

## Come Out & Play

Discounts For Members. More Info Online.  
[www.schiffnaturepreserve.org](http://www.schiffnaturepreserve.org)

April 25, 2021 (Sunday) 9:00 - 11:00 am  
**Volunteer Day @ Schiff**

April 25, 2021 (Sunday) 4:00 - 6:00 pm  
**Music in the Woods - The Joe Cirotti Trio**

May 4, 11, 18, 25, 2021 (Tuesday) 1:00 - 3:00 pm  
**Homeschooling at Schiff - Science in the Woods**

May 7, 2021 (Friday) 7:00 - 8:30 pm  
**Full Moon Hike**

May 8, 2021 (Saturday) 8:00 - 10:00 am  
**Bird Walk @ Mt. Paul Preserve**  
Mt. Paul Preserve  
Mt. Paul Rd, Chester, 07930

May 18, 2021 (Tuesday) 7:00 - 8:30 pm  
**Environmental Book Club**

May 29, 2021 (Saturday) 9:00 - 11:00 am  
**Volunteer Day @ Schiff**

Please check our website for current calendar offerings.  
Some programs may have since been cancelled.



## Support Schiff with a Recurring Membership

There are SO many fun and educational events being offered at Schiff for all ages. Please help us spread the word about Schiff by:

- **Telling your friends and neighbors** why you chose to become a member of Schiff. Ask them to support Schiff. We rely heavily on revenue from membership.
- **Showing your friends and family** our new and improved website, Facebook and Instagram posts. Please share our posts and events.
- **Taking pictures when you visit.** Use the hashtag #schiffnaturepreserve OR #supportschiff.
- **Taking friends to the preserve** to check out our trails, nature center, and programs.
- **Attending (and bringing your friends to) our Special Events,** like our Environmental Film Festival, our Annual meeting or our event for music lovers: Music in the Woods.

# Field Notes

From Schiff Nature Preserve



**Important News!**  
SAVE THE DATE for the  
Environmental Film Festival  
June 5, 2021

339 Pleasant Valley Road, Mendham, New Jersey 07945-2922 • 973.543.6004 • [www.schiffnaturepreserve.org](http://www.schiffnaturepreserve.org)

## Living a Sustainable Lifestyle

By Pat Charney, Trustee

If you'd like to live more sustainably, but are having trouble getting started, there are plenty of ways you can approach it. If you're looking to make serious, significant changes, you could start with an environmental or carbon footprint calculator online. Generally speaking, they'll tell you where you're using more resources than the average person and what changes have the most impact. The downside of this approach may be that if you're not looking to make big changes, it could be overwhelming.

A more incremental approach might be to look at how you're currently living with an eye toward obvious waste and issues you find unacceptable. Think about all of your consumption, household and otherwise, including the subcategories. Using food as an example, you might consider where it's grown, how it's grown, its packaging, etc. There may be plenty of changes you can make without doing any research whatsoever. For instance, you may be able to easily opt for clean sourced electricity from your utility company. Using a drying rack or a laundry line might cut your dryer use in half. The list goes on . . .

Whatever route you take, there are multitudes of websites and other online resources, magazines, and books filled with great ideas. Following one or two environmentally oriented organizations on Instagram may get you started in an area you hadn't considered. An internet search on green living, zero waste, sustainability, or environmental impact can produce more in depth, thorough discussions of issues. All these resources can help you sort through the options and keep the momentum going. Good luck and remember to celebrate your accomplishments before moving onto a new goal!

Learn more about the topic of sustainability by reading these books and/or visiting these websites:

- Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things by William McDonough & Michael Braungart
- The Upcycle: Beyond Sustainability - Designing for Abundance by McDonough & Braungart
- Rebuilding Earth: Designing Ecoconscious Habitats for Humans by Teresa Coady
- [www.treehugger.com](http://www.treehugger.com)
- [www.motherearthnews.com](http://www.motherearthnews.com)

## Geocaching at Schiff Nature Preserve

By Janis Slutsky, Trustee

Geocaching is an outdoor recreational game of treasure hunting, in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) or mobile device to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches", at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the container hidden at that location. Containers can be large, easier to find sealing Tupperware bowls or army ammo boxes, or trickier ones that look like a bolt or a fake rock. Mystery caches involve solving a puzzle, giving the participant a mental challenge in the process of locating the cache.

