SUMMER CAMP

BRC Summer Camp 2017 was a huge success! We had a record high of 505 campers. Our wet and muddy campers roamed through our 318 acres tromping through forests, splashing in streams and skipping through the fields. We had more field trips than ever this year they included: floating down the Brandywine Creek, rock climbing, learning about insects at the University of Delaware, riding horses at Grazing Acres farm and many more. We also had summer camp at our Saalbach Farm location near Coatesville. We had over 50 campers attend over the course of two weeks.

This summer could not have been possible without our amazing summer camp staff! A special shout out to our Coatesville Youth Initiative (CYI) youth participants, Amaya Briggs and Maleena Seymour. Their hard work and dedication ensured that all our campers were wet, muddy and safe.

The education staff wants to thank everyone who helped make summer camp such a success. Don’t forget that registration for Summer Camp 2018 starts February 1st!
Eyes squinting into the bright sunrise and the cold December air, two teenagers peer above the tall brown grasses and look across the scene before them: an expansive wetland, full of chattering ducks, honking geese and soaring Bald Eagles. The entire Bear Swamp impoundment at the legendary Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge is full of life and awakening at sunrise. Their parent beside them, these young adults are full of anticipation as they prepare for their first-ever waterfowl hunt.

In these days of smartphones and digital life keeping us tied to screens indoors, one of the best shows on Earth is watched each year by a special group of people. These are the Young Waterfowlers, a group of youth who connect deeply to the outdoors and continue a grand American tradition.

Brandywine Red Clay Alliance and Delaware Nature Society’s Young Waterfowlers program is a comprehensive curriculum that introduces youth to waterfowling through a broad array of topics such as wildlife management, wetland enhancement, waterfowl identification, and hunting ethics. For the past two decades, the program has evolved and expanded to keep up with modern changes in the world while still keeping with the traditions of the waterfowling lifestyle.

Every fall, students and their parents gather at Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin, Delaware for the series of seven weekend Young Waterfowlers classes. A team of volunteer instructors from the community, with more than 200 combined years of waterfowling under their wader belts, lead the students through hands-on activities that are fun and exciting. Youngsters test their skills by blowing a goose call, carving a cork duck decoy, and training a retrieving dog.

The Hunter Education course is taught in conjunction with the class, and students may choose to receive their hunter safety certification upon completion of the class. BRC Board Member and gifted artist and carver Neil Dougherty will lead the carving lessons, while World Champion Goose Caller and Young Waterfowler class alumni John Walls will teach the finer points of duck and goose calling.

The Young Waterfowlers program successfully brings together a large group of young men and women (ages 11 to 17) each season, and many return year after year to be part of the Advanced Young Waterfowlers. Many graduates return to the class to help out as assistant instructors. BRC shares the leadership of the program with Delaware Nature Society.

“The Partnership between BRC and DNS is one of the reasons for the long-standing success of the Young Waterfowlers program,” says Jim Jordan. “The partnership enables us to offer the program to a much broader audience, in addition to attracting instructors who have a vast amount of knowledge and expertise in different disciplines.”

Field trips on Sundays help the students prepare for the waterfowl season. A visit to the Ommelanden Range in New Castle, DE is when participants test their skills with shotgun shooting under the tutelage of instructors Jim Jordan and John Campanelli, founders of the Young Waterfowlers program, bring decades of safe shooting instruction to help youngsters master the skill of breaking a clay target.

A trip to the Bombay Hook refuge to gather grasses and camouflage the hunting blinds provides lessons in mastering the art of concealment. The Waterfowl Identification field trip takes the Young Waterfowlers families on a tour of the Delaware Bayshore from Bombay Hook, with stops at natural areas to scan wetlands with a spotting scope. The excitement of seeing a wide variety of ducks, geese, and swans is amplified by the additional sightings of wildlife like deer, foxes, and even a close encounter with a Snowy Owl one year.

