

RESEARCH • EDUCATION • CONSERVATION

## Making Connections



Photo by Ken Luhman

This curious otter and it's family are just some of the residents of the new property recently acquired by FrOGS in the North Flow. Article on page 3.

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*Friends of the Great Swamp was founded in 1990, a non-profit volunteer organization. Our mission is to preserve and protect the health of the Great Swamp watershed through research, education and conservation.*

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# Hunting And Fishing In The Great Swamp

By Judy Kelley-Moberg, with pictures and sketches from the "Cabin Chronicles"  
donated by Roberta Smith Morse and Sariena Masiero, to the Patterson Historical Society.

*H*unting and fishing have a long history in the Great Swamp watershed. Spring-fed streams drop down its wooded ridges and over glacial deposits into the wetland corridor that surrounds its two rivers. Hunters know it as a migratory flyway for wood ducks, and fishermen for its native brook trout.

The "Cabin Chronicles" written by the "Swampers", a group of hunters and fishermen from Patterson in the 1940s, records their experiences in the Great Swamp. They built an 8' by 11' log cabin called "Hawk's Rest" on the north end of Pine Island, a hemlock covered rocky ridge in the middle of the East Branch Croton River floodplain.

Journal entries describe traveling to the island by boat when the water was high, over muddy unmarked trails in drought, and over the ice in winter. Water had to be carried uphill from the spring and they were continually working on the cabin, battling the mice, who chewed up the toilet paper, the curtains, and even "George" the stuffed owl.

Target practice, fishing Stony Hole, swimming at Muddy Brook Junction and taking their dogs out to hunt were some of their favorite pastimes.

Surrounded by the swamp, they were aware of nature as it moved around them through the seasons.