Besides the thrill of the find, inside the cache, seekers may reward themselves by taking a trinket of treasure and then entering their name and date in the logbook inside the cache

to mark their find. Schiff currently has 20 caches hiding in various areas of the preserve.

Why cache? Geocaching is a fun activity to do with family or friends. It gets folks out and moving, boosts mental health, taps into creativity, improves memory, and gets kids excited to go out on the trails.

Recently, Schiff offered a Geocaching for Beginners program. Keep an eye out for more geocaching programs this summer and fall.



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## Schiff's Strategic Plan

The Schiff Natural Lands Trust Board of Trustees has updated its strategic plan, tightening its focus on its core missions to preserve and enhance the ecological value of the land, educate, and engage the public on good stewardship practices, and promote passive recreation within the preserves.

Schiff's Board accomplished several of the goals in its previous strategic plan, noted Trustee John Eade, including making new connections with local businesses, schools, and groups, while continuing to expand upon our signature events such as the Maple Sugaring Open House, Environmental Film Fest, and Music in the Woods. Schiff's commitment to environmental education continues through its popular Summer Nature Program for Kids and the offering of a variety of educational programs throughout the year.

The Strategic Plan builds on the Board's commitment to conserving the biodiversity of native plants and animals found on Schiff's preserves while also promoting Schiff's recreational assets and its educational and cultural programs. The plan also challenges the Board to increase and diversify engagement methods with members, business partners, donors, and grantors, and to continue to diversify and expand the skill set of the Board of Trustees.

"We are excited that this Strategic Plan positions us to continue to care for the land, engage our community more deeply through increased Membership and educational programs, as well as

broaden our partnerships with local businesses to help support our preservation efforts." offered by Marissa S. McDonnell, president.

The development of the plan was a collaborative effort. A Board committee including Board President Marissa S.

McDonnell, MD., John Eade, Alex Battey, Pat Charney, W. Barry Thomson, and Executive Director, Dorian von Aulock met virtually over several months to discuss ideas and priorities, and ultimately shape the final document.



## Glad You Asked!

*Why must dogs be on leash while walking in Schiff?*

Walking your dog off-leash in the preserve exposes you and your dog to potential dangers. Regardless of how well trained your dog might be, animal instincts take over in the wild. If your dog chases a bear, the bear may strike back in self-defense. No matter how sweet the temperament of your dog, some people do not wish to visit with your dog. Folks may have severe allergies, a traumatic fear of dogs, or just prefer solitude. Please be respectful of our Visitor Use Policies and other visitors by keeping your dog on leash at all times.

## Summer Solstice & Father's Day Beer Hike

On Sunday, June 20, from 2 to 4 PM, celebrate both the summer solstice and Father's Day by joining local historian, author, and Schiff Trustee W. Barry Thomson for a narrated hike showcasing the rich and fascinating history of what is now the Schiff Nature Preserve. Near the end of the hike on the hilltop of the Great Meadow, we will celebrate both of these notable June 20th events by raising a toast with locally made craft beers. During the hike Barry will relay the storied past of Schiff, beginning with the history of the rural industrial district that developed along the North Branch of the Raritan River and McVicker's Brook in the 18th and 19th centuries. The hike and talk -- enhanced by the use of archival photographs, rare maps, and stops at a number of important sites on the preserve -- will also describe the early 20th century development of the 600-acre "Brookrace" estate of Richard and Julia

Williams, including the rare treat of a visit to what was once that family's beautiful stone manor house.

In 1932, following Richard Williams' death, the "Brookrace" estate was transformed into the Mortimer L. Schiff Scout Reservation, and for the next 47 years the property served as the National Training Center for the Boy Scouts of America. The hike will include a visit to what is now the Schiff Nature Center, but was originally Boy Scouts' Troop Cottage No. 8.

Guests are encouraged to wear shoes suitable for hiking, and should expect that the walking portions of the hike will range from 7-to-15-minute spurts and will involve some incline. More detailed information will be sent once you've registered. Twenty-four hour advance registration is required. Space is limited for this event, and social distancing and face coverings will be required.

