



A publication of the
WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE AT SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE

Nature's View



Nature Unites Our Visitors

By Angela Belli, Director

Celebration, community, and nature wrapped-up this year with many friends young and old at the Nature Reserve. It is so fitting as I reflect on the past year and all that was accomplished.

In this season of giving and merriment, nature has united so many guests together at the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve all year long. Young children with wet feet from playing at the pond on a cold morning sought the warmth of the barn with their families; nature campers delighted in unique tiny creatures found along a trail on a hot summer day with new friends made at Nature Explore Camp; and volunteers shared in the development and planting of a new Children's Garden and Colonial Garden that will be here for so many to enjoy for years to come.....this is how the natural landscape of what is now the ever-changing Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve has allowed the greater Latrobe Community and Saint Vincent College to reach into nature all year long.

The wonder of the season was brought to the Reserve all year. Interesting cocoons, crazy colorful spiders, slimy salamanders, and strange fungus happened to our doorstep. Curious visitors seeking answers to their backyard nature discoveries brought exciting and intriguing "nature" conversations along with fantastic wildlife finds that make this nature nook their shelter.

Let your curiosity of nature take you on a winter and spring walk here at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve. Begin the new year by sharing this quiet place of discovery with yourself and your family. Each season brings new discoveries to visitors that take the time to look and explore.



Photo: Ron Patun

Winter, a lingering season, is a time to gather golden moments, embark upon a sentimental journey, and enjoy every idle hour.

John Boswell

Merry Christmas from the Reserve Staff

**The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve
at Saint Vincent College**
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Website:

www.wpnr.org

Hours:

Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
First Saturday of Each Month: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturdays at the Barn Programs Begin: 10 a.m.

Contributors to this Issue:

Angela Belli & Beth Bollinger, WPNR Staff;
Kim Metzgar, Design Assistant
Photographs: Karen Gillner,
Jim Kellam, Ron Patun, Allie Petris

A Natural Perspective

by Angela Belli, Director

Nature brings beauty, science and joy to those who explore it. Have you ever taken a walk slowly and taken a closer look around you? Nature is all around us, but seldom do we stop and appreciate it for its intrinsic beauty, healing, mystery, and inspiration. This issue reflects the many visitors of all ages to Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve that are drawn to the natural world on many levels within their own community- and share their personal experiences with us.

Each one of us can probably tell a story about at least one meaningful experience in nature, no matter if that experience consisted of excitement and joy, or adventure and fear. Nature can tell us so much about ourselves. Maybe a bad day leads you to take a hike to de-stress - nature listens and it can show you calmness and peace. That same hike may rejuvenate your senses with smells and sights and heal you and cause you to ask questions of yourself or of nature.

Everyone possesses what I call a "Natural Perspective". How we see, appreciate and experience nature personally. Maybe that perspective uses words in poetry; images of nature in painting or drawing; wildlife in photography; stones, leaves or twigs in constructing or building; or a combination of many that fosters your own connection to the natural world.

So what is your "Natural Perspective"? I hope you visit a special natural place to explore, reflect, create, and take a rest this winter. Experience it! Explore it! Question it! You will learn so much about nature and yourself if you give it a chance. Take a snowshoe hike here at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve this winter; bird watch along our trails; sit at the quiet and frozen pond; or swing at the nature playground. Winter may rest, but nature does not sleep. Find your "Natural Perspective" this winter season here at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve or your own backyard or special nature spot. It will not disappoint you.



Camden Gillner
5 year old Nature Explorer

When asked why he created this, here was his reply: "I made this rock pile because I wanted good shiny rocks! The leaves just fell onto the rocks. I keep creating it because I like smooth rocks and the light when it hits them. Sometimes I like to carry rocks and other nature things around with me in my pocket. I really like the "swamp" at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve."

Photo: Karen Gillner



Allison Petris,
Saint Vincent College Student

Photo: Allison Petris

Nature connects me to my artistic side. Through photography, drawing and even creating engaging nature crafts with children- Nature is a God given muse for artistic souls like me.



Photo: Ron Patun

Ron Patun
Master Gardener and WPNR Volunteer

I did not hear any sounds as I walked except my own footsteps trudging through the snow covered path. I could hear a few birds squawking in the trees overhead but I did not hear any people or machine sounds. It was a very peaceful and restful walk that brought me back to nature and for my love of the outdoors. I wished the snow was a little deeper....I would have gone home for my cross country skis.

WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE CALENDAR

Registration forms and additional information are available on the web site (www.wpnr.org) or by stopping by at the Nature Reserve. **No phone or e-mail reservations will be accepted.** ALL EVENTS ARE HELD AT WINNIE PALMER NATURE RESERVE UNLESS INDICATED.