They mention carp working the river,

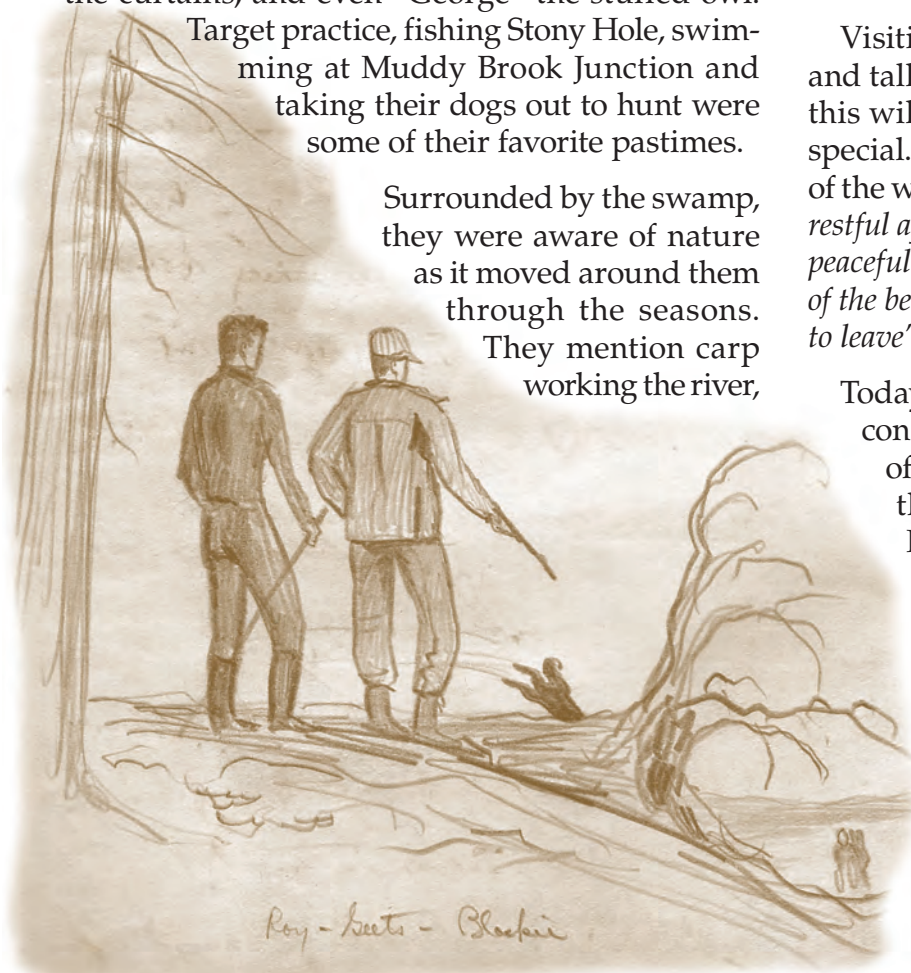


as migrating sandpipers and ducks flowed over the spring blooms of marsh marigold and trillium. In the fall, the ducks returned when the gentians and wood asters bloomed along the Quarry Trail and owls talked back and forth to each other at night. There were fleeting views of a red fox that left its tracks in the winter snow.

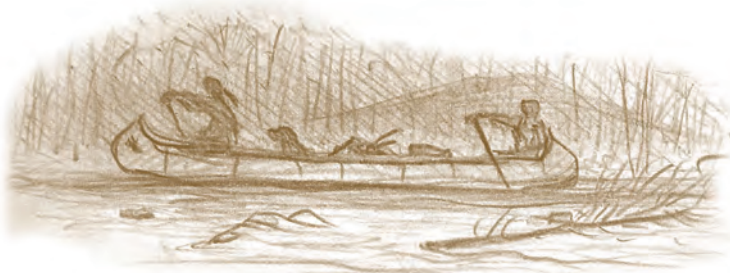
Visiting the cabin with friends, sharing meals and talk, and staying for the night in the silence of this wild and untouched place made it something special. Their everyday concerns and the problems of the world were left behind. *"Have had a pleasantly restful afternoon in this quiet and so far changeless and peaceful place"*. (B. Watkins and Rover 1941) *"It is one of the best and secluded spots, only wish we didn't have to leave"*. (George Pfahl and Roy Smith, 1943)

Today's hunters and fishermen enjoy the same connection to nature. They know the features of the forest, the structure of the stream and the habits of the animals they hunt. Tony Maniero, a respected local fisherman, helped me understand the value of the Great Swamp as a fish hatchery by describing all the cold pools where the brook trout breed as well as the warm flats that attract breeding perch, blue gills and bass.

Much of the forests, fields and wetlands we enjoy in the Great Swamp watershed are managed by the D.E.C. whose programs are supported by the sportsmen who purchase hunting and







fishing licenses, duck stamps, and habitat stamps. The Pawling Fish and Game Association and the Patterson Sportsman's Club manage wildlife preserves in the watershed, Trout Unlimited stocks the river and Ducks Unlimited has started a campaign to restore and conserve our wetlands. The



value of the Great Swamp as a waterfowl flyway helped FrOGS earn two North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants and with the help of 13 partners has protected almost 3,000 acres of wetlands and buffers in the watershed. Hunters and fishermen are *really* conservationists in camo.

## An Exciting New Property in the North Flow

FrOGS has just acquired a 194-acre parcel (not yet named) in the Town of Pawling with a grant from the U S Fish and Wildlife Service through their North American Wetlands Act (NAWCA) and the assistance of The Nature Conservancy. The property is located west of the MTA railroad tracks, north of the Appalachian Trail and south of Old Pawling Road. It is a key parcel in the wetland corridor that stretches from the East Branch Reservoir in the Town of Southeast to central Dover and is the “jewel in the crown” of the wetland habitat surrounding the Swamp River.

The extensive flood plain portion of the property is a mix of emergent marsh and shrub scrub wetlands, habitats that support breeding wood ducks and mallards as well as the several thousand

waterfowl that stop over during migration. These habitats are also attractive to breeding fish, amphibians, turtles, beaver, otter and wetland dependent species like the Great Blue Heron and Virginia rail.

The western portion of the property climbs out of the wetlands and up the wooded eastern side of Corbin Hill in a series of plateau-like steps, to end beneath a massive cliff face whose peak overlooks the Swamp River wetlands. Except for the traces of an old logging road, most of the hillside portion of the property is a jumble of boulders and ledges.

FrOGS needs time to explore, to understand the animals and plants in the landscape, and to make a complete biological inventory of the property, and perhaps then we'll know its name.



Photo by Ken Luhman



# The Great Swamp: Connection

The Great Swamp makes connections. It connects New York and Connecticut, Dutchess County with New York City, small upland streams with the Atlantic Ocean. Through migrating birds and insects, it connects Canada with South America, and North America with Mexico. Its water flows north via the Swamp River and Ten Mile into the Housatonic, through Connecticut, and eventually into the Long Island Sound, and south via the East Branch Croton through a series of reservoirs, into the mighty Hudson, and eventually into New York Harbor. Towns are strung along it like a necklace of pearls across county and state boundaries. The navigable part of the swamp runs for 20 miles, connecting Dover to the north with Brewster to the south through the counties of Dutchess and Putnam. A tributary stream of the Great Swamp, cold enough to harbor native brook trout, connects New Fairfield, CT, with Patterson, NY.

It connects people with nature. The waterways invite paddlers, cross-country skiers, ice skaters and snow-shoers. Birds, fish and mammals bring hunters, anglers, students and naturalists, while breathtaking vistas bring photographers, painters and sightseers. A network of trails in the upland forests and meadows of the watershed provide close-up encounters with amphibians, reptiles, butterflies, and flowers, as well as panoramic views of the valley. Visitors are surrounded with bird songs, scampering chipmunks, velvety moss, and the rich, earthy scent of fallen leaves and fresh mushrooms. The Appalachian Trail, the longest hiking trail in the Eastern U.S., traverses the Great Swamp on a

boardwalk north of the village of Pawling. Plans are afoot to complete sections of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Network by 2020 on an old railroad bed along the scenic Ice Pond corridor.

Besides connecting people with nature, these corridors of the Great Swamp also connect us with the past. They were used by mastodons thousands



## The Joys of Paddling

by Carol Paterno

Hoisting the kayaks to the roof of the car  
piling the gear into the back  
driving the short distance to one of  
several choices to put in.  
Unloading.  
Sliding  
into the flow with a muffled...*Spish.*

**paddle**

deep breath  
floating

listening

melting

letting go

**paddle**

opening up—becoming aware  
quiet

yet alive with sound

**paddle**

swooping swallows  
still on a broken branch

choruses of conversations

**paddle**

Overhead! —a

Great

# s, Corridors, and Communities

By Jill Eisentein

of years ago. Indigenous people traveled the same ridges and waterways, hunting and fishing along the way. The clay and marble found here were used to build foundations and buildings in the area hundreds of years ago. Migratory birds have used the Great Swamp as a flyway and rest stop for their north-south migrations for millennia. Beaver, bear,

otter and fisher, once abundant and then extirpated, have begun to return.

We know that people need community, but so do animals and plants. In the Great Swamp, communities have been built, shored up, and nurtured. It presents a beautiful mosaic of water, forests, meadows, shrubs, valleys and ridges with pockets of plants and animals that need each other, and even some rare and endangered species. Human communities, too, have grown up along the shores of the waterways and beside the protective shelter of the floodplain. The Great Swamp has provided community for sports enthusiasts, environmentalists, writers and artists.

Humans, animals and plants, connected by the need for clean water, have long relied on the Great Swamp. Through the years of the 20th century, it became apparent that human activity could change this special connector forever—by filling it, polluting it, or drawing out too much of its water at once. Attentive groups that recognized the need to protect the Great Swamp began conducting grant-funded studies and making land acquisitions. Since protective laws and regulations can vary by state, county or town, some have been raising an important flag: plants, animals, and clean water don't recognize political boundaries, and need protection across all borders.

In the Great Swamp, people, plant and animal communities have lived in an intricate three-dimensional web for thousands of years. It enriches the quality of life for all.



pterodactyl?  
Blue Heron!  
**paddle**  
Baaaahhhh-rum  
Bullfrog  
greens & yellow—water lilies  
**paddle**  
Look!  
like a line of train cars on a track  
painted turtles on a log  
Ker-blip-blip-blip  
They split the surface of the flow.  
greens & purples—pickerelweed  
**paddle**  
greens & blues—leaves, sky, forget-me-nots  
Reflections  
the world turned upside down  
**paddle**  
New perspectives  
fully enveloped by the natural world  
in the  
**Great Swamp**  
Renewed, I return  
from whence I came.



# Sightings In The Swamp

## The Horror Webs

by Jill Eisenstein

Late August looked like Halloween, with big, showy webs covering the ends of branches all over the place. It caused quite a stir. Hope you did not run for the pesticides or start lopping branches! Other than the sight of them causing us to shrink, it was probably “much ado about nothing”.

The webs were the doing of fall webworm (*Hyphantria cunea*), a native pest of deciduous trees and shrubs whose larvae feed actively in the late summer into fall. Though the damage looks bad, they are feeding on leaves that are close to the end of their productive lives, not on buds. Next year, new leaves will emerge with no sign of last year's devastation.



Larvae of the fall webworm drop off their host trees after about 6 weeks, and overwinter as pupae in the ground. The adult moths first appearing mid-June. Both larvae and adult moths vary as to their

coloring and markings, but the larvae are usually greenish with a broad, dusky stripe along the back and a yellow stripe along the side. Adults vary from pure white to white with black spots, with about a 3-inch wingspan.

## People Are Beginning To Notice!

The Signage Committee: Bill Roll (PCLT), Chris Wood (OLC) & Judy Kelley-Moberg (FrOGS)



Bob Leo with one of the new signs.

We hope increased awareness of the Great Swamp watershed's location and its value to the community will encourage stewardship of this environmental treasure. Many thanks to Putnam and Dutchess Counties for supporting the Great Swamp signage project, the Putnam County Highway and Facilities Department for completing the final phase, Lauri Taylor, manager of the Putnam Soil and Water District for pushing to make it happen and crew chief Bob Leo for getting it done.

## Monarch Butterflies 2018

by Beth Herr



After many summers with very few seen, I was delighted to spot the lilting flight of these iconic butterflies, to find plump caterpillars munching on milkweed leaves and noted the bejeweled chrysalides in my garden.

I watched as a female monarch laid more than 20 eggs on one feeble milkweed plant. Three days later they hatched. I moved each of them to an individual plant to ensure they had enough to eat.

The young “cats” are so interesting to watch as they molt (several times), change colors, and grow fat. Lucky the observer who sees them spin a pad of silk, attach upside down, shake and shed their skin to reveal a lime green chrysalis decorated with drops of gold.


The butterflies that emerge in September are the generation that make the journey to Mexico; their grandchildren will make the miraculous journey back. Look to the skies this month to see the monarchs catch the north wind and float by.

## Monarch Wonderings



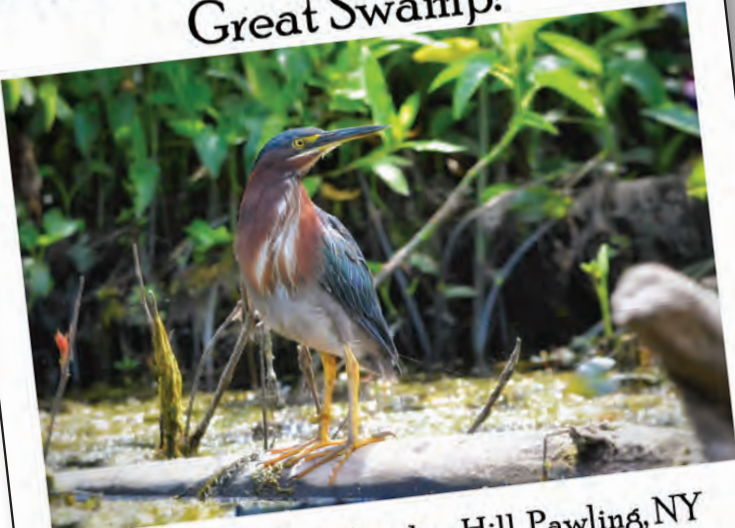
This September we (Beth, Judy and Nancy) observed Monarch caterpillars munching on the tender leaves of a patch of re-grown milkweed by the side of the road. Three of the caterpillars formed their chrysalises next to each other near the top of a yew hedge while a fourth dangled from a nearby window ledge. It made us wonder: *What were the caterpillars seeking when they were ready to pupate? Why settle so close together? Did they leave a trail? How did they make the gold beads and dots on the chrysalis and why in that pattern? How did it benefit their survival?*





**FrOGS**  
Friends of the Great Swamp

## 22nd Annual Celebration of the Great Swamp!



Photograph by John Foley

**Christ Church on Quaker Hill, Pawling, NY**  
**Saturday & Sunday, October 20 & 21**  
Hours: Saturday 11 to 5 & Sunday Noon to 4  
~ Free Admission ~  
A Wonderful Educational Autumn Event for the Entire Family!  
Clock Tower Grill Food Truck returns for 2018!  
Great Swamp Art and Photography Exhibition & Sale  
Educational Talks and Presentations ~ Children's Activities  
Chuckie Goodnight ~ Jim Eyring's Birds of Prey ~ Great Swamp Slide Show  
FrOGS hats, t-shirts & the new Great Swamp Coloring Book!

# JOIN US FOR THE 22ND ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE GREAT SWAMP!

**Saturday  
October 20  
11am-5pm**

**Sunday  
October 21  
12am-4pm**

**Christ Church on  
Quaker Hill  
17 Church Rd  
Pawling, NY 12564**

## FrOGS Needs *Your* Help!

The generosity of our members and supporters extends FrOGS reach and effectiveness.

### There are two great ways to help...

|                 |   |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| <b>DONATION</b> | <i>Remember your donations are tax deductible! Send yours to:</i><br><b>Friends of The Great Swamp, P.O. Box 373, Pawling, NY 12564</b> |   |   |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$25   | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$100       |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$250   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$500    | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$1,000 |
|                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |   |   |

|                  |  |  |                                   |
|------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>VOLUNTEER</b> | <i>We can always use another helping hand! Let us know which activities you're interested in helping with. You can pick more than one.</i> |  |                                   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Celebration  | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoe Trips     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mailings |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Activities  | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Studies  |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Suggest an activity: _____  |  |                                   |

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

*So we know whom to thank...*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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DAY PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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**THE GREAT SWAMP** NEWSLETTER



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**Saturday, October 20, 11am-5pm**

**Sunday, October 21, 12am-4pm**

**Christ Church on Quaker Hill  
17 Church Rd, Pawling, NY 12564**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sunrise Paddle

*Saturday, October 27 (meet 7 AM)*

Green Chimneys launch.

Bring your own boat and camera

### Sunset Paddle

*Sunday, October 28 (meet 4 PM)*

Patterson Environmental Park.

Bring your own boat and camera

### November Hike

Watch FB [frogs.ny](https://www.facebook.com/frogs.ny) for details

The most up-to-date list of events can always be found on  
our Facebook page: [facebook.com/FrOGS.NY](https://www.facebook.com/FrOGS.NY)

You can also sign up for email updates  
via our website: [frogs-ny.org](https://frogs-ny.org)

Additional events can be found at:  
[OblongLand.org](https://OblongLand.org), [PCLT.net](https://PCLT.net) and [GreatHollow.org](https://GreatHollow.org)