And so we return to Bombay Hook where we started our story:

An entire Fall season of classes and field trips prepared them for this day—both a graduation and initiation into the world of waterfowling. A flock of Green-winged Teal banks hard to the right of the blind and powers into the North wind. A Black Duck quacks loudly nearby, as the decoys bob gently in the water. Smiles flash as the youngsters prepare for the arrival of waterfowl joined by their guide, with their parents watching over their shoulders. Two generations together outdoors, connected by the tradition of waterfowling.

For additional information call
610-793-1090

Online registration now being taken at
www.brandywineredclay.org

Young Waterfowlers
Wednesdays from
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on
Oct. 4, 11, 25, Nov 8,29 & Dec. 6
at Ashland Nature Center,
located at
3511 Barley Mill Rd
Hockessin, DE 19707
$125, members only
**THE UNIVERSE IS OUT THERE!**
September 22, 2017
7:30pm – 9:30pm
Members: Free / Nonmembers: $5
Please join BRC and the Chester County Astronomical Society for a night gazing at our universe. Listen to local experts and learn about the night sky in Chester County. Attendees will also learn how to identify stars and constellations. Please note that this is a weather-dependent event and may be rescheduled.

**FALL CRAFT NIGHT**
September 27, 2017
6:00pm – 8:30pm
Members: $3 / Nonmembers: $5
Love Fall? Join us in making some fun Fall crafts! Crafts will be made out of materials that can be found around the Myrick Conservation Center or even around your house! Participants will also have the opportunity to submit their crafts to the Unionville Community Fair for a chance to win cash prizes.

**FALL MIGRATION AT THE MYRICK CENTER**
October 1, 2017
8:00am - 10:00am
Members: $10 / Nonmembers: $15
During a guided walk, explore the varied habitats of the Myrick Conservation Center as we search for migrating birds like warblers, sparrows, and raptors. Learn about the migratory patterns of birds that travel through the Brandywine Valley and how you can better locate these birds during your own time afield. We will utilize a spotting scope to provide the best views of the birds. Bring your own binoculars if you have them. All participants will receive a copy of The Birds of the Myrick Center guide and checklist. Presentation will be given by Derek Stoner, gifted naturalist and well-known photographer and past president of the Delaware Ornithological Society.

**OWL PROWL**
October 23, 2017
Ages: 8-13
7:00pm – 8:30pm
Max: 20 Participants
Members: $3 / Nonmembers: $5
Whooo’s ready for some fun! Discover local owl species that inhabit the surrounding area. Dissect an owl pellet to find out what the owls have been hunting. Learn how to identify owl species by sight and their nighttime calls. Use all of this newfound knowledge as you hike the Myrick Conservation Center property listening for the owls and other creatures of the night.

**BOOKS & BOOTS**
A Story Time and Outdoor Adventure Club
FOR CHILDREN 3-5 YEARS OLD

Books come to life at the Myrick Conservation Center as Potter the Otter reads a book to inspire. Afterwards, the story continues into a real-life, outdoor adventure. Adult participation is optional. A snack will be provided. Space is limited. Please register by Wednesday before class by visiting: www.brandywineredclay.org or by calling 610-793-1090. Dress for the weather and don’t forget your boots! $6.00 per child for BRC members and $8.00 for non-member participants.

**TREE PLANTING**
November 4, 2017
9:00am
Volunteer Opportunity
Join BRC staff as we work on the a Red Streams Blue project in the Red Clay Watershed. Volunteers will have the opportunity to get their hands dirty as they assist with the tree planting stage of this watershed conservation project. Space is limited for this program. Please call 610-793-1090 for availability. Free for members and nonmembers.

**ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT NIGHT**
December 15, 2017
5:00pm – 9:00pm
Ages 6-13 years
Members: $20 / Nonmembers: $30
Siblings half price!
Max: 15 Participants
Looking for some time to yourself to prepare for the holidays? Drop your children off for an evening of fun! Our annual Holiday Craft Night will give participants the opportunity to create a natural ornament or craft and play games. Later, snack on popcorn and watch a seasonal movie. Please dress for an outdoor hike and bring a flashlight or headlamp.

