fox” to indicate high intelligence and sneaky behavior.

The Eastern red fox (*Vulpes fulva*) is one wild animal that is thriving despite the encroachment of people. It is now the most common fox in North America. In the East it outnumbers the once-dominant gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*).

Both of these wily creatures have ranges that cover a large portion of the United States. The gray fox prefers densely forested areas while the red fox prefers forest edges and fields for hunting. However, they are similar in their eating habits. They are predominantly nocturnal hunters. Their diet consists mostly of small rodents (such as rabbits, mice, rats, and voles) but also includes small reptiles, birds,

large insects, fruits, nuts, berries, corn and carrion.

As its name implies, the red fox has silky reddish-orange fur, dark-fronted forelegs, and a bushy tail with a white tip. However, color variations of black, silver, and mixed occur. The gray fox has a coarser coat of black and gray with a black streak running the length of its tail, ending in a black tip.

Their mannerisms are different, too. A gray fox is the only fox capable of climbing a tree and will occasionally seek refuge in tree branches when threatened. The red fox, on the other hand, is known for running for its life. In addition, their mating habits are different. The gray fox mates for only one season while the red fox mates for life. Both red and gray foxes mate during the winter and have pups in the early spring.

Male foxes are referred to as dogs while females are called vixen. Footprints left by foxes are generally similar to those of a small dog. Their scat can be distinguished from the droppings of domestic animals by the presence of fur, hide and small bone fragments. If you don't want to inspect scat that closely, foxes generally leave smaller and denser droppings than our well-fed, domestic dogs.



References: *American Wildlife & Plants A Guide To Wildlife Food Habits*. Alexander C. Martin, Herbert S. Zim, Arnold L. Nelson, 1951. *Park Ranger Guide to Wildlife*, Arthur P. Miller Jr., 1990. □

—Lynn Gulley

Encountering Snakes on the Trail: First in a two-part series on snakes

Most hikers encounter a snake sooner or later—along the trail, around a shelter, in the privy! It's usually a surprise—for some, enjoyable, for others, upsetting. Most snakes are harmless to us and our dogs, but a few species can be deadly. Since we share our hiking environment with snakes, we owe it to ourselves to become better acquainted with them, if only to avoid the hazardous ones.

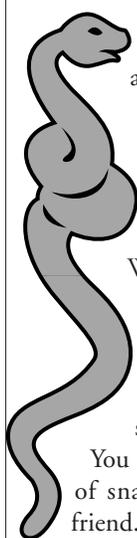
Most advice on avoiding poisonous snakes focuses on identifying them. This article focuses on learning to see snakes. Seeing comes first, identification comes later. Snakes are usually partially hidden, and their color patterns often make them difficult to detect. If we don't train our eyes to see snakes, we'll have startling encounters, perhaps actually stepping directly on one of them.

Take the opportunity to observe

We need to take every opportunity to watch snakes, from a safe distance, of course. Two or three steps are enough. The snake is very unlikely to advance toward you, but be sure you have room to step back.

Suppose you are hiking on a trail, and you see a snake ahead. This is an opportunity to train your eyes. Begin by examining a 10-foot radius around you to ensure there are no other snakes. Snakes congregate at certain times of

the year. If there are other snakes nearby, pick the closest snake. Step carefully to a safe distance. Remain motionless and observe details of the snake such as its color and any pattern in the color. Also note its length, the texture of its skin, its width and its shape, the shape of its head, and how it moves and rests.



Close your eyes and draw a mental picture of the snake, with all the details you have observed. Write down the details and make a sketch, if you can. These details will help you identify the snake, but more important, you are training yourself to see this snake in its natural environment.

You will instantly recognize this type of snake the next time—like an old friend.

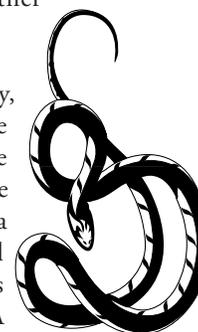
So you've alarmed the snake, what now?

The opportunity to make all these observations is rare. More often, your approach has alarmed the snake, and it is moving away or into a defensive posture. Back up carefully, and stand still. If you are patient, the snake may relax. In the meantime, you can watch. After you have noted every possible detail of the snake and its surroundings, you are ready

to watch what the snake does when alarmed.