Monthly Meetings at the Barn

Third Wednesday - 7 PM - Forbes Trail Trout Unlimited - For More Information: www.forbestrailtu.org

Special Programs at the Reserve

TINY WONDER TIME - **Tiny Wonder Time** is an hour of nature play for children ages 2-4 the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Each session includes an outside activity (weather permitting), interactive activities, a craft, and a story. Children must be accompanied by a Parent or Caregiver. **COST: \$1/month, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

NATURE STORY TIME - **Nature Story Time** is a literature hour for children ages 2-5 with an adult. Each session includes a story and craft. Children must be accompanied by a Parent or Caregiver. **COST: \$10.00/5 Week Session, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. NO PARTIAL REGISTRATIONS.**

JANUARY

2 Barn Closed - Enjoy the Trails

6 12:30 PM - Outside Your Frosty Window Series
Class 3 of 7 - Reptiles

How do cold-blooded creatures survive drops in temperature? Discover what it means to be cold-blooded and how reptiles behaviorally change during winter months to survive cold temperatures.

7 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
SPEND A SATURDAY OUTDOORS THIS WINTER

Nature may rest in the winter, but signs of wildlife are underfoot or overhead. Come snowshoe, bird watch, or spy for tracks along snow covered or frozen ground. We will take whatever day mother nature provides to explore the outdoors!

13 12:30 PM - Outside Your Frosty Window Series
Class 4 of 7 - Amphibians

How does this quickly disappearing classification of animal balance land and water when the world freezes? Learn the shocking answer on what hibernation means to amphibians.

18 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Vulture View"

Registration Required

20 12:30 PM - Outside Your Frosty Window Series
Class 5 of 7 - Birds

What birds will you find at your winter bird feeder and why? Discover the difference between overwintering and migrating birds as well as how humans are changing these patterns.

27 10:30 AM Nature Story Time
Go to Sleep Groundhog!- Session 1 - Week 1

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

27 12:30 PM - Outside Your Frosty Window Series
Class 6 of 7 - Fish

How do fish regulate body temperature and find enough oxygen and food to survive as the lake surface turns to ice thick enough to skate on, and the warmest temperatures in the water are near freezing?

Registration Required: Free

FEBRUARY

3 10:30 AM Nature Story Time
When it Starts to Snow- Session 1 - Week 2

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

4 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Outside Your Frosty Window Series Conclusion
Class 7 of 7

A conclusion to the "Outside your Frosty Window" which is a seven-part education series that focuses on how wildlife in Western PA survives the piles of snow and bitter chill of the winter.

10 10:30 AM Nature Story Time
Sleep Big Bear, Sleep! - Session 1 - Week 3

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

15 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Whose Tracks, Moose Tracks?"

Registration Required

17 10:30 AM Nature Story Time
The Three Little Fish and the Big Bad Shark
Session 1 - Week 4

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

24 10:30 AM Nature Story Time
There was a Coyote Who Swallowed a Flea
Session 1 - Week 5

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

MARCH

3 10AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Living 'With' the Seasons

A 2-hour Qigong (Tai chi) workshop focusing on the postures that represent the 5 elements in Nature - Fire, Water, Earth, Mineral/Air/Metal, and wood. Qigong is an energy practice that represents each element and goes through the cycle of the seasons, each with an energy associated with it.

Workshop presented by: Linda Vucelich

Registration Required: \$30.00/person Min: 8 Registrants.
Registration Deadline: February 20, 2012

16 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
The Busy Tree - Session 2 - Week 1

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

16-17 Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators Conference
EARTH: The Educators Manual

Two days of informative workshops within four workshop tracks: Rabble Rousers, Movers & Shakers, Nature Lovers, and Gurus, Guides & Messengers. Lake Raystown Resort and Conference Center, Entriken, PA. www.paeec.net for more information.

21 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Springtime"

Registration Required

23 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
A Color of Our Own - Session 2 - Week 2

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

30 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
Is Your Mama a Llama?- Session 2 - Week 3

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

31 Food, Land and People Educator Workshop
9AM - 4PM

A 6 hour workshop focusing on agricultural and environmental awareness. Food, Land and People is coordinated and sponsored by the Office of Environment and Ecology, Pennsylvania Department of Education. Participants will receive a FLP curriculum manual.

Registration Deadline: March 15, 2012
ACT 48: 6 Hours FEE: \$20.00

APRIL

5-9 Barn Closed - Enjoy the Trails

13 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
Feathers for Lunch - Session 2 - Week 4

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

14 9 AM - 11AM
Beatty County Road Clean Up

Join the Nature Reserve and Mountain View Rotary to clean up along Beatty Road. Coffee and Donuts at 8:30 AM at the Saint Vincent Gristmill, Please register at 724-537-5285.

14 10 AM - 12PM
Compost Workshop - Westmoreland Cleanways

Westmoreland Cleanways will teach you how to turn your food scraps and lawn clippings into a beautiful treasure for your garden. Bins are not included.

Registration Required: \$10.00/person

18 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Fishing Fun"

Registration Required

20 10:30 AM - Nature Story Time
City Dog Country Frog - Session 2 - Week 5

Registration Required: \$10.00/Session (5 weeks)

22 Westmoreland Earth Day
Saint Vincent College - "Healthy Earth Recipe"
11AM - 4PM

Join local organizations as they share their time and expertise. Environmental Groups will naturally connect you to your community and help foster a healthy Earth.

Interested vendors may contact Beth Bollinger at beth.bollinger@email.stvincent.edu

MAY

5 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Bug Puppets and Fly Fishing
Forbes Trail Chapter-Trout Unlimited

Imagine creating an imitation insect, a bug puppet, then casting it with a fishing rod so it lands where a trout is, a bug puppet show. Fly fishing is the art of using artificial insects to catch fish. Make our own bug puppets and put on our own bug puppet show. Learn how trout stream insects mark the environmental danger zone for all living things that share its environment, including humans.

16 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Nature Moms"

Registration Required

JUNE

2 10 AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Volunteer Clean Up Day

Calling all volunteers of all shapes and sizes...what can you do? Weed, mulch, plant, clean or gather? We have tools and refreshments, bring along a friend or community group and contribute to maintaining the Reserve for all to enjoy! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please call to register.

20 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Nature Dads"

Registration Required

JULY

7 10AM - Saturdays at the Barn Program
Raptor Education - Birds of Prey by Justin Sindorf

Come learn about the important role that birds of prey play in our everyday lives, and how essential the conservation of these animals is for not only human habitat but wildlife habitat as well. Meet a real bird of prey up-close and watch it fly!

9-13 10AM - 2 PM Nature Explorer Camp for 6-7 yr. olds
Warm-Blooded, Winged Wonders
A Bird and Mammal Adventure

Curiosity will take flight as students learn about song-birds, birds of prey, and other birds native to our state. They will warm-up to learning about mammals that inhabit our region - both day and night dwellers. Excursions, experiments, games, hikes and more as they explore Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve with staff.

Registration Required: \$125/child
Registration Deadline: June 15, 2011

18 10 AM - 11 AM OR 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Tiny Wonder Time - "Fishing Fun"

Registration Required

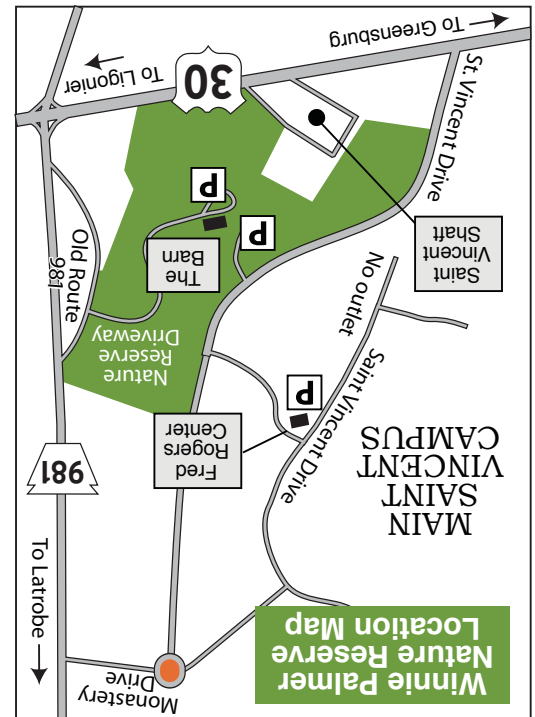
Students Investigate Wildlife

by Dr. Jim Kellam, Associate Professor of Biology, Saint Vincent College

The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve is used by students conducting animal surveys as part of their coursework in Wildlife Biology or Ornithology, both courses taught by SVC faculty member Dr. Jim Kellam. Ornithology students have laughed at the aggressiveness of a tiny House Wren defending its nest. They have exclaimed over the 400-member flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds seeking temporary refuge in the Reserve during autumn migration. Students have also become very frustrated trying to track down the secretive Chipping Sparrows hopping about within the grass stems of the un-mown fields. In Wildlife Biology, students surveyed the fields and woods for small mammals, capturing and then releasing house mice, white-footed mice, woodland jumping mice, shrews, voles, and a mole. Students have also used trail cameras to document use of the Reserve by white-tailed deer. The Reserve serves as a place of wonder and research for students at Saint Vincent College as they investigate the fascinating world of Pennsylvania's wildlife right here in our backyard.



Photos: Jim Kellam



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The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve

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