**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ALL PROGRAMS**
Register at: www.brandywineredclay.org or call (610) 793-1090
**INTERNS HIGHLIGHTS**

**Susannah Halligan**

Susannah Halligan is a Wildlife Conservation and Ecology major at the University of Delaware. For the past several years she has worked as a counselor at the Delaware Nature Society. She is an avid outdoors woman and seeks adventure, getting her start in nature at the BRC Summer Camp and Young Waterfowlers program! Susannah is frequently seen with her pet ball python, Archer!

**Tom Oranzi** has been a wonderful addition to our groundskeeping crew this summer, assisting with maintenance and upkeep of both the Myrick Conservation Center and the Saalbach Farm. Tom is a senior at Penn State majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife Studies, who says he appreciated the opportunity to work out in nature this summer, and learn about the area’s invasive plants and BRC’s watershed conservation efforts.

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**PLANNING FALL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

After more than a year’s pause in construction activity, this fall will see two major projects break ground. In the Brandywine, the second phase of stream restoration projects on Plum Run will begin with a 400 foot addition to an existing project that was completed in 2012. The new work includes streambank stabilization, in-stream structures, and a buffer planting. Future projects are in the design stage for Plum Run and will ultimately restore nearly one mile of this impaired stream. Together with previous work, the result will be over two miles of stream restored. Funding is from the William Penn Foundation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The second project, in the Red Clay Watershed, will protect and improve about 1,500 feet of the upper east branch just below its source. This site is a horse farm and the work will include streambank stabilization, fencing, stream crossings, a tree and shrub buffer, and improvements to agricultural practices. BRC is partnering with several organizations on this project, which is funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and support from Stroud Water Research Center, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and SUEZ Water.

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**INTERN LEARNS ABOUT WATERSHED CONSERVATION FIRST HAND**

Jacob Bradley, a senior environmental program major at Shippensburg University, learned first hand how BRC does watershed conservation. As part of his requirement for graduation, Jacob spent the summer getting up close and personal with Red Streams Blue projects, as well as visiting sites that impact water quality. Much of his internship was spent at 11 of the 15 completed stream restoration projects. With a temporary lull in project construction, maintenance and site monitoring become important, and summer is the time for this work. By the end of his internship, Jacob had a good understanding of how projects were selected, funded, developed, designed, constructed and maintained.

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**WE NEED YOU!**

at the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance’s Volunteer Work Day
at the Myrick Conservation Center

**September 30, 2017**
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

8:30 - Registration and light breakfast with Starbucks Coffee
9:00 - Begin work on projects
12:30 - Lunch served

Email or call for more info: contact@brandywineredclay.org

*Sponsored by Starbucks Coffee*
CORPORATIONS SUPPORT BRC AND RECEIVE DIRECT TAX CREDITS THROUGH EITC PROGRAM

We are excited to share that BRC is designated by The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s EITC program as an Innovative Educational Program. This allows corporations to direct corporate tax dollars to directly support BRC’s environmental education programs. If your company would like to make a donation or learn more, please contact Eliza Bernardini at 610-793-1090 or ebernardini@brandywineredclay.org.

EITC contributions support BRC’s environmental education programs. Students pictured here are learning about stream ecosystems at the Myrick Conservation Center.
2017 FALL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Volunteer Work Day at the Myrick Conservation Center
Saturday, September 30th

Annual Dinner & Silent Auction
Mendenhall Inn
Thursday, October 26th

Delaware Valley ‘Night’ Orienteering
Saturday, October 28th

WISH LIST

Native Animal & Wildlife Posters
Taxidermy Mounts & Insect Collections
Gently used archery & fishing equipment

NOW OFFERING

SCOUT PROGRAMS
Call 610-793-1090 and speak with Education Coordinator,
Stephanie Bernasconi to discuss availability.