



THE NIAGARA EXPLORER

Newsletter of the Adirondack Mountain Club - Niagara Frontier Chapter

Upcoming Meeting: Tues, Feb. 11th

**6:30p - 7:15p | Education Workshop:
Delicious Backcountry Cooking**

This is the time of year to cook extra food and preserve it for your paddle and hiking adventures next summer! Join Mary and Richard Schraven as they share their expertise. The Schravens have led many backcountry paddling trips among other adventures. They will share some of their secrets for home preparation and making mouthwatering goodies in camp.

Our workshop is in the community room adjacent to the main meeting room, 6:30pm.

7:00p - 7:30p | Meet, Greet, & Refreshments

7:30p - 7:45p | Business Meeting

**8:00p - 9:00p | Presentation:
Endangered Species**

Our February program, presented by the Buffalo Zoomobile featuring vital and endangered species.

The program defines what threatened, endangered, extirpated and extinct species are. They will show a cross section of animals on the endangered species list, the reasons they are in danger and discuss preventative measures that have arisen over the years to help save these wonder creatures.

They'll be discussing illegal pet trade, animal hunting/exploitation for merchants, and habitat destruction. Fortunately protective laws and conservation/preservation efforts of zoos and nature preserves are offering hope for the future of these precious animals.

Location
Fellowship Hall
Amherst Community Church
Washington Hwy. Snyder, NY 14226
NOTE: Please park in rear and enter through back, (walk up to 2nd floor)



***** MEETING CANCELLATION POLICY*****

If Amherst Schools or Amherst After-School Activities are cancelled due to weather, the General Membership Meeting (2nd Tuesday of the Month) will also be cancelled.

In Case You Missed it ...

Our monthly January meeting presentation on "The Great Gorge Route Trolley" was quite fascinating! Carol Rogers from the Niagara Region parks department shared a wealth of history and tales from the past about the Niagara gorge region from the early 1900s. She also brought many artifacts and historical photos from that era. It was amazing to hear about how the electric rail system trolley was built and then carried passengers alongside the rushing wild water rapids of the Niagara River!

Looking Ahead

Our March program presentation will be led by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper. They are a non-profit organization that works to protect and restore water and surrounding ecosystems in the Niagara River watershed.

The presentation will give an overview of the organization's history and role in the community. They'll discuss the recent work on the Buffalo River, as well as habitat restoration, the importance of native plants, and the community engagement programs.

Look forward to seeing you all at the March meeting!



Message from the Chair

I've been thinking a lot about animals lately. In January, my family experienced a triple tragedy, when I and two of my sisters each lost a beloved family pet in a space of three days. In my case, my cat was old and sick, and his death was not unexpected. Nevertheless, I miss having him around. His loss reinforces the way that animals, whether pets or wildlife, add joy to our lives. So, I have been recalling a number of encounters that I have had with animals in the wild, and would like to share a few of them with you.

On my first solo backpack, the weather was especially fine, so I slept out under the stars, without any shelter. In the middle of the night, I awoke to the sound of a porcupine, slowly making his way past me in the dark. We studied each other for a while, before he ambled along and I fell back asleep. Early the next morning, I made my way down the trail, to a small wooden bridge that arched a meandering stream. In the marshy shallows beyond the bridge, a solitary fawn emerged from the mist, as she nibbled her way through the lush ferns that grew along the bank.

Once I was walking through Reinstein Woods on a bright autumn day. When I reached the stone house on the shore of Flattail Lake, I paused to enjoy the view. Suddenly, I heard a croak overhead, and looked up just in time to watch a Great Blue Heron soar by, just above my head.

I was just stretching my legs in Mill Road Park, a short distance from the parking lot. From across the creek, a red fox slowly emerged from the brush on the opposite bank, made his way cautiously to the water's edge, and took a drink. Then, turning, he slowly and quietly disappeared back into the woods.

On a winter's day, I was hiking through the Burchfield Center. A soft snow was falling steadily, and muffled all sound. Just ahead of me, a line of deer emerged from the woods on one side of the trail, crossed over, and spread out to graze on the other side, while I stood still and quiet, watching.

Finally, on my recent trip to Yellowstone, our group made a visit to the nearby Beartooth Mountains. We hiked up to a rocky overlook, and were treated to a spectacular vista. While we sat enjoying the view, little pika scurried under and beneath the rocks. One bold little guy emerged from shelter, practically at my feet, and sat there licking salt off of a backpack's shoulder straps.

It's been an unusual winter, with wild swings between mild and cold, minimal snow, and limited opportunities to enjoy our traditional winter sports. I encourage you to get out there anyway. The warmer weather and lack of snow may increase the opportunities for similar wildlife encounters. To me, it isn't so important what I do in the wild, just as long as I spend time in it. I hope you enjoyed my reminiscing. See you out there!

