



# ECOS NEWS



## *ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse* Celebrating Our 44th Year in Environmental Education

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Number 3

February 2017

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### ECOS Walk Coordinators Needed

Have you ever wondered how the ECOS nature walk schedule magically appears every spring and every fall? It's ECOS volunteers! For several years, Sheila Daniels and Nancy Peterson have put their heads together and done some planning, contacting, and computer work, and turned over the finished product to Patrick for publication.

Now we need someone to take Nancy's place. She has been doing the computer part, after Sheila makes contacts to line up potential leaders for the trips. Sheila intends to continue making leader contacts, but Nancy's progressing macular degeneration is making it difficult for her to continue the computer work. She is making it easy for you to take over. She has created an alphabetical master list of spring walks and a master list of fall walks of places where we frequently go. There is a description of each place, and directions of how to get there, so all you have to do is cut and paste to put together the document. When we find a new place, we add a new description with directions to our master list. Sheila and Nancy meet in mid to late February to start planning the spring walks so Patrick will have the document by mid March so you'll receive it in your April newsletter. Planning for fall starts in mid July so Patrick will have it for the September newsletter. Please contact Patrick, 370-4125, to offer to help with this volunteer work.

9th Mohawk Watershed Symposium  
Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>  
College Park Hall  
Union College, Schenectady, NY

Registration Now Open  
<http://minerva.union.edu/garverj/mws/2017/symposium.html>

Save the Dates  
Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup>  
**ECOS All Member Meeting**  
Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>  
**ECOS Annual Dinner**  
See next issue of ECOS News for details.

### ECOS Seeking New Board Officers and Board Members

Of particular interest are potential Board Members who are working in environmental advocacy, environmental oversