



The Friends of Valley Falls, Inc. Newsletter

www.friendsofvalleyfalls.org

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FALL 2017

ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH AT 1:00 PM

"Eastern Coyotes in Connecticut"

A presentation by Paul Colburn, Master Wildlife Conservationist

Back by popular demand, Master Wildlife Conservationist Paul Colburn will present "Eastern Coyotes in Connecticut" at the Friends Annual Meeting on Sunday, September 24th. At our 2016 meeting, Mr. Colburn's talk on black bears in Connecticut was so well-received that we were asked to engage him again to hear his talk on coyotes. And he has graciously accepted!


Coyotes have been in Vernon for a number of years. You may have seen them roaming in packs or heard them howl in the middle of the night. Like it or not they are our neighbors and are becoming an increasingly common sight in the Connecticut suburban landscape. At the same time, public fears and conflicts are on the rise, as many residents experience sightings and, at the same time, concern for family pets.

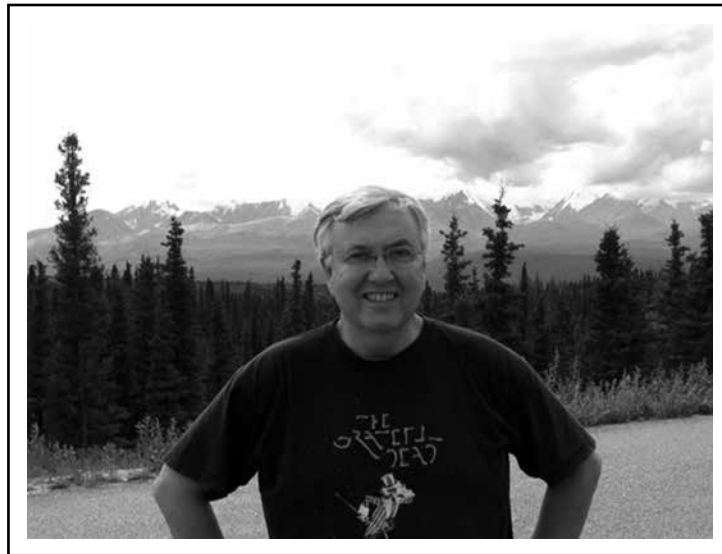
The presentation focuses on the history of coyotes in Connecticut, an overview of coyote habitat, diet, behavior, and reproduction. It also provides practical recommendations for optimum coexistence with our coyote population. Paul will have a display table with coyote artifacts to share with the audience. The talk is intended for ages 12 and up.

Paul Colburn is certified Master Wildlife Conservationist and a graduate of an interesting program created by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection called the Master Wildlife Conservationist Program (MWCP). The program trains participants in the fields of wildlife management, natural history and interpretation. The purpose of the

program is to develop a volunteer corps capable of providing education, outreach, and service for state agencies, environmental organizations, libraries, schools, and the general public.

Paul is the consummate volunteer! In addition to his work as a MWC, he volunteers for the Red Cross, Wesleyan University Admissions, and The Travelers Championship. He has served on the Board of Directors

of Special Wishes Inc., an organization devoted to assisting families facing life threatening childhood diseases. He is past President of Residents Advocating Conservation, has been active in local politics, youth athletics and served on many local boards and commissions. His interests include the outdoors, nature, hiking, biking, politics, and travel. Paul holds a BA from Wesleyan University and served honorably in the United States Army. 



Paul Colburn, Master Wildlife Conservationist

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ARTISTS' DAY 2017 AT VALLEY FALLS

Our sixth Artists' Day event: an afternoon of art, history and music. As one visitor commented, what could be better on a sunny summer day! The event attracted over 100 visitors to the fields and historic buildings at Valley Falls Farm. Fifteen Connecticut plein aire artists spent the day painting scenes of the Farm, at the same time welcoming those who strolled by to watch their works in progress.

The pleasant afternoon was enhanced by the mandolin and guitar duo of Judy Handler and Mark Levesque. The event also featured historic tours of the Farm, and an art display and sale of other works by the artists in the red barn.

Thanks go to the volunteers that made it happen: Joe King, Ann & Bob Letendre, Ginny Gingras, Kar- en & Rich James, Paula Passaretti, Jean Merz, Don Sierakowski, Jon

Roe, Rosemarie & Anna Gallichio, and Tom Duva; the Vernon Parks and Recreation staff for assistance with facility preparation; and the Vernon Arts Commission for providing the music. Thanks also to the artists that gave their time and patience to the many visitors that came to see them work.

The photos on *page 3* tell the story. Enjoy! ☺



Plein aire artist working on painting of the stable. Photo by Tom Griswold.



Photo by Tom Griswold

THE OLD BELL – A NEW FACT!

At every Artists' Day event, we usually learn some new fact about the history of Valley Falls Farm from someone who lived at or near the Farm. This year, Mike Darico, son of former owner Andy Darico, stopped by with some old photographs and stories. The Daricos were bell collectors, and it was during their ownership of the Farm that the bell on the property was acquired. We had heard that the bell came from one of the mills in Rockville, but we didn't know which one. Mike verified that the bell came from the Springville Mills in Rockville, and, in fact, he has photos of the removal of the bell from the mills, which he promised to show us. Mystery solved! Thank you, Mike – we'll be in touch to learn more! ☺



SCENES FROM ARTISTS' DAY AT VALLEY FALLS FARM:

An Afternoon of Art, Music, History and Nature

*Plein air artist Irene Laine
Photo by Tom Griswold*



Photos by Rose Gallichio, Tom Griswold and Jon Roe



*Board member Joe King welcomes a visitor
Photo by J. Roe*

*Ginny Gingras looks over artist Hans Weiss's display
Photo by R. Gallichio*



*Don Sierakowski talks about Valley Falls history
Photo by R. Gallichio*

*Music from the porch: Handler & Levesque, guitar duo
Photo by R. Gallichio*



*Sharon Kehmna paints a farmhouse scene
Photo by J. Roe*





The Friends of Valley Falls, Inc.
P.O. Box 2008
Vernon, CT 06066

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NATURE NOTES _____

Connecticut's Coyote | COYOTE - *Canis latrans*

Coyotes were not originally found in Connecticut, but have extended their range eastward during the last 100 years from the west and midwest United States. Coyotes eventually expanded their range throughout the entire state and are now a part of Connecticut's ecosystem. The coyote is one wildlife species that has adapted to human-disturbed environments and can thrive in close proximity to populated areas.



Coyotes are opportunistic and use a variety of habitats, including developed areas like wooded suburbs, parks, beaches and office parks. Their ability to survive and take advantage of food sources found in and around these "man-made" habitats has resulted in an increase in coyote sightings and related conflicts. A coyote's diet consists predominantly of mice, woodchucks, squirrels, rabbits, deer, some fruits, carrion, and when available, garbage. In Connecticut, unsupervised pets, particularly outdoor cats and small dogs (less than 25 pounds) are vulnerable to coyote attacks.

As coyotes have become more common, public concerns about coyotes attacking pets and people, especially children, have increased. Although some coyotes may exhibit bold behavior near people, the risk of a coyote attacking a person is extremely low. This risk can increase if coyotes are intentionally fed and then learn to associate people with food.

*The above information was taken from the CT DEEP "Coyote Fact Sheet." You can read more about coyotes on the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325992.

Want to learn more? Join us at The Friends of Valley Falls Annual Meeting on Sunday, September 24th, 1:00 pm at the Red Barn, Valley Falls Park, 350 Valley Falls Road, Vernon CT. If the Parking Area by the barn is full, park at Valley Falls Park. We will provide shuttle service, if needed. 📍