## With Donor and Volunteer Support, Schiff Makes Multiple Improvements

Social activities have been nearly impossible this past year, but on alternating monthly Saturday and Sunday mornings, a group of volunteers and Schiff trustees gather to maintain trails and make repairs and improvements. These monthly Volunteer Days are a rare opportunity to meet and get to know new people while making a real difference at the preserve. This past fall, the crew, led by Land Steward Chet Komorski, tackled the replacement of a rotted split-rail fence at the McVickers Brook Preserve parking

## Summer Nature Program embarks on its 18th year of nature immersion for kids



SNP 2021 is as ready as ever to embrace the fun-loving feel it's always had as we enjoy the beauty of summer outside. Co-Directors Jenny Chmura and Christi Lorenson are thrilled to

announce that with safety protocols and reduced capacities in place, Schiff will be able to operate its Summer Nature Program this year! Endless amounts of nature-themed fun for children ages 6-13 will be offered through morning programming, as well as afternoon "special elective" programs. This summer's themes include "Who Goes There?", "Defenders and Guardians of the Great Outdoors", "Then and Now", "Cycles that Make the World Go Round", "Schiff Survival Explorers" and "Special Conservation Species". Children will experience the joys of nature through hiking, animal tracking, habitat exploration, shelter building, and so much more! Schiff's Summer Nature Program is dedicated to fueling children's appreciation for the natural world, while also encouraging them to build confidence within themselves and friendships with others. Please visit our website to learn more!

lot. Early this spring a large group of volunteers helped us prepare for the very popular Maple Sugaring Open House.

These are just a few examples of the many efforts of our volunteers to assist us in many improvements that have been undertaken at Schiff. The Nature Center concrete stairs were recently repaired. Wood Badge Lodge is in the process of receiving a much needed new roof after having completed repairs to the massive stone chimney. Lastly, hikers may notice

many new signs dotting the preserve in an effort to reinforce some of our preserve "rules". We are grateful to everyone who has rolled up their sleeves to help enhance the preserve and improve our facilities and infrastructure.



## For the Love of Open Spaces

The VERY best way to support Schiff Nature Preserve is to become a recurring member. Membership dues constitute the majority of our operating budget. Recurring membership allows us to reduce our expenses while reducing your inbox and mail slot with reminders to renew your membership. Already a member and want to do more to support our work?

- Participate in our annual Earth Day Appeal by returning the enclosed form with your contribution or donating online.
- As a local business owner, consider showing your support of Schiff by joining our Business Partner for a Greener Community program.
- Attend one of our signature friend/fundraising events: Environmental Film Festival, Music in the Woods, Farm to Table benefit or our Plant & Gingerbread House Fundraiser.
- Shop with AmazonSmile having selected Schiff Natural Lands Trust as your charity of choice. Each time you make a purchase, a small percentage of purchases made through AmazonSmile is donated to Schiff as a cash donation.
- Consider making an in-kind donation of the many items we have listed on our Wish List page of the website.
- Become a Schiff Volunteer by visiting the Get Involved page of our website to register as a Schiff Volunteer or join us for our monthly Land Steward Volunteer Days and join the group maintaining trails, fences, buildings and grounds.
- Follow us on Facebook & Instagram. Share, like, follow, and tag our posts!

## Schiff Seeks to Grow its Volunteers

Sign up on our **NEW Volunteer sign up form on the website**

Folks often choose to volunteer for an organization because they want to help others, they want to become involved in their community, and contribute to a cause, develop new skills and have new experiences, use the skills they have in productive ways, and/or to stay fit. The volunteer opportunities we offer here at Schiff can satisfy all of those desires. With three part time staff and a volunteer board, Schiff welcomes volunteers to assist us in a variety of tasks. Visit our NEW Volunteer Sign Up form on the Get Involved page of our website and let us know if your interested in:

- *Administrative & Publicity* (collating mailings, email/contact maintenance, flier distribution, writing press

releases, photography, etc.)

- *Fundraising & Events* (in-kind solicitation, gala ad journal sales, decor and setup, baking, etc.)
- *Land Steward & Maintenance* (trail maintenance, native garden maintenance, invasive species removal, fence repair, painting, cleaning, etc.)