Back away and get yourself a long stick. Tie a hat or bandanna to the end, like a flag, and dangle it near the snake, perhaps touching the ground to make noise as well. Note that a bare stick is less effective. The snake will become alert, perhaps moving away or assuming a defensive posture. If it moves away, try to stop it by moving your flag ahead of it. Watch the way it moves, take mental snapshots as it goes through grass, past a bush, a rock. If you follow it, remain at a safe distance and don't risk running into another snake.

Some snakes race away, some put on a defensive display, while others move off serenely. A hog-nose snake may go through a threatening act then roll over and go limp, with its mouth hanging open. A black racer may cover itself with its own smelly excrement, curl up into a mound of tight black curls (like a mound of bear scat), with its head poking out from underneath so it can watch you. A black rat snake may go up into a bush, where it is even more visible!



See Snakes, page 16

Snakes, from page 15

After the snake leaves, spend a few minutes reviewing your mental snapshots. Hold the snake in your mind's eye for a while before you resume your hike. And make a note about the terrain—wet or dry, grassy or rocky. If you carefully observe a snake, you may want to consult a book on snakes. I recommend *Snakes of Virginia*, by Linzey and Clifford, University Press of Virginia, 1981. Besides learning about all the snakes in Virginia, you will learn about the two most prevalent poisonous snakes in the East, timber rattlesnakes and copperheads. The general information about these snakes—and the coral snake—applies to all poisonous snakes in the United States. If you hike in another country, you

should familiarize yourself with the snakes of that country.

Some harmless snakes resemble their poisonous relatives in coloring or behavior. Any snake may bite when stepped on and will flee when you jump away. Identification of a fleeing snake is difficult when you are in pain and very agitated, so training your eyes to see snakes is good preparation for a bite situation.

Watch where you're going!

Your best snake repellent is keen eyesight and sensible behavior. Be extra careful when birdwatching, because your attention is up, eye level and higher. Be careful when picking berries. Bug netting over your head can impair your vision, especially in sunlight.

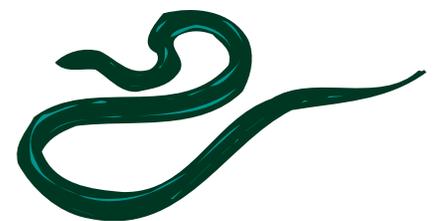
Some dogs walk past a snake without seeing it, others begin to harass the snake long before you've begun making your observations. If you can remove your dog from the scene and tie it securely nearby, you may have a better chance to observe a snake before it disappears. You may also be saving the dog's life.

Next month: What to do if bitten. □

—Wil Kohlbrenner

What to note when observing snakes:

- **Color and pattern:** Is the pattern uniform for the entire length of the snake? Does the head or tail have a different color or a different pattern? Does the skin look especially rough or smooth? Is it glossy or dull?
- **Length and thickness:** Does the snake look skinny, fat, or just "normal?" Try to estimate its length by imagining it straightened out alongside a yardstick.
- **Shape of the head and body:** How wide would you say it is at its thickest point? As thick as your little finger? Your thumb? Two fingers? Your wrist? Is the neck noticeably thinner than the head and body, or just a smooth taper from head to neck to body? Does the tail taper to a point or end abruptly? Is the end bumpy, does it have a rattle?
- **Behavior:** Is the entire snake in contact with the ground? If the head is off the ground, can you see the color of its chin and throat? If the snake is in a bush, observe how it rests on the branches. If it is moving in the bush, see if you can figure out how it moves. Is the snake watching you? Sticking its tongue out at you? Vibrating its tail? (Keep in mind that many harmless snakes vibrate their tails when alarmed.)



Animal Trivia Answers

Answers are from pages in Linsky's *Mammals of Virginia*:

1. The spotted skunk, in the mountains, prefers rock piles, rock slides, and crevices in cliffs; in agricultural areas, it prefers brushy undergrowth, p.258
2. Experiments show bats use both vision and echolocation in long distance navigation, p.38.
3. The domestic dog, hunters, and motor vehicles are the major predators of white-tailed deer. Linsky does not say which of the three is the greater predator, p.295.
4. Of the three mammals possessing poison glands (the male duck-billed platypus, the echidna, and the short-tailed shrew), the shrew lives in the mid-Atlantic region. Its poison killed a 2.7 kg. rabbit, but the few records of human bites report only considerable discomfort and some swelling of the bitten area. p.47

Linsky, Donald W. *The Mammals of Virginia*. Blacksburg, VA, 1998. 459p. illus., maps, bibl. \$65. (May be ordered direct from: McDonald & Woodward Publishing Corp., 1-800-233-9898 by phone)

A Baltimore native now teaching in the southern Shenandoah valley (Wytheville Community College), Linsky has given naturalists and outdoors people a book to be used for years. The book is useful for those in any Mid-Atlantic state, because Virginia's mammals are common to most

of eastern North America, and because the books on mammals of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and, no doubt, other states are both older and briefer.

The book is arranged for zoologists, by taxonomic order and then by species of the animal being described. Not to worry, the index cheerfully supplies both scientific and popular names for search. Each description, running to several pages, covers description, habitat, habits, longevity, reproduction, food, and other details. The information is drawn from scientific studies of the species made wherever the species is found.

Linsky is scientific, but he is not stupefying. He writes clearly and well. He quotes from many other writers, who are also interesting.

It's not all zoology. The opening chapter on the history of mammalian studies in Virginia and the appendix on early Wisconsinian mammals (they lived 25,000 to 10,000 years ago) interested this historian, who was also impressed by his one hundred page bibliography.

While this is a reference book, it will also be a desirable gift for the adult or teenager who is interested in our area's wildlife.

—Paula M. Strain

New Land, from page 3

over to the National Park Service (NPS) as a part of the present AT corridor. This parcel under discussion was an unacquired piece left over from that effort.

Eventually, PATC acquired an adjoining tract of Oliphant property and, through a generous donation from the Myron Glaser family, later built the Myron Glaser Cabin on it. The NPS acquired most of the "Glaser Tract" for the AT, leaving the cabin environs intact with a guaranteed right-of-way to the AT in perpetuity. The recent November purchase of Oliphant Land Venture Tract protects the view from the cabin tract and provides access to not only the AT but the AT corridor in perpetuity. This guarantee was negotiated by former Legal Committee Chairman Scott Johnson.

The wood road through the property is a legal right-of-way to the cabin and also crosses the tract below it. PATC's new General Counsel Eric Olson negotiated a reasonable road maintenance agreement with adjoining landowners that will not leave PATC liable for major road expenses in the future.

PATC held a site inspection of the Oliphant Joint Venture tract on Feb. 22, 1998, and after further study, formally recommended the PATC acquisition Feb. 26.

What Needs to Be Done

There are many other such tracts in need of acquisition through voluntary sale. While PATC does not currently have funds to acquire many such tracts, newly elected President Walt Smith wants to get going on land acquisition as a major priority for the Club. He hopes to establish a program through the Corporate Donations Committee to increase funds available for the purpose.

Those of you who have fund-raising experience are requested to contact Jack Reeder, Chairman, Corporate Donations, at reederbooks@earthlink.net, or phone 301/320-6324. A program is beginning, and individuals with development experience are urgently needed to help guide it to fruition. □

—Jack Reeder



Donations

Our heartfelt THANK YOU to those members who have given additional donations with their dues renewal fee, and from the goodness of their heart to the individual funds listed below.

Our mission of protecting the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and side trails throughout Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, is assured through generous donations from you. It also helps greatly to ensure that these protected trail lands can be enjoyed by future generations.

A very special thanks goes to Mr. Hank Cohen, Gen. Manager of HUDSON TRAIL OUTFITTERS. In January, at George Mason University, HTO chose PATC to be the recipient of half the proceeds (which was an extensive amount) from ticket sales for a lecture/slide presentation given by Ed Viesturs, famous Mt. Everest climber.

Donations received in January

Funds: G - General; T - Trail Lands; S/C - Shelters, Cabins, Cabin Lands; HQ - Headquarters Capital Repair; E -Endowment

Dean and Jo Ann Aulick	G	Tom and Carol McIntosh	G
Kenneth and Susan Bawer	G	Robert Wilson Mobley	G
George and Susan Bergmann	G	Babulal Pragani	G
Timothy Chew	T	Marguerite Schneeberger	T
Mrs. Ruth Franes		Martha Seigel and Robert Le Mar	S/C
in memory of Alfred Hanel	G	Joseph E. Shashaty	G
Michael D. Fry	S/C	Robert Shaw	T
William Groening	G	Evelyn A. Sumpter	S/C
Katherine Louise Horn	G	Charles C. Webb	
Carol L. Kearns	T; E	in memory of Gardener Demallie	G
Anne Kinsinger and Ron Wilson	S/C	Neil Williamson	T
Steven M. Long	T	Susan R. Yanoff	T
Donald and Ragnhild Malnati	G		

A brief note about DUES RENEWAL NOTICES. The expiration date on your membership card reflects the month in which I generate the dues notices. Your membership will not expire exactly on the date shown, but it will shortly thereafter if the dues notice remains unpaid after that month. I normally generate the dues notices sometime after the 10th of the month, so please be patient if you think your membership has passed the expiration date. If it passes a couple of months, then please contact me as there is a problem we need to correct.

—Pat Fankhauser, Membership Coordinator

Cabin Tip of the Month

Ice: Milk it for all it's worth!

Freeze solid a 1/2 gallon or gallon jug of milk a few days before your camping trip. It's important to open and pour off an inch or two of "head space" so the container doesn't split open while freezing. You can re-seal cartons with staples, bag clamps or clothespins, what ever is handy! The frozen milk contributes to keeping the contents of your cooler chilled while it slowly thaws out. In summer temps, that will be 24 or more hours. When the milk is thawed, give it a good shake and serve! Got kids? When the milk is partially thawed, but still icy, add some chocolate syrup and shake vigorously. Presto! Chocolate milk shakes - - quite a treat on a camping trip! You can also pour milk into various heavy-duty plastic serving jugs and freeze. □

—Deb Wagener

ARE YOU MOVING?!!

Did you know that the Post Office charges PATC 50 cents every time they let us know a member has moved? You can help save money and get information to you faster just by telling us yourself.

Please fill out the following form and mail it to 118 Park Street, S.E., Vienna VA 22180-4609. You can also call Pat Fankhauser at 703/242-0693 or e-mail her at pfankh@erols.com.

Name: _____

Effective date of New Address: _____

Old Address: _____

New Address: _____

New Phone Number: _____

Trailhead

Trail Conditions

After six months of hardly any measurable precipitation, January blessed PATC trails with badly needed rain to replenish the water sources and reduce the risk of fire. Unfortunately, some of the rain came in the freezing form and served to alarm overseers who had to deal with the February 1998 ice storm that devastated trails at elevations above 2,000 feet. Fortunately, the ice damage seems to be limited to the lower elevations and has generally left our trails unscathed.

District managers report the normal amount of winter blowdowns, plus a lot of broken limbs hanging in trees from last year's storm, have begun to fall. In addition, some waterbars and drains are beginning to fill because of the combination of the heavy rains in January, ground loosened by frost heaving, and leaf accumulation. Overseers may want to check known problem areas and report to their district managers any blowdowns that they can't handle.

As Trailhead goes to press, a January thaw has left the PATC trail system remarkably free of snow and ice. Only a few sheltered pockets of snow remain near the Appalachian Trail (AT), where it crosses the north slope of Hawksbill in Shenandoah National Park (SNP), and there might be similar pockets in the hollows of the northern and western sections of the Tuscarora Trail. But with February traditionally being the snowiest month of the year, there is no telling whether PATC trail workers will be looking at another disaster recovery effort like last year's or a normal spring cleanup. One can only hope that it will be the latter!

Stonewall Brigade and Mountain Bikers

Renters of PATC's Sugar Knob Cabin on Great North Mountain often use the Little Stoney Creek Trail to reach the cabin. Mountain bikers from the Sarah Zane Bicycle Company in Winchester maintain this trail. Four members of the Stonewall Brigade recently joined five regulars from Sarah Zane for a day of waterbar work. After three days of heavy rains, there was water flowing everywhere. It was like being let out to play after a thunderstorm, but the toys were picks, shovels, rakes and a chainsaw. The combined crews built or rebuilt 56 waterbars and drains in a 1.6 mile segment of the trail.

Work Becomes Pleasure in Rock Creek Park

Mark Anderson reports the first work trip of the season in Rock Creek Park, set for March 13, has been turned into a pleasure hike. Instead of donning work gloves and doing complex manual labor, we will take a look at the park's beauty on a 4 to 6 mile hike in the park. We will meet at 10 a.m. at Pierce Mill for this easy to moderate hike. Bring water and lunch and be prepared for a surprise if you've never been in the park before. See the Forecast for additional information.

Blue and White Crew Clears Portion of AT

The Blue and White Crew convened on the weekend of Jan 23-24 at the Firestone Cabin, near Elkton, VA. The crew braved the downpour on Saturday to clear the AT of winter deadfalls from the Poccosin Cabin south to Swift Run Gap. Saturday evening found the intrepid few dining at the Lafayette Hotel in downtown Stanardsville and bidding adieu to longtime member and crew leader, Anneliese Ring. The Crew will begin its regular monthly work schedule (the 4th weekend of each month) this month (March). Details will be listed in the Forecast.

Second Attempt Works for Cadillac Crew

After a failed attempt in early January to negotiate the icy road to Vining Tract, warmer weather allowed the Cadillac Crew to reach Morris Cabin for a winter work trip. Crew regulars welcomed five new recruits who dared to brave the wet conditions to join crew activities. We also welcomed back Dave Pugh after a two-year absence. Dave came complete with tales from his hike of the northern half of the AT last summer. Although predicted to start later Saturday evening, rain greeted the crew upon their arrival and continued during the day. A little rain didn't stop the crew from clearing the vines, briars, and blowdowns that had hidden the old home site located between Morris and Mutton Top. After the rain let up on Sunday, the crew continued their past effort to re-open the trail to

the ruins at the top of Devils Graveyard adjacent to the SNP boundary.

This is the year that the Cadillac Crew should finally reach the top of Shockey's Knob with the Tuscarora Trail relocation. Last year's work ended about half way up the Knob, at the Virginia-West Virginia state line. A related relocation project, across Beacon Hill in the Sleepy Creek area of West Virginia, is on the crew calendar for the last weekend of March (See Forecast). This will involve clearing, blazing and rehabilitation of an existing old trail and has already been partially accomplished.

Reports from North District AT in SNP

There is not much news to report from the North District AT in SNP since access to the Park was restricted because Skyline Drive was closed most of December and January due to snow and ice. Overseer Lloyd Parriott hiked the north end of the AT from Chester Gap and reported minimal storm damage. George Walters inspected some trails on the day after Skyline Drive re-opened and found much the same - "Looks like normal winter damage." It should be noted, however, that last year's ice storm occurred in early February, so we are not out of the woods yet (pardon the pun!). On a side note, Walters reported that as he was hiking down one trail, it was quite windy and two trees came down - one up the trail in front of him and the other down the trail behind him!

District Managers Moving On

Nancy and David Carey, District Managers for Massanutten North will be leaving for Germany in May. The PATC trails organization extends thanks and appreciation for their conscientious work and fine leadership. They are a great District Manager team and will be missed by all of us who have been associated with them.

Please send any interesting tale, technical advice, individual or group accomplishments, and trail maintenance questions to Trailhead, c/o Jon Rindt, 7861 Colonial Village Row, Annandale, VA 22003 or to jkrindt@erols.com.

Volunteers - Appointed in January

Trail Overseers

Richard Mazza

Kenneth Sharpe

René Wilson

AT - Bear Hollow Creek to US 522 Ethan Meurlin

Tuscarora Blue South - Rock Marker to Massanutten West Trail
Great Falls River Trail - So. end of Patowmack Canal
to Ridge Trail

AT - 4-H Access Trail to Tom Floyd Wayside
Tom Floyd Wayside & Ginger Springs Trail

NOTICES

NEW NOTICES

RIDGERUNNERS NEEDED ALONG THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL. Promote Leave-no-Trace principles. Four positions available in PATC territory, two in Virginia and one each in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Seasons: Memorial Day through Labor Day, 18 years or older, experienced hiker, personable, self-reliant. Need first aid certification, strong communications skills. Familiar with AT maintenance, camping experience. EOE. Send resume and cover letter by February 28. To: PATC Seasonal Programs Coordinator, 118 Park St., SE, Vienna, VA 22180. For more information contact Wilson Riley at 703/242-0693 x11 or wriley1226@aol.com.

PARENT AND CHILD HIKING PARTNERS WANTED. My son and I would like company for day and weekend hikes. If you have a child (or children) approx. 3 to 6 years old and are interested in joining us please contact Lynn at Earthconc@aol.com or call 410/730-3672.

EARTH DAY AND NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENTS! If you're planning on having a work trip or other event on Earth Day or National Trails Day, please alert the editor, so we can include it in the PA and on the website. E-mail bianca@moon.jic.com, or mail your item to HQ.

THROUGH-HIKER NEEDS YOUR HELP! Del Doc will be a thru-hiker on the AT beginning March 1, carrying a Global Positioning System (GPS) for mapping purposes. Del Doc volunteered to hike the AT to get a digitized trail on our maps that will be accurate to within two meters. John Killam, ATC HQ Volunteer is identifying persons who can help provide support to Del Doc, as he progresses along the trail, so that: (1) he does not have to carry too much weight in addition to the GPS equipment, (2) the information can be down-loaded frequently to a permanent storage, (3) the GPS and laptop batteries can be recharged and returned to him without waits that recharging would require, and (4) perhaps arrange transportation for supplies or to a motel or hostel might be arranged upon occasion. For more information, contact: John Killam, c/o Appalachian Trail Conference, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807; Phone: (304) 535-6331, E-mail: jkillam@atconf.org.

HIKE THE SPECTACULAR DOLOMITE MOUNTAINS OF NORTHEASTERN ITALY September 6-15. Sandwiched between the Austrian border on the north and the vast Venetian plain to the south, its enormous rock walls (a rock climber's paradise) explode to startling heights above the pastoral green countryside. The Dolomites are stunning in shapes and dramatic with brilliant colors and enjoy a reputation of unsurpassed appeal and beauty. Join us for 6 nights in Cortina, our hiking home base, and for 2 nights experience the culture and beauty of Venice. The fee includes: air; ground transfers between Venice and Cortina and airport transportation; lodging in two superior tourist class hotels; all breakfasts and 7 dinners; guide; and hotel taxes and service charges. INFO: Donna Brother, 703/435-8315.

PATC SHELTER COMMITTEE IS SEEKING OVERSEERS for Dick's Dome Shelter in northern VA, Rocky Run Shelter in MD, and Boone Run Shelter in the southern Massanutten Mountains. Applicants may inquire by contacting PATC's Chairman of Shelters, Charlie Graf by e-mail at Cogra@aol.com or at 410/757-6053.

HIKING RECOMMENDATIONS NEEDED! Family will be hiking and camping in Nova Scotia late July, early August. We would like information on where to stay and hikes to take. Contact Bob Huber at 301 277-6736.

LOST AND FOUND

SMALL KNIT "HIKER DOLL" found on AT in Pennsylvania, south of Birch Run Shelter on South Mountain. Contact ATC Lost and Found at ATC, P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

CORRIDOR MONITORS. Trail corridor monitors are needed in MD, VA and WV. Although the work is not as visible as other trail related jobs, corridor monitoring is no less important. Corridor monitors are responsible for the inspection and protection of lands owned by the National Park Service along the AT corridor. Corridor monitors get to explore off the trail and play detective locating property boundaries. Strong map and compass skills are needed as well as good people skills to deal with trail neighbors. For more information contact Tom Lupp at 3010-271-7340 or email at mdacent@erols.com.

FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR. Seeking person to oversee the financial administration of the Club to include preparing the annual budget. Reviews annual budget proposals and supplemental requests and makes recommendations to the Executive Committee and the Council. For information contact Walt Smith: wsmith@visualink.com or 703/242-0693.

SUMMER CARETAKER JOB IN THE BLUE RIDGE. Perfect summer job for a couple who enjoy the sometimes quiet but always beautiful Blue Ridge mountains of Northern Virginia. Meet and greet hikers stopping at the Blackburn Trail Center located on the AT 12 miles south of Harpers Ferry. Duties include some light maintenance of the house, the hiker's hostel, and the camp ground. Prefer April through October stay, but dates are negotiable. Knowledge of the AT a plus. Modest stipend provided. For more information, write PATC, 118 Park Street, SE, Vienna, VA 22180. Att: Chris Brunton or call Chris at 703/560-8070.

PATC DOGWOOD HALF HUNDRED: The premier endurance hike on the east coast needs your help. Give something back to the trail by volunteering to watch a checkpoint, arrange logistics, cook, make phone calls, assemble and mail packets, or just clean up afterward. This unique trails happening WILL NOT HAPPEN in 1999 unless volunteers are found NOW! Please take one small step now to make this 50-K hike a reality. Phone Ric Franke for additional information or to volunteer. 703/356-2106

DEAF TRAIL WORKERS. PATC's Massanutten Crew has an interpreter who will volunteer her time if there are deaf members who want to maintain trails with us. We work the second Saturday of the month. Call a week ahead so that we can send our usual newcomer material about what to expect on a work trip. Interpreter: Kelli Watts 202/543-4618 (tty). Crew leader: Wil Kohlbrenner: 540/477-2971 (relay).

NOT INTERESTED IN WORKING OUTDOORS? PATC has a continuous need for Headquarters Volunteers willing to help out with a variety of tasks — from manning the sales desk in the evening, to providing typing or office support. It takes a lot more than trail workers to keep the Club going! INFO: Wilson Riley (wriley1226@aol.com) 703/242-0693, Ext. 11.

PATC OVERSEERS get BIG discounts from the following merchants who support our volunteer programs: -Blue Ridge Mountain Sports (Charlottesville/Tidewater)-20% -Hudson Trail Outfitters (DC Metro Region) 15% -The Trailhouse (Frederick, MD) 15% -Casual Adventures (Arlington, VA) 10% -Campmor (Mail Order via PATC HQ) 10% Check the back page of the PA for the latest trail, cabin, and shelter overseer opportunities. And all PATC members receive a 10% discount from Blue Ridge Mountain Sports. Be sure to have your membership ID or overseer ID ready when you shop.

SHENANDOAH MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP (SMRG) is seeking people interested in wilderness search and rescue. New member orientation meetings are held every month at PATC headquarters. NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY. INFO: Martin Juenge 703/255-5034, then press #5.

TOOL ROOM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to help sharpen and maintain tools at PATC Headquarters. INFO: Pete Gatje 703/242-0693 x13.

HIKING VACATIONS

DISCOVER THE LAKE DISTRICT IN ENGLAND. An invitation to fellow PATC members. Come and enjoy a leisurely guided hiking and sightseeing holiday in this beautiful corner of England. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty - land of Wordsworth, lakes and mountains. For more details contact Derek Teasdale at DTeasdale1@aol.com or write to 25 Queens Drive, Whitely Bay, NE26 2JU, England (tel 0191-2520752) Call John Mason at 703-450-5009 for local reference.

MISCELLANEOUS

SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN. House to share on the mountain (access from Rte. 270 Urbana exit). Enjoy the mountain culture, the wildlife, and the view. Walk 10 minutes to blue trail. Drive 10 minutes to downtown Frederick. Non-smoking male/female. INFO: John, 301/253-3050.

THE PATC WEBMASTER MAINTAINS A SPECIAL "MEMBER'S ONLY" EMAIL LIST. The list is used to distribute special information of interest to the PATC membership, special volunteer opportunities that miss the regular issues of the *Potomac Appalachian*, and other items of note. If you'd like to be added to the list, send an email to PATC Webmaster Andy Hiltz (hiltz@mindspring.com), and you'll be included following membership confirmation.

THE PATC STORE would like to ask our members for their opinion. We would like to have your suggestions as to what you would like to see available for sale in our store. You can send your suggestions to the PATC Headquarters to the attention of Maureen Estes, Sales Coordinator. We appreciate your feedback and hope to receive some helpful suggestions.

Notices are published free of charge for PATC members only. PATC cannot vouch for any of the advertised items. No commercial advertisement or personal notices unrelated to hiking will be accepted. Deadline for inclusion is the first day of the month preceding issuance of the newsletter. PLEASE let us know when your notice is no longer applicable.

TRAIL OVERSEERS WANTED

Trail Overseer Openings February 6, 1999. Contact the District Manager for the region that interests you.

VIRGINIA SOUTH AT & BLUE-BLAZE (Maps # 8 & 9) NEW AT SECTIONS

[CALL ED MCKNEW AT 540/622-6004 or
E-mail emcknew@aol.com]

Appalachian Trail

Ashby Gap to Second Logging Road (creek crossing) [1.7 miles]

Appalachian Trail

Pipeline to the Davenport Meadow [1.2 miles]

Appalachian Trail

South end of the waterline to Bear Hollow Creek [0.9 miles]

SNP NORTH BLUE-BLAZE (Map #9)

[Call Bernie Stalman at 301/725-8876 or
E-mail: Bstalman@aol.com]

Dickey Ridge Trail

MP 2.1 to Snead Farm Road [2.60 miles]

Tuscarora Trail

SNP Boundary to Thompson Hollow Trail [2.30 miles]

Elkwallow Trail

Mathews Arm Campground to Elkwallow Wayside [2.00 miles]

SHENANDOAH SOUTH BLUE-BLAZE (Map #10)

[CALL CHARLES HILLON AT 703/754-7388
or E-mail: hillon@mnsinc.com]

Catlett Mountain Trail

Hannah Run Trail to Hazel Mountain Trail [1.20 miles]

Crusher Ridge Trail

Skyline Drive to West Park Boundary [1.80 miles]

White Oak Canyon Trail

Skyline Drive to First Waterfall [3.00 miles]

Corbin Hollow Trail

Old Rag Fire Road to Weakley Hollow Fire Road [2.00 miles]

Cat Knob Trail

Laurel Prong Trail to Jones Mountain Trail [.50 mile]

Staunton River Trail

Fork Mountain Fire Road to Jones Mountain Trail [1.50 miles]

McDaniel Hollow Trail

Staunton River Trail to Jones Mountain Trail [.40 mile]

SHENANDOAH SOUTH BLUE-BLAZE (Map #11)

[CALL LOIS MANSFIELD at 804/828-0476 or
E-mail: lem@Virginia.edu]

Gap Run Trail

Rte. 638 Access Trail to the Rocky Mount Trail
(lower end) [.8 miles]

MASSANUTTEN NORTH (Map # G)

[CALL DAVID & NANCY CAREY at 703/538-2418 or
E-mail: nancyc@his.com]

Massanutten Mt. East Trail

Scothorn Gap Trail to Waterfall Mountain Trail [3.4 miles]

Massanutten Mt. East Trail

Waterfall Mountain Trail to US Rte. 211 [1.0 mile]

MASSANUTTEN SOUTH (Map # H)

[CALL BILL SCHMIDT AT 301/585-2477
or E-mail: weschem@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu]

Massanutten Mountain South Trail

TV Tower Road (FR375) to Pitt Spring [3.4 miles]

Massanutten Mountain South Trail

Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail [3.3 miles]

Morgan Run Trail

Cub Run Rd. to Massanutten Mt. South Trail [1.4 miles]

Winter Stresses, from page 7

An interesting secondary adaptation to winter stress developed by many mammals is delayed



fertilization and implantation. Delayed fertilization—seemingly a highly advantageous

adaptation in mammals with long periods of dormancy—occurs among most of our native bats. Bats' copulation, requiring considerable energy, occurs in late summer and autumn when males are in excellent condition and have abundant food, rather than in spring when the animals are in their poorest condition and when insects may not yet be abun-

dant. Ovulation and zygote formation occur almost immediately upon emergence from dormancy, rather than being delayed until after males attain breeding condition. Perhaps the major advantage is allowing the longest possible time for development of young before the winter period of dormancy. □

—Bob Pickett

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