



Friends of the Great Swamp

FrOGS
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www.frogs-ny.org

FrOGS, Friends of the Great Swamp Cries "Wolf!"

Hosts a visit from Atka, the Wolf Conservation Center's Arctic Gray Wolf on January 28 th

FrOGS (Friends of the Great Swamp) Annual Board meeting will take place at Patterson Recreation Center on Sunday, January 28, 2007. The meeting will begin at **1:45 PM** with refreshments, welcome by Dr. James Utter, FrOGS Chairman and presentation of the Michael Ciaiola Conservation Award.

At **2:15 PM** - FrOGS will welcome the Wolf Conservation Center of South Salem, NY and their four-year old Arctic gray wolf, Atka. The program will include an awe-inspiring, up-close encounter with this important but misunderstood predator. Guests will learn about the history of wolves in the United States, the importance of wolves in a healthy ecosystem and the efforts to save these magnificent creatures for future generations.

Founded in 1999 the Wolf Conservation Center (WCC) in South Salem, NY promotes wolf conservation by teaching about wolves, their relationship to the environment and the human role in protecting their future.

The WCC accomplishes this mission through onsite and offsite education programs. These programs emphasize wolf biology, the ecological benefits of wolves and other large predators, and the current status of wolf recovery in the United States. The WCC also participates in the Species

Survival Plan (SSP) and Recovery Plan for the critically endangered red wolf, and the Mexican gray wolf. For more information about WCC, you may visit their website at www.nywolf.org or call (914) 763-2373. For more information about FrOGS or the annual meeting,

you may visit the website at www.frogs-ny.org or call Evelyn at 845-877-6498.

The Patterson Recreation Center is located at 65 Front Street, Patterson, NY, just south of the Patterson Metro North Railroad Station in the Patterson Hamlet. Front Street is off NYS Route 311, opposite Patterson Town Hall. Free parking is also available at Metro North parking lot adjacent to the Recreation Center.



Great Swamp Fish Study Published

How does land use affect the fish community in our streams? This was the question studied by Tracy Van Holt, Diane Murphy, and Lauren Chapman in 1998 as they waded into the streams of the Great Swamp. The results of this study have recently been published in the journal *Northeastern Naturalist*.

Fish were sampled at seventeen sites that included streams draining different kinds of land use in both the North Flow and South Flow of the Great Swamp. Over 1300 fish representing 23 species were captured using an electro-fishing technique. The average number of different species found at each site was higher in the Swamp River Watershed (8.3) than in the East Branch Croton River Watershed (6.2), probably reflecting its less developed nature. Redfin pickerel, a beautiful, relatively unknown fish, was the most common species; it is considered moderately tolerant of water pollution, as were half the species caught. Nearly 10% of the fish captured, however, belong to five species known to be intolerant of pollution, fish like the brook trout; their prominence indicates a high level of water quality in the Great Swamp. Comparing the fish data with the kinds of land use upstream from each sample site indicated that the amount of forest cover in the watershed and the diversity of structural features in the stream bed affect the number and kinds of species found in a stream.

The scientists made three recommendations for local land use planners:

- *protect forested land in the watershed,*
- *maintain 100 meter wide buffer areas along forested streams to help mitigate the impacts of development, and*
- *limit activities that reduce the in-stream habitat variation.*

Their study was supported by the Wildlife Conservation Society and was part of a project directed by Michael Klemens.

Gordon Douglas To Receive Ciaiola Conservation Award

Friends of the Great Swamp honor Gordon Douglas, writer, artist, and conservation advocate, with the sixth Michael Ciaiola Award at its Annual Meeting on January 28, 2007. This award is in memory of Michael Ciaiola who established a conservation legacy through his passionate action in protecting open space and educating both the public and local government officials on the importance and values of the environment.

Gordon Douglas, our 2006 honoree, is a quiet advocate who leads by example as he carries on the Ciaiola tradition. Gordon serves on the Dutchess County Planning Board, the Pawling Conservation Advisory Board, the Advisory Board of Oblong Land Conservancy, and is Vice Chairman of FrOGS, all of which are involved in protection of open space. Gordon makes lasting impacts through his exceptional and diverse contributions bringing the beauty and values of the Great Swamp to the general public. He was instrumental in shaping FrOGS as an education and research focused organization, serving as Vice Chairman since its formal establishment in 1997 and helping to write the bylaws and secure non-profit status. Gordon worked with Mae Greene and Dan Siemann to establish the Great Swamp Art Show as a way to bring wider awareness of our wetlands and wildlife to the public. This past fall was the tenth annual edition of the Art Show and Gordon is still actively contributing to its success.

This long-time Pawling resident is probably best known for his weekly column "On the Wild Side" that has appeared in the Pawling Chronicle for over a decade, and is now carried by the suite of Taconic Press papers in Dutchess County. Each piece presents something special about the Great Swamp or other environmental concern; it may be based on a common everyday occurrence that generally goes unnoticed, an extraordinary event, an ongoing environmental process, or denizens of the Swamp or uplands, but each is presented in flowing prose with a personal viewpoint and a bit of wisdom about how to treat our Swamp and our earth

Continued on Page 6

Eastern Coyote

The Eastern Coyote is larger and more robust than its western relative. This has often led to mistaking them for wolves, feral dogs or even "coy-dogs" thinking they interbred with domestic dogs. Coyotes run with their tail down and a gait that is noticeably different than a domestic dog. I've seen color variations from grey and tan to reddish gold.

They tend to operate as a pack with individual animals marking their own territory with scent posts and scat. However, they may range over a very large area when food is scarce. Coyotes feed on rodents and larger mammals (even deer) that may be compromised due to injury, sickness, or age. The high-pitched yips and howls of the pack can often be heard at dusk in Putnam and the rocky hillsides in the county are excellent den sites. Like the ravens and vultures, the coyotes patrol the Metro-North tracks near my house looking for animal carcasses. Their scat is often full of animal hair and bone fragments.

Coyote tracks are dog-like but the two central toes and toenails are closer together and point forward, giving them a longer and more compact look. They also seem to have a focused direction to their trail while a dog's trail will wander.

As the land in Putnam becomes more developed the coyote seems to have adapted to living near humans and this has led to some concerns about our coexistence. Although I've heard of no attacks on humans, the once people shy coyote is very opportunistic and has snatched small pets from their owner's yards.

Dr. Dan Decker head of the Human Dimensions Research Unit in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell and co-investigator Dr. Paul Curtis head of the Wildlife Damage Management Program for Cornell Cooperative Extension along with researchers

Heather Wiczorek Hudenko, William Siemer and Dan Bogan have begun a 5 year study of coyote ecology and behavior in suburban areas of New York.

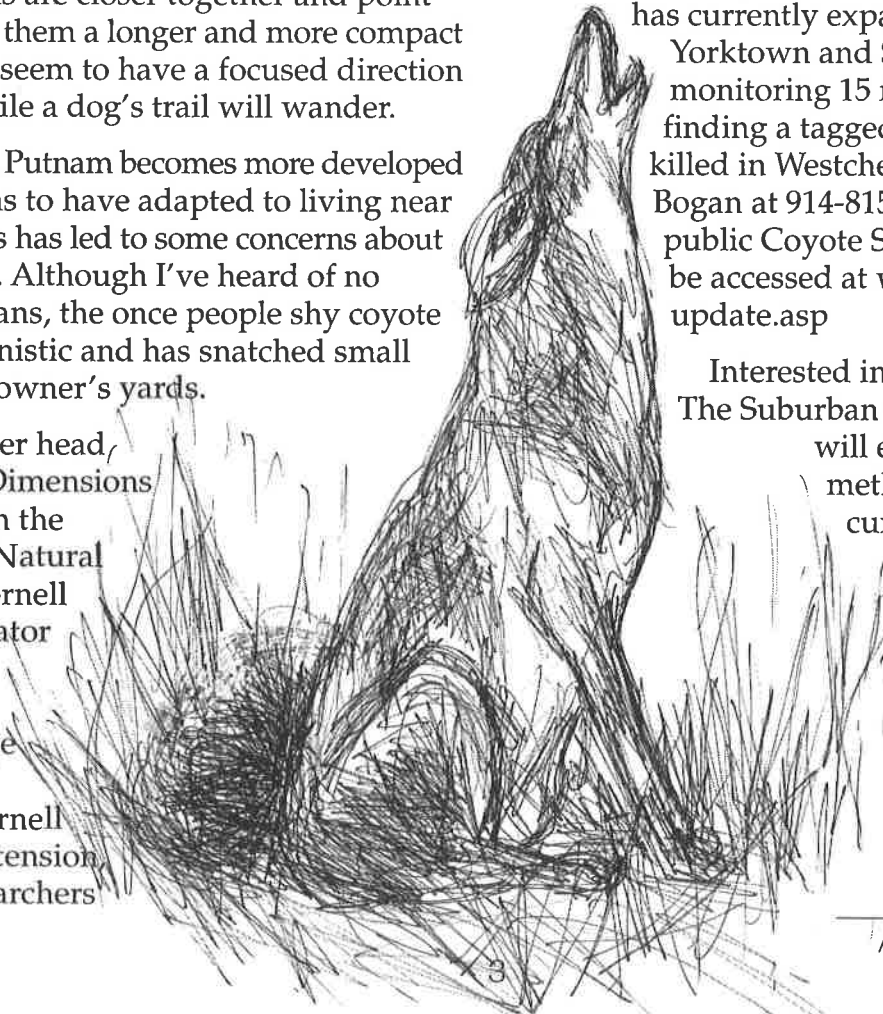
They received a \$428,000 grant from New York's D.E.C. to study coyote ecology and behavior that may cause clashes between humans and coyotes in the suburban environment. The study also includes interviews and surveys to assess public attitudes toward coyotes.

