



The Clark Chronicle

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From the Chair...

Fall in Central New York is especially beautiful here at Clark Reservation! The days are cooler, the sun is still shining and the leaves are turning; a great time to hike and just enjoy the beauty here.

We've had a great summer here as always with plenty of things going on. New this summer was Storytime and Natureplay held in conjunction with Jamesville-Dewitt Library and two Out Of The Cage Animal visits! We were able to host a Garden Tea Party in July with iced tea, hot tea, finger sandwiches and delicious baked treats from Half Moon Bakery. It was a blisteringly hot day but 15 people still came out and enjoyed a sunny afternoon. We were able to put this tea on thanks to a grant we received from Parks and Trails New York to promote our park, organization and membership. And it did bring in two new members!

At the end of the season, we held our annual Volunteer Thank You Pizza Party along with our



Annual Meeting. We couldn't keep the Nature Center open nor take care of the gardens without the help of our volunteers. A big Thank You to all of them! It was good to see some of our members at the meeting as well. The highlight of the evening were the raffles! Karen Tennant won the wood turned mushroom, Alan Kolts won the handmade cornhole drink holder (both made by Rich Scheckells) and the beautiful painting of Glacier Lake (by Kevin Chick) was won by Leah and Riley Redmond! Thank you to all who bought tickets.

We are in the process of changing our name from Council of Park Friends to Friends of Clark Reservation. The Board recently revamped our mission statement and formally voted to change our name; members voted to accept the revamped by-laws at the Annual Meeting. We are on our way!

See you on First Day Hike!

*Tina Redmond, Chair
Friends of Clark Reservation*

Yoga in the Park!

*by Sarah Smith
Friends of Clark Reservation Board Member*



Community members gathered at Clark Reservation State Park this summer to enjoy free yoga classes at the park. Classes were led by instructors from Vyana Yoga, who led participants in a relaxing yoga practice surrounded by the sounds of nature. A couple sessions ended with listening to the relaxing sounds of crystal alchemy bowls, a truly meditative experience.

Thanks to Vyana Yoga, the community was able to enjoy a mind body connection with nature and meet other fellow local yogis, both new and experienced! Participants generously donated to the park's Nature Center which will help support future programming at the park. Given the positive turnout for this summer series, we plan to offer yoga in the park again next summer. We hope to see you there!

Mildred Faust, Botanist

by Joy Pople, Master Gardener
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County

PART II: (Continued from the July issue)

Noted botanist Mildred Faust (for whom the Clark Reservation trail is named) was born in 1899 in Emporia, Kansas, and studied at Penn College of Iowa, the University of Chicago (where she earned her doctorate), and Cornell University.

While teaching at Syracuse University, Millie published a checklist of the ferns and flowering plants of Onondaga County. Later, she worked on a study of all New York State's bogs and created an extensive flora list for New York state.

Millie was considered the ranking authority on Onondaga County plants. An example of a rare plant in Onondaga County is the American hart's tongue fern. Botanists have checked its condition every five years beginning in 1916, and Millie took over the job in the 1940s. The fern is common in Europe,

but the American variety only grows in isolated parts of our area, Michigan, and Tennessee. Millie would check locations in Clark Reservation and Chittenango Falls every spring and fall. "I am afraid to check more often," she commented in her late 70s, "because the plant grows near cliffs."

She retired from Syracuse University in 1965 as an associate professor and continued teaching formally and informally for 20 more years.

After retirement Millie taught part time at SUNY ESF, lectured widely, checked on rare plants not only in Onondaga County but around the state, and worked in the college's herbarium, a collection of dried plant specimens.



Have You Seen Me?

by Dean Kolts, Board Member
Friends of Clark Reservation



Two female ruby-throated hummingbirds discuss who gets to visit the cardinal flower in front of the Nature Center.
(Photo by Dean Kolts)

You have to have a keen eye to spot these fast-flying birds darting about. The Ruby-throated hummingbird (*archilochus colubris*) is the only breeding hummingbird in eastern North America. They can fly forward, backward, up, down and when hovering their wings can beat 80 times a second, with a heart rate over 1000 beats a minute. They can enter into a state of torpor, similar to hibernation, at night and to conserve energy their heart rate can drop to 50 beats a minute. They're able to fly up to 35 miles per hour and stop instantly in mid-air.

The males have an iridescent red patch on their throats which can appear black depending on the angle of light. The females, which are larger, have a plain white throat. They're solitary birds, unsocial except when breeding, and will aggressively defend feeding sites. The male doesn't take part in nest building or rearing young. Females will lay 1-3 eggs. The nests are found on sloping branches but have also been seen on drooping wire or chain. They have a life-span of 3-7 years, but one banded female was tagged at over nine years.

It's widely known they're attracted to red, orange & pink flowers, but will get nectar from other colored flowers and also eat flying insects and spiders for protein and minerals.

In fall, they migrate to Mexico and Central America, many crossing the Gulf of Mexico for 500 miles and 20 hours in a single flight. Males can leave as early as late August and return before the females, then begin a courtship consisting of high speed looping dives.

Take time to enjoy these fascinating little creatures.

Out of the Cage!

by Angela Weiler
Friends of Clark Reservation Board Member

The Friends of Clark Reservation sponsored two free wild animal petting zoo events at the park this past summer, thanks to a successful grant proposal authored by board member Sarah Smith. "Out of The Cage Pet Mobile", a traveling exotic petting zoo, provided the animals along with a very knowledgeable handler who told the attentive audience all about each one. Many of the animals were rescued from neglectful or abusive situations.

Children of a wide variety of ages as well as some adults attended and were able to see six exotic animals at each event. They were also able to touch and hold the animals if they wanted to. Animals such as a ferret, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, exotic reptiles, and even a coati mundi came "out of the cage" to provide these two educational, fun family events.



Photos by Dean Kolts



Exploring Nature in a New Way

by Molly Mulhare
Nature Center and Outreach Program Intern

Smiling faces, giggles, and fresh air is what you might have experienced at Story Time and Nature Play with Nan and Molly. Bright smiles of children and adults were seen at the Nature Center every other Tuesday this summer. Rain or shine, hot and/or humid, we had a great time during the program created by Molly Mulhare and Nancarrow Brown, Outreach Librarian for the Community Library of Dewitt & Jamesville.

During the program Nan would read books related to the nature topic preselected for the session and Molly would facilitate connected activities. One week a butterfly life cycle poster was made, which you may have seen hanging on the back of the door of the Nature Center, if not you can see it in the

featured photo. Another week Molly walked around the front garden with participants during one of the sessions and Kerry Dannon snapped a photo. The last session was Tuesday, August 27th, and it was the best weather to be outside, low seventies, partly cloudy and low humidity.

It was also the best turn out; over forty people attended! This program was an incredible opportunity for children and adults to be outside and have fun.



Beautiful But Deadly

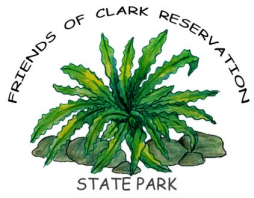
by Angela Weiler
Friends of Clark Reservation Board Member

In autumn, surely one of the prettiest native plants to bloom at Clark Reservation is White Snakeroot (*Ageratina altissima*). Its smooth dark green leaves and brilliant white blossoms rival many plants common to the gardens of central New York, and it blooms for weeks. White Snakeroot is native to the woodlands of the eastern North America, west through the midwestern states and Texas. It is found in full sun to partial shade, and grows to 3' to 5' tall.

White Snakeroot was used by Native Americans to treat snakebite, as its name

suggests. However, the plant is highly toxic because it contains trematol, a poisonous alcohol, and it had to be specially prepared before it could be used medicinally. The plant sickens cattle that feed on it, and consuming the milk or meat of a cow which has eaten White Snakeroot can be fatal. This condition was known as "milk sickness" in the 19th century, and it killed many people, including Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's mother. It wasn't until the late 1800s that it was discovered that White Snakeroot was the cause.





Friends of Clark Reservation
Clark Reservation State Park
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Details/updates at <https://www.meetup.com/Clark-Reservation-Meetup-Group>
and <https://www.facebook.com/pg/NatureCenterCPF/events/>

Don't miss these!

January 1 - First Day Hike

May 2 - I Love My Park Day



“Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance of weeds
whose seeds are the granary of the birds?”

Henry David Thoreau - Walden

Do you ❤️ Clark Reservation?

Please consider joining or donating today. Your membership of \$25 will help us to expand the Nature Center hours, provide educational programs in the summer, and further our mission. We need YOU!

Thank you! <https://www.friendsofclarkreservation.org/join-us>

(Donations button - top right)

