

Centre County Senior Environmental Corps Newsletter February 2020



Winter surveys can be exciting.

More about Ticks

Viqui Gildow, Team 16, told us of several recent articles about tick pathogens

The November 2019 issue of “Research Penn State” contained an article by Chuck Gill, reported that Pennsylvania has had the highest number of Lyme disease cases in the U.S. since 2000.

Joyce Sakamoto, assistant research professor of entomology. Is quoted as explaining “That black legged tick’s population likely declined in the 20th century because timber-harvesting practices destroyed habitat for deer and other wildlife. As reforestation was achieved and habitat restored, the population of these ticks – sometimes called deer ticks – exploded. Black-legged ticks are now found in every county in Pennsylvania.

The 2019 December issue and the 2020 January-February “ADIRONDAC” magazine has a very detailed article entitled “The other” Problems with Ticks that addresses anaplasmosis (a serious disease with a higher mortality rate than Lyme) and other diseases by Tom Welch M.D.

Susan Snap, Team 8, reminds us that Opossums love to eat Ticks



Opossums: Unsung Heroes in the Fight Against Ticks and Lyme Disease by Rick Ostfeld, Senior Scientist, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies.

Opossums are extraordinarily good groomers it turns out – we never would have thought that ahead of time – but they kill the vast majority – more than 95% percent of the ticks that try to feed on them. Opossums are walking around the forest floor, hoovering up ticks right and left, killing over 90% of these things, and so they are really protecting our health

Opossums, sometimes referred to just as possums, are a benefit to ecosystems and a healthy environment beyond eradicating ticks. They will catch and eat cockroaches, rats and mice – in addition to consuming dead animals of all types (also known as carrion). [Gardeners appreciate opossums’ appetite for snails, slugs and for cleaning up over-ripe fruit and berries.](#)

Opossums are also resistant to snake venom and actually prey on snakes, including venomous species such as copperheads and rattlesnakes. Having opossums around can minimize chances of encountering venomous species close to your home.

[Jane Kirchner](#) | [June 13, 2017](#)

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<https://blog.nwf.org/2017/06/opossums-unsung-heroes-in-the-fight-against-ticks-and-lyme-disease/>

Some data indicate opossums eat thousands of deer ticks per season, reducing the number that can go on to spread Lyme Disease to humans. How much of an impact opossums' eating ticks has on Lyme Disease infection rates is indeterminate.

Up-coming happenings

Third Wednesday of every other month, Spring Creek Watershed CNET Air Times:



The Spring Creek Watershed Commission meetings begin at 7PM and are held the third Wednesday of every

other month. Location: Bellefonte Borough Building, 236 W Lamb St, Bellefonte, PA 16823

Thursday, February 6, Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited Meeting at 7:30. Speaker: Bryan Swistock Senior Extension Associate, Ecosystem Science & Management. Topic: Potential Effects of Climate Change on Pennsylvania Streams and Groundwater.

February 14 Valentine's Day

March 12, 10:00 at the Match Factory, Bellefonte Volunteer Day.

Shale Network (May 14 & 15 2020)

<http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/025/chapter102/chap102toc.html>

"The struggle of today is not entirely for today, but for a vast future." --Abraham Lincoln

Nature Abounds™ was the primary sponsor and provider of equipment and supplies for CCPaSEC. The ClearWater Conservancy and Centre County RSVP are major supporters. The following have provided additional support funding for special equipment for one field kit: Financial support for this grant is provided by the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation which is dedicated to the economic, physical, and social health of the communities served by Dominion Energy companies. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy: This grant program was administered by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in commitment to its core mission of conserving Pennsylvania's diverse ecosystems through science-based strategy, leadership, and collaboration, Patagonia for the protection of water resources in Centre County, PIG Difference, a charitable initiative to salute our customers' passion for protecting habitats and preserving wildlife and our many individual contributors through Centre Gives.

CCPaSEC Volunteers Contribution to our Community

In 2019, CCPaSEC members contributed many hours to the community of service in their mission to gather and publish data on the quality of water in the streams of Centre County.

CCPaSEC works with several organizations, universities and youth groups to carry out projects benefiting Centre County watersheds.

Average member participation	34.08/Month
Average monthly mileage	758.3 miles
2019 Total Volunteer hours	2,748.75 Hrs.
2019 Value to the community*	\$68,553.83

* The value of those hours to the community in 2018 dollars https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

To join us: Please call the Centre County RSVP

(Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)

Monday – Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Phone (814) 355-6816

The CCPaSEC newsletter is published quarterly except for special events. To contribute news articles, or corrections please Contact Ken Johnson via our CCPaSEC website.