The goal of the study is to gather information that can help avoid human/coyote interactions with negative consequences to both species.

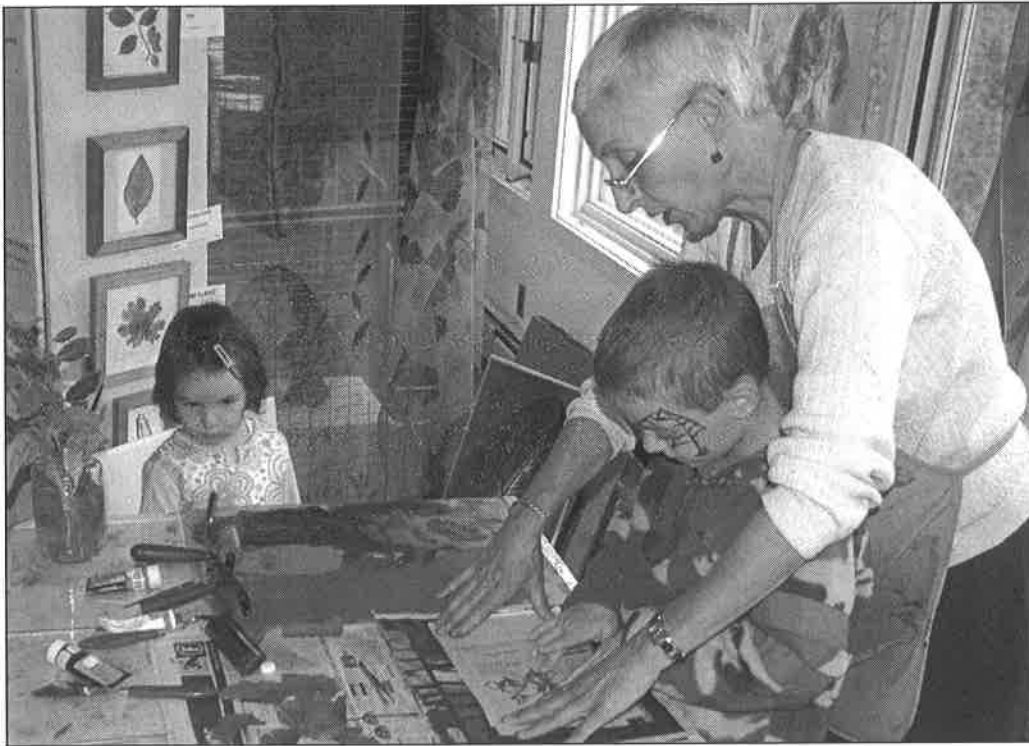
To study coyote ecology and behavior, coyotes are captured and fitted with a radio-transmitter collar to monitor their movements both day and night. Numbered and coded ear tags are attached and body size, weight, general health, and age is recorded before releasing each animal. In 2006, 13 coyotes were radio-collared and public interviews conducted in Mt. Pleasant and Greenburg in Westchester County. The team

has currently expanded the study to Yorktown and Somers in hopes of monitoring 15 more coyotes. Anyone finding a tagged or untagged coyote killed in Westchester should call Dan Bogan at 914-815-0317. There is also a public Coyote Sighting Log that can be accessed at www.nycoyote.org/update.asp

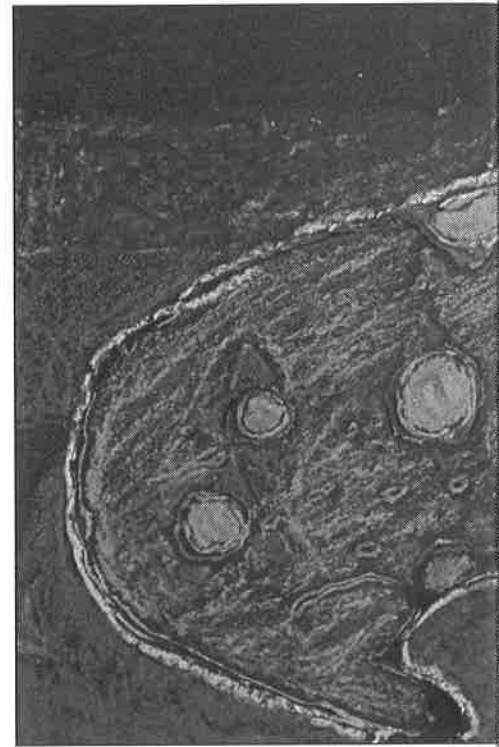
Interested in learning more? The Suburban Coyote Study group will explain their research methods, goals and the current status of the project at a special program sponsored by The Putnam Land Trust at 2:00 on February 11th at the Lawlor Building at the intersection of Route 311 and 164 in Patterson.



FrOGS Tenth Anniversary



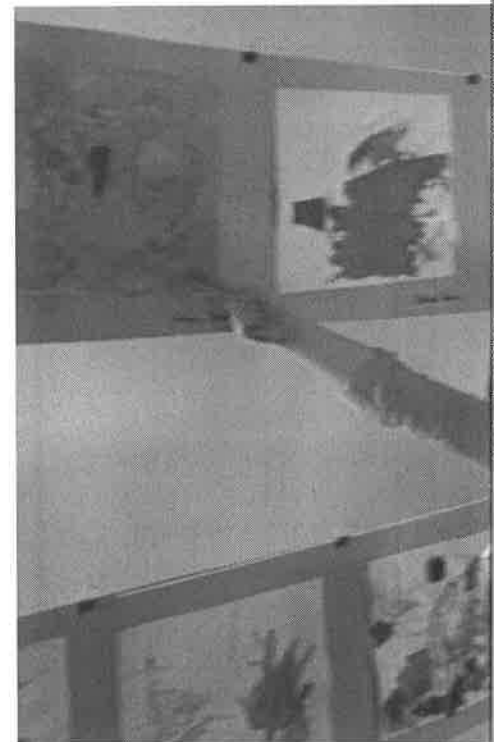
*Lenone helping children make leaf prints.



Painting by Mieko Palazzo from



Dr. Jim Utter, Chairman of FrOGS, and Stancy Duchamel alongside the FrOGS educational Exhibit



Roger Smith and gran

ty Art Show Highlights



Titusville Intermediate School



Sherie Ingraham helps young artists with their work.



daughter admiring art.



Visitors pose in front of the Butterfly Mural by the students of Patterson Elementary School.

Gordon Douglas To Receive Ciaiola Conservation Award (cont.)

with respect. His boyish enthusiasm exudes as he forays out into a rainy evening to help monitor wood turtles nesting in the Great Swamp, both contributing to the scientific endeavor and developing fodder for another fascinating col-

umn. His artistic strokes, whether with brush or pen, paint an intimate picture of nature and environmental issues that provide enjoyment and education for everyone. We thank you Gordon.

Fall Leaf Pack Results 2006

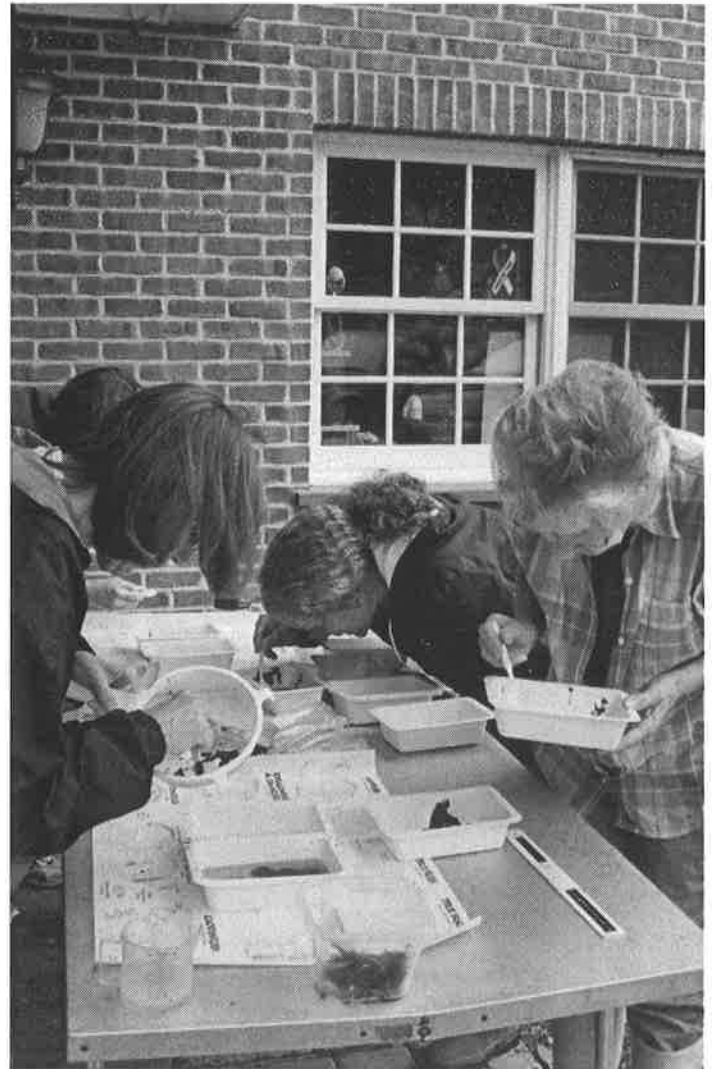


The 3 leaf packs placed in Towner's Brook next to the Lawlor Building and the 3 placed in Mill Brook near the corner of Route 311 and 292 in August were pulled out on September 17th and 19th. The larger variety of macroinvertebrates found at Towner's Brook compared to Mill Brook were noticeable to the study team.

We were careful to place the 3 packs in riffle areas (shallow and fast with rocky bottom) in the stream and securely tie them to rocks below the surface with fluorescent string. None were lost despite a period of heavy rain. The 3 leaf types used in the net packs at each site were the same as last year as well as the time the packs were submerged in the brooks.

The biotic index calculated using the pollution tolerance rating of the macroinvertebrates collected indicated that Towner's Brook had an excellent water quality rating of 3.5 (less than 3.75) while last year it was a little better at 3.4

Mill Brook generally has more sediment in its bottom but we did locate a riffle area for the 3 packs. This year there was more sediment in the packs and less diversity in the macroinvertebrates,



which moved its water quality rating down to very good, instead of excellent. We hope to continue to use the leaf packs and the macroinvertebrate populations they attract to monitor the water quality at other locations in these streams and expand the study to other tributaries that run into the Great Swamp.

Leaf Packs are a great teaching and learning activity for novice observers and lots of fun!

Article by Judy Kelley-Moberg

Calendar of Events

January thru April 2007

Friends of the Great Swamp (FrOGS) and Putnam Land Trust (PCLT)

JANUARY

Sunday, January 28th 1:45 PM
FrOGS Annual Meeting
 Wolf Program—with Atka, Artic Grey Wolf
 From the Wolf Conservation Center
 Patterson Rec. Center, Front Street, Patterson

FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 4th 1:00 PM (*weather permitting*)
Winter Hike to Pine Island
 Reservations required!
 Call Judy Moberg, 878-7740
 Sponsored jointly with the Putnam County Land Trust

FEBRUARY (continued)

Sunday, February 11th at 2:00 PM
Coyote Conservation—Special Program
 Lawler Building, Rte 164, Patterson
 Sponsored jointly with Putnam County Land Trust—
 see details in story

APRIL

Saturday, April 28th 5:00 PM
Putnam County Land Trust—Annual Dinner
 Call Judy Terlizzi for details and Tickets 225-4520
 Please support the Land Trust's Fundraising Event—
 a great Dinner & Auction



2007 SPRING CANOE TRIP

Saturday and Sunday:
 May 26 and 27 (Memorial Day Weekend)
 And: June 9 and 10

Cost: \$18 adult members \$11 child (6-14 years)
 \$22 adult non-members \$15 child (6-14 years)
(child must be 6 years or older)

Call Evelyn at 845-877-6498 for reservations, details and times.

Friends of the Great Swamp is an organization dedicated to *Preserving the Great Swamp* through educational programs, scientific projects and special events and making all aware of this wonderful resource in our midst.

The generosity of our members and supporters extends FrOGS reach and effectiveness. Contributions support the efforts of the Education Committee, the Spring Celebration and this newsletter.

Please consider a tax deductible gift to FrOGS.

Send your gift to: **Friends of the Great Swamp**
 P.O. Box 373, Pawling, NY 12564

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Day _____ Night _____

E-Mail Address _____

WE NEED HELP

If you can lend a hand with any of the following, please check off the box and we will call you.

- Spring Celebration Publicity Mailings
 Education Committee Art Show Other

