Nature Watch

April typically brings spring **woodland wildflowers**. They usually reach their peak by late April, fading before trees grow new leaves. This year could be very different as snow melts and the sun warms the soil to coax these spring ephemerals to rise above the forest floor.

Warming water temperatures prompt **painted turtles** to sun themselves along pond edges in April.

**Woodland warblers** return or pass through from April into May. Some will stay to nest while others continue moving north.

Adult **mayflies** emerge from streams and rivers, often in large numbers in May, providing food not only for fish, but also for predatory insects and insect-eating birds.

The snoring calls of **pickerel frogs** and the banjo-like **plunks** of **green frogs** issue from ponds by May. You might also hear the high trills of **American toads** particularly after a spring rain as they gather in ponds to mate and lay eggs.

June is **summer wildflower** time. Flowers bloom in open habitats basking in the warm sun. Look for Brown-eyed Susan, Yarrow, Indian Paintbrush and Ox-eye Daisy.

The insect season also begins in June. **Fireflies** begin flashing their lanterns on summer evenings. **Mosquitoes** appear and, so too, do **dragonflies** along ponds.

Sky Watch

Jupiter moves opposite the Sun in Earth's sky on April 7, when it is at its closest to Earth. **Full Moon** is April 10th; **New Moon** April 26th. Venus is low in the eastern dawn sky, rising slightly higher as the month progresses. Look for the star pattern of the Big Dipper high in the northeast in April. By May 7, Jupiter pairs with the Moon high in the southeast during the evening hours. From May 5-8, the moon passes Jupiter in the evening, then Saturn, Venus and dim Mercury in the early morning, May’s Full Moon is on the 10th and the New Moon on the 25th. The Summer Solstice, when summer begins in the Northern Hemisphere at 12:24 a.m. June 21st EDT. From June 7-9, the moon passes close to Jupiter and Saturn in the evening sky. Full Moon is on June 9; New Moon on June 23.
“At last came the golden month of the wild folk — honey-sweet May, when the birds come back, and the flowers come out, and the air is full of the sunrise scents and songs of the dawning year.”  
— Samuel Scoville Jr., Wild Folk

SPRING BIRD WALK
Saturday, April 15  
9 a.m.  
Meet at Goose Cove Overlook  
Led by: David Brown & Evan Houston, Lycoming Audubon

We’ll start by taking a look at birds on Lake Chillisquaque and then move uphill checking shrub and tree rows for additional birds. Migrants are moving through and summer residents are returning, so there could be a nice variety of species to observe. Dress for time outdoors and bring a pair of binoculars and spotting scope if you like.

SPRING WOODLAND WILDFLOWERS
Saturday, April 22  
10-11:30 a.m.  
Meet in Environmental Education Center  
Led by: Jon Beam, Assistant Director MARC

The delicate beauty of spring woodland wildflowers brings a special touch to our woodlands. These early bloomers have some unique adaptations that allow them to sprout and bloom in a mad dash. These wildflowers are among the first signs that spring is truly here. Join us on an exploratory walk through the preserve’s woodlands to discover the beauty, facts and folklore of spring wildflowers.

A Two-Wheeled Adventure
Friday, April 28  
7-8 p.m.  
Environmental Education Center  
Presented by: Jon Beam, Assistant Director MARC

Join us for a travelogue of a bicycle trip on the Great Allegheny Passage, an old railroad bed that extends from Cumberland, MD to Pittsburgh, PA. We’ll explore the geology, history and natural history of the area as well as highlights of this two-wheeled adventure.
EVENING BIRD WALK  
Friday, May 12  
7-8:30 p.m.  
Meet in Environmental Education Center  
Led by: Jon Beam, Assistant Director MARC

This is typically a time when many species of birds are courting and nesting in our area. We’ll take a leisurely walk through the preserve to look for common and uncommon bird species. We just might catch some late migrants in the process. Join us and bring binoculars if you have them. Dress for the weather and time outdoors.

WHAT IS UNDER OUR FEET  
Saturday, June 3  
2-3 p.m.  
Environmental Education Center  
Presented by: Michael Hohl, Geotechnical Scientist

Join us to learn about the fundamentals of geology and the general geology of Pennsylvania. During this program we will examine the layers of the earth found under us, how rocks formed, discuss common rocks and minerals found in the area, and how geology plays into our everyday lives.

BIRDS OF MONTOUR PRESERVE  
Friday, June 9  
7:00 p.m.  
Environmental Education Center  
Presented by: Lauren Schaffer, Photographer & Avid Birder

Montour Preserve with its variety of habitats is temporary or permanent home to many species of birds. Some stop for a day or two; others are here year-round. Learn about the diversity of birds at the preserve through the amazing photographs of Lauren Schaffer. Dress for the weather and time outdoors. All materials will be provided.

CELEBRATING BUTTERFLIES  
Sunday, June 25  
Time to be Determined  
Environmental Education Center  
Presented by: Julia Morano

Although details of this program are not available at this time, mark the date on your calendar for an educational program on Monarch butterflies. Look for more details soon.
Montour Preserve Website

Montour Preserve now has a website maintained by the Montour Area Recreation Commission. Here you will find information about events at Montour Preserve, pavilion reservation information, some great photographs, volunteer and donation information. Please visit the site at: www.MontourPreserve.org.

Visitors Center Hours

Hours for the spring and summer months will be Monday—Saturday 8 a.m.—4 p.m. The center will be closed on holidays.
The Montour Area Recreation Commission (MARC) is a group of mostly volunteers, committed to providing the best possible recreation facilities for the people of Montour County and the area serviced by the Danville Area School District (DASD). We are people who live and work here and recognize the vast resources the area has to offer. We are interested in helping to create a great place to live, work and raise a family. We hold monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month (except July) at 7:00 pm at the Environmental Education Center of Montour Preserve at 700 Preserve Road, Danville – that are open to anyone and we are always looking for new ideas and perspectives.

For more information about MARC Projects, visit: http://montourrec.com/

Donations are always welcome to help operate and maintain Montour Preserve. To make a tax-deductible contribution, please visit www.CSGiving.org. Look for the “Montour Area Recreation Commission – Montour Preserve Fund.”

Pavilion Reservations

Montour Area Recreation Commission (MARC) will begin taking reservations for pavilions at Montour Preserve. Fees will be as follows:

Goose Cove #1 — $100/day
Goose Cove #2 — $75/day or $30/half day
Goose Cove #3 — $75/day
Goose Cove Overlook — $75/day or $30/half day

Heron Cove A — $100/day
Heron Cove B — $75/day

Each pavilion offers tables, electric, water, charcoal grill and easy access to playground equipment and restroom facilities.

To reserve a pavilion visit: http://MontourPreserve.org/pavilions/ to review the online calendar of reservations for available dates. Contact MARC at (570) 336-2060 or Support@MontourPreserve.org to schedule your reservation.

As in the past, if a pavilion is not reserved for a specific day and time, it is available on a first come first served basis.