Volunteer & Internship Opportunities

Internship: applications are accepted on a rolling basis. We offer undergraduate students the opportunity to work alongside our staff in three positions: animal care/museum, environmental education, and non-profit management. Internships are unpaid but can usually be used for college credits. Please email your application and a cover letter to Maggie, Volunteer Coordinator (volunteer.tanglewood@gmail.com).

Animal Care and Museum Curator internship:
This position has duties including cleaning, maintaining and designing museum exhibits, feeding and healthcare for animals, and handling/socializing animals.

Environmental Education internship:
Position involves assisting with or conducting educational workshops and programs, guided tours, and hikes.

Non-Profit Management internship:
This position involves assisting our staff with marketing, fundraising and event planning, participating in membership and other committees as applicable, operating the gift shop and aiding visitors.

Contact Us:
Tanglewood Nature Center & Museum
443 Coleman Ave. Elmira NY 14903
Ph: 607-732-6060 Fax: 607-732-6210
Email: tanglewoodnc@stny.rr.com
www.tanglewoodnaturecenter.com

Nature Center Hours of Operation:
Tuesday-Friday 9am-4pm
Saturday 10am-4pm
Trails open dawn-dusk 365 days/year

Nature Center Holiday Closures:

Microclimates. Each terrarium, enclosure, aquarium, etc., is its own self-contained microclimate. The most challenging part about being the curator is balancing these little climates. Some desert animals need low humidity, and some rainforest animals need high humidity, and they may be only 5 feet apart. When interns and volunteers help with animal care daily, it allows me the time to provide optimal care.

If the soil sits unturned for too long. If the air is too dry during a reptile shed. If the filters are clogged up. This can all be problematic for our animals very quickly. Wet soil molds. Dry air makes shedding unhealthy. Clogged filters don’t work. Thanks to the multitude of volunteers and interns this spring and summer my job curating just became a little easier, and a lot better for the animals.
Avian Flu
Ian McLaughlin

It’s spring! Open the windows! Get the animals outside! Breathe in that fresh clean air! Everyone enjoy! Well, everyone except the birds. Where are the raptors? It’s a question we have gotten a lot during the early spring. The short answer: inside. H5N1 is the technical name for the avian flu, and much like ourselves that contract the flu each year, the birds are spreading it. We can get annual flu shots to help knock the disease down a bit, but we can’t expect the wildlife to line up at local drug stores for a shot.

So, because of the lack of immunization, the avian flu has taken more than 22 million bird lives this year so far according to the Center for Disease Control(CDC). Although the large numbers are mainly from commercial chicken farms in the Midwest, it’s in New York as well. The closest county that has had a contracted case in the wild is Seneca. Researchers are hoping that the summer heat will help kill the virus off before it keeps spreading. Let’s hope they’re right.

Avian flu is a very transmissible disease that is spread mainly by poultry and waterfowl. We have two ponds and six pairs of Canada Geese, and a multitude of other wildlife that use the ponds daily. Even non-waterfowl can spread it via walking in feces, or breathing and carrying it. It’s airborne too. There is only one known case of a human catching avian flu, but we could be carriers. What do we do?

We have specific protocols in place to minimize spread within the building when handling, cleaning, or feeding our raptors. We limit their exposure during and after programs, and we have two indoor display areas. This allows the public to see them throughout the spring/summer, or until it cleans up. Stop by between 12pm-3pm Tuesday-Friday or 10am-1pm Saturday to see one or two of our raptors on display in the museum. Please note, that this may change as the flu edges closer to our facility, or conversely, starts to die off.

I feel like we all need to take a breath after reading this. Deep breath in, hold, and release.

Upcoming Events at Tanglewood!

What to look for:

Run for the Hills Race Saturday, July 23, 2022: We are excited to invite trail-goers back to Run For The Hills! This race offers a 5k course and a 10k course that weaves you through all of Tanglewood's meadows and forests. Register at RunSignup.com

Photo Contest 2022: We have partnered with Corning Gorilla Glass to bring back our Nature Reflected photo contest! Enter your photos in four unique categories to win a copy of your photo etched in Gorilla glass. There will also be a category for youth under 17 to enter their nature photography. Digital submissions will be accepted via email from July 1- August 24. $25 per entry for non members and $20 for members.

Twilight at Tanglewood Saturday, September 17, 2022: an evening of birds, barbeque, and beverages! Sample local beers and wines, meet our avian ambassadors and learn about their stories, enjoy raffles and a liquor pull. Music by DJ Ian and John Manfredi. Vendors include: Horseheads Brewing, Iron Flamingo, Liquid Shoes, Redbyrd Orchard Cider, Wagner Vineyards, Four Fights Distilling and more! Food will also be available for purchase, including BBQ By Stone Age BBQ food truck.

Tickets are $45 prior to 9/1/2022, $50 after 9/1/2022 and at the door. Tickets include tastings and entertainment. Purchase tickets online or by calling 607-732-6060. You can also stop up at the nature center and ask to purchase a ticket!

Haunted Happenings: Haunted Happenings is making its return this year! Stay posted for more information.

Shining a light on the importance of volunteering
Polly Smith-Blackwell

Tanglewood Nature Center was selected by the Rotary Club of Elmira for their Rotary 2021-22 President’s Project, an annual undertaking Rotary clubs do to meet the needs of their community. Tanglewood’s Personius Woods trail system was in desperate need of bridge repair to allow hikers to safely cross several streams on the property. Working with Tanglewood volunteers, Rotarians worked to repair and refurbish three existing structures— from replacing treads, to completely rebuilding two of the bridges. Tanglewood volunteer Matt Smith, owner of Laminated Concepts, Inc. in Big Flats donated his bridge engineering expertise, materials and time to help design and build the new structures. Volunteers DeLos Blackwell, Tyler Smith, Rich Gridley and Gerry Caruso also dedicated many hours of labor to the project. The Elmira Rotarians enjoyed the experience of making such tangible improvements in our community that will be enjoyed by Tanglewood visitors for many years to come.

This 32’ bridge on the Cottontail Trail got a facelift with new treads

This 32’ bridge on the Cottontail Trail got a facelift with new treads

Rotary Club of Elmira volunteers (front l-r) Angela McInerny, Marshelle Elliott, President Maggie Barnes, Polly Smith-Blackwell; (back l-r) Karl Schweisinger, Ryken Ruwaspakka, Tim Von Veida, Matt Weibel, Joy Perry and Dick Dubois.

Tyler Smith and DeLos Blackwell, Rotarians Karl Schweisinger and Matt Weibel, and Matt Smith are in the process of installing new treads to the stringers.

Tanglewood volunteer Tyler Smith and Rotarians Dick DuBois, Matt Weibel, Karl Schweisinger, and President Maggie Barnes finish installing hand railings to complete the new 20’ span.

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How to Create a Bird Friendly Backyard
Elaine Smith, Executive Director

It’s that time of year again when the landscape begins to wake up and we start opening our windows and blinds to see the beauty of spring beginning to bloom. Tanglewood is just bursting in the spring with great stuff to see! Bird songs and behaviors are often a favorite thing of many to watch at this time of year, and if you can entice birds to your yard, you’ll never be bored.

Creating a bird friendly backyard is not only good for individuals, it’s good for the birds too. Birds need healthy habitats, especially now, due to increasing habitat loss associated with urban sprawl. With increasing loss of habitat comes the loss of food too. No place to nest, hide and shortages of food means fewer birds (we already have scientific proof this is happening). Could you imagine your yard without birds? I certainly don’t want to experience that! That is why you need to think about how you can create a bird friendly habitat right in your backyard.

First, let’s talk about food and feeders for the birds. There are several different types of feeders and food types that you can purchase. What you buy depends on the kind of birds you would like to attract. Northern Cardinals are a bright and colorful bird found in our area. They prefer black-oil sunflower seed that you can place in a hopper or tube feeder with large holes. Many, many birds like black oil sunflower, so you really can’t go wrong making that available. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds on the other hand drink nectar as their main food source and need a special feeder found in most stores (please don’t use colored nectar, they don’t need the dye in their food). Remember Hummingbird feeders need only be out during the spring, summer and early fall as these little critters fly way South to winter. Make sure to clean them quite often, as the mold that accumulates in them is bad for Hummingbirds. Another sweet-loving species that is fun to attract is the Baltimore Oriole. They readily eat sliced oranges or grape jelly and there are feeders on the market just for placing those items in (or you can just find an orange-colored container in your kitchen cupboard and that will attract them just as well as a store bought item.) Nuthatches and Woodpeckers love suet or suet and peanut butter mix. You can buy the suet already made, or you can make your own with an onion bag and butcher shop suet. Don’t forget about the birds that prefer to be on or near the ground. To attract these feathery friends, you can put out a mix with millet, hulled or regular black oil sunflower and even peanuts on a platform feeder. Last but not least, are you looking for Gold or House Finches? Try putting out thistle in a tube type feeder. Lots of birds will eat mealworms too—live and dried, especially when they are feeding nestlings or at the end of the winter when other food sources become scarce. Our local friends and supporters at Wild Birds Unlimited in Horseheads can help you pick out quality long-lasting feeders and seed.

Now that we’ve fed your birds, what are some other things you can place in your backyard to attract birds? Water! Every living thing needs water. Put out a decorative birdbath in your garden, or even just a large dog bowl. In the winter, you can buy a heater to keep the water from freezing. Put up a nesting box to attract cavity nesters like Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows. Make sure you mount the box on a pole or high up a tree with a predator baffle underneath and make sure the box is one you can open to clean out in the late fall and early spring. If you want to further help birds in their nesting efforts, you can place dog fur, people hair and/or dryer lint around your yard for birds to incorporate into their nests. There are a lot of plants that are good for birds too, so if you have a green thumb try one of these—Purple Coneflower, Sunflowers, Milkweed, Cardinal Flower, Trumpet Honeysuckle, Virginia Creeper, Buttonbush and Elderberry. Oak and Dogwood are great too. Visit Chamberlain Acres in Southport or Parker’s in the Heights for your local bird (and pollinator)-attracting plants.

Now that you have the basic tools needed to create your backyard bird habitat, enjoy all the birds! To add excitement to your bird watching without leaving the house, try counting the birds in a certain time frame, and keep a list. This is a great way to know what birds are coming and how often. You could even help scientists in their efforts to keep track of bird populations by becoming a member of Cornell’s Project FeederWatch (feederwatch.org). Most of all—have fun!
New Members & Donations

As of May 16, 2022

New Members

Individual $40
Sara Seymour

Senior Family $45
Jan Bollinger
Paul & Indy DiPietro
Walter & Dana Slurck

Family $50
Angela Alis
Carrie Aio
Danicka Appel
Maggie & Derrick Baker
Gary & Pamela Bement
Anne Bezo
Carrie & Kyle Blakeslee
Jocelyn Brooks
Michaella Butlers
Carol & Travis Cain
Jennifer & Daniel Coben
Kayla Crane
Evelyn Davila
Sarah Davis
Nicholas Delaney
Nathan Delong
Amelia Dick
Susan & Tom Donaldson
Michelle Duntas
Samantha Dunn
Stacie Epippinger
Cheri Erwin
Madison Favia
Amy Feiker
David & Lucy Forest
Angi Franceschelli
Doc Billingsley & Katherine Fultz
Kathleen Galvin
Deborah & Mike Gesek
Alaara Harris
Corinne & Ryan Heffernan
Al & Cindy Held
Renée Jankowski
Joe & Julie Joyce
Vanessa & Aleksandr Kalinskiy
Michael & Kathleen Karnas
Jennifer King-Keene
Amanda & Evan Kister
Jessica Baker & Justin Kuhn
Ellen & Michael Lanahan
Alize Li
Kimberlee & Joseph Linehan
Shia Liu
Wes Lobdell
Lonnie McDonald
Emily Michalski
Emily & DJ Morse
Justin & Andrea Mosher
Rimsha Nigam
James, Charlotte & Jazmyn Pike
Nisha Rana
Berndette & Scott Roberts
Justin Romanski
Amanda & Adam Ruth
Rachel Ryan
Avir & Tom Rynone
Andria Schwend
William & Carolynne Shangraw
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Katie Troger
Xue Wang
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Bluebird $100-$499
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Brandon & Rachael Saylor

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Bonfitter & Leslie Schweizer
Stuart & Lucy Schweizer
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Joceline Egger
Tom & Marie Ferrery
Sean & Laurie Garner
James & Barbara Hassell
Geoff & Joan Heywood
Douglas Iszard
David & Katy Kane
John & Suzanne Knighton
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Scott & Sharron Moore
Ralph Moore
Art & Bev Morrell
Ron & Christine Panosian
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Robert & Ann Recotta
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Brett Sheldon
David & Patricia Silvermail
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Margaret Lutz

In Honor of Dr. Charles and Muriel Friend
Charley & Lori Friend

Sponsoring the Butterfly Garden in Memory of Ellen Hyland
Sara Hyland

In Memory of Lydia Lynn
Hans Bernhardt
Duke and Wendy Carroll
Mary & Sharon Emmick
Rich Gridley
John Hellinsaine
Thomas and Tracy Kunchick
Richard Quedomine
Les and Bonnie Schweizer
John Short and Surface Technologies, Inc.
Jay Schissel and Jeri Wall
Jennifer Whitbeck
The Senior Flexibility Class at Big Flats Community Center

In Memory of David Hogancamp
Dan & Barb Blakeing

In Memory of Emma Novotny
Oscar Reiner

In Memory of Rowena Campbell
Scott Cook

In Memory of Paul moss
Scott Cook

In Honor of Bill and Ann Bishop
Margaret Streeter

In Memory of Alice Weeman
Bill & Ann Bishop

In Memory of Samuel Kutchukian
Linda Hillman

In Kind Donations
Ammie Bickham – 27 Meg Lowman “It’s a Jungle Up There” books
Dahlympie – Gravel for parking lot
Dead Dog Farm Honey – 2 Bat boxes
Sara Hurley – Peanut butter, veggies and magazines
Merrill Lynn – Bird seed
Jennifer Sekella - Newspapers
The Christmas House – Animal Christmas tree ornaments