— *Paul M. Gannon*



Outings

01/25 - SAT – SS/HIKE Central part of Sprague Brook Park

(B) Lynn & Doug Kenney, 716-825-7329 or woodthrush3@hotmail.com. Day of event call 716-361-6172. Enjoy a 3 mile snowshoe or a 4 mile hike along wooded trails with some easy hills and views of Sprague Brook Creek. Bring water and snowshoes. Optional: lunch at a local restaurant afterwards. Call for meeting place & time.

02/08 - SAT - SS/HIKE at Beaver Meadow Audubon Center

(B) Contact Marlene Seifert, marlene4800@gmail.com and Janet Kowalski, janetk300@gmail.com, 839- 3114

We will begin at the Welch Rd parking lot for a 4-mile loop hike through many diverse habitats including a boardwalk trail, woods, kettle ponds and an arboretum. Please wear sturdy shoes, dress for the weather, and bring water and a snack. Call for meeting time and place.

02/15 - SAT - XC SKI - YOUNG MEMBERS (ages 21-39 ish) – Iroquois Nat'l Wildlife Refuge

(A) Deena Mueller-Funke deena.mueller1@gmail.com

The designated cross country trail leaves from the parking lot and heads through the marshland before coming out on a narrow berm perfect for trying out your skate skiing moves. We'll ski about 4-7 miles. Bring a snack for the trail but we can also stop as a group for food and drinks on the way back to Buffalo. Contact the trip leader to coordinate start time and car pool.



02/16 - SUN – SS/XC SKI – Location Snow Dependent

(B) Location to be determined based on snow - Schravens Contact maryschraven1@gmail.com or 716-946-7489

Joint outing with Buffalo Nordic - We enjoy skiing on groomed trails through Byrnclyff, Elma Meadows, Bond Lake, and Spraguebrook. Ski for 2-3 hours, bring a lunch. Please call by Saturday (02/15) afternoon.

02/23 - SUN – SS/XC SKI - Location Snow Dependent

(B) Elma Meadows at 10AM. Leslie Salathe at 716-560-1311 or lesliesalathe@live.com

Joint Buffalo Nordic and ADK outing. We will ski or Snowshoe for 2 to 3 hours. Warming Hut. Contact Leslie for details.

REOCCURRING EVENTS

EVERY WED AT 9:00 AM - SS/HIKE - Beaver Meadow Audubon Center

Carol Griffis -716-652-2547; carolpgriffis@gmail.com

Every Wednesday morning you will find me at the Beaver Meadow Audubon Center. I will be most happy to get outside for a hike or snowshoe with you. There are snowshoes available for a modest \$5. All ages and abilities are welcome. Bring your lunch if you can stay. Call me to verify time and plan a meet up location at the center.

EVERY WED AT 6:30 PM - HIKE - Reinstein Woods

(C) Gus Phillips. gusphillips1941@yahoo.com or call 716-646-5034.

Hike in the woods in the evening to hear and see night-time wildlife. Enjoy a starry sky or the moonlight. Possibly hear an owl. Family Friendly. This is a weekly event. Please email/call to let me know you are coming and to confirm in the event of inclement weather. There may be weeks when I need to cancel.

EVERY SAT MORNING - SS/XC-SKI - Knox Farm State Park

(C) Carol Griffis - For time & directions, call/text 716-652-2547 or carolpgriffis@gmail.com. I will lead this all snowy Saturday mornings. Good for beginners, gentle inclines, some woods, some open fields. Some of the trails have been nicely improved. PS trails are not groomed.



Plan Ahead

02/06 - 02/09 - THUR - SUN - SS/XC Ski - Algonquin Provincial Park

(A - C) RichardSchraven1@gmail.com (716) 564-2106, MarySchraven1@gmail.com (716) 946-7489 - 5 to 6 hour drive
Arrive early enough to ski a few hours at the Fen Lake Ski Area before checking into Mad Musher Hostel. On subsequent days we will ski at the Leaf Lake ski are, snow shoe through the Algonquin Logging Museum and visit the impressive Algonquin Visitor's Center. Carpooling is possible. If snow conditions are poor this weekend in Algonquin, we will consider going to Harris Lodge in Tug Hill instead. OR we would consider going the weekend of Thur. Feb.20th to Sun. Feb. 23rd. We will be in contact with reserved participants closer to the date

02/11, and 03/17 - Mid-Week ADK Loj at Heart Lake

Contact Kate Hacker, hackerks@gmail.com, 716-491-7046 for full details. (i.e. JAN trip will be reserved in DEC).
The Loj is a great place mid-week because its quieter and less crowded and there are always other people there to meet and hike with. Cross-country skiing to snow shoeing and hiking. I like to ski at Whiteface one day when I go and go to the Van Hoevenberg Olympic cross country ski area, but hiking and snowshoeing are also good. The club rents equipment for winter hiking and snowshoeing and there are ski trails around the Loj property.

FULL! 03/06 - 03/08 - FRI - SUN - X-C SKI/ SS /HIKE - Weekend ADK Loj at Heart Lake

(A-C) MarySchraven1@gmail.com or call 716-946-7489

Buy 1 night/get 1 night FREE! Your charge for the 1st night stay is only \$56.04, including breakfast. THE TRIP IS FULL. Send your refundable check of \$56.04 (91 N.Parrish Dr. Amherst, My 14228) to get on the wait list or book your own accommodations at the lodge via website adk.org/stay for a sure thing.

03/08 & 03/15 - SUN - Wilderness First Aid Course

Two-day course, offered through Gear for Adventure with instructor Tim Reed of Adventures in Fitness. Take to the trail with confidence and be able to help your trail tribe in times of need! Ideal for outdoor enthusiasts & professionals - learn how to assess & treat common injuries in a remote environment where care by a physician and/or rapid transport is not readily available. Held at Hamburg shop: 305 Buffalo St. Hamburg, NY. Must be present for both days: March 08 and 15, 2020 from 9am to 3pm each day. Cost: \$180 per person. Space is limited, please call 716-646-GEAR (4327) to reserve your spot.



03/22 & 03/29 - SUN - Wilderness First Aid Course

Offered through Gear for Adventure with instructor Tim Reed of Adventures in Fitness. Two-day course Take to the trail with confidence and be able to help your trail tribe in times of need! Ideal for outdoor enthusiasts & professionals - learn how to assess & treat common injuries in a remote environment where care by a physician and/or rapid transport is not readily available. Held at Amherst shop: 305 Buffalo St. Hamburg, NY. Must be present for both days: March 22 and 29, 2020 from 9am to 3pm each day. Cost: \$180 per person. Space is limited, please call 716-646-GEAR (4327) to reserve your spot.



05/29-05/31 - FRI-SUN - Wilderness First Aid Course

Offered by the Adirondack Winter Mountaineering School, this is a unique opportunity - saves WNYers the time, expense and trouble of traveling to the Adirondacks to take this training. Our ADK-NFC Chapter MAY be able to offer scholarships to assist our trip leaders in getting this vital training! Register ASAP! When this was offered in 2017 it filled up quickly (class size was only 20 people). Train to respond to common medical issues in the backcountry or where help is delayed. This course is a hands-on introduction to wilderness medicine. Taught over the weekend in a "wilderness" setting. Be ready to respond to first-aid situations where help is delayed. To register please email wmswfa@gmail.com - Course fee is \$200 which includes free camping, breakfast and lunch, and coffee and tea.

Outings Ratings

(A) Strenuous, for the duration and level of fitness and skills needed (B) Moderate difficulty

(C) Easy, good for beginners, shorter length

For and updated list of outings, please see the event calendar posted on our website, ADK-NFC.ORG

Announcements

Information Brief

Cycle the Erie Canal- July 12-19th - Buffalo to Albany 400 miles- for information on the bike ride please visit <https://www.ptny.org/cycle-the-erie-canal>. Registered ADK cyclists may submit their name and contact information to Mike Lex at blex@roadrunner.com. He will compile and share the list with members registered for the ride.

Update from your Hiking Chair



Are you interested in climbing the Adirondack high peaks? Have you become a 46er and want to share your expertise with Aspiring 46ers? If you are interested in leading a workshop, informal discussion, or a hike, please email me at lesliesalathe@live.com.

I would like to form a group of ADK hikers that want to participate in longer outings. Please contact me if you are interested.

Our chapter will continue to offer popular themed hikes throughout the year. I look forward to hearing from present and future leaders that would like to share their expertise in wildlife studies or field ecology while leading an outing.

-Leslie Salathe, Hiking & Winter sports chair

Conservation Corner

Next Conservation Meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 18th 7 pm

The developer of the ill-advised 20-story residential tower on the Outer Harbor ("Queen City Landing") is trying to push the plans through. Recently, as I drove on I-190 watching huge waves crashing over the breakwall like waterfalls, I was tempted to divert over to Fuhrmann Blvd. to see what that proposed site looked like in severe conditions, but I made the decision to avoid Fuhrmann Blvd. while Lake Erie was angry. Can you imagine actually living in a tower that's exposed to the frequent gale winds and occasional seiche that floods the shores? A high rise tower built on that landfill is simply out of place. The structure and its lights would disrupt migratory birds as it permanently mars the view and occupies space adjacent to the State Park marina (small boat harbor) that should be public. With all the great efforts to create natural settings and recreational opportunities for the public good, "Queen City Landing" is simply a bad idea for our Outer Harbor. <http://www.ourouterharbor.org/>

VIGILANCE. Committee members are keeping watch over a proposed development in Clarence where important wetlands are jeopardized, and monitoring news concerning the West Valley radioactive waste site that has radioactive and hazardous nuclear wastes buried, stored, and leaking.

WE HAVE A HOME! Beginning in February, our Conservation Committee meetings will be held at the Amherst Community Church - the same location where our chapter's monthly meetings are held - in the upstairs (balcony) room at 7pm February 18.

Meetings are open to all chapter members. Come see what we're up to, or contribute to the conversation. If you have any related news or topics that might be of interest to our chapter, please email adkpaddles.bvh@gmail.com

-Bob Van-Hise, Conservation Chair

Our Executive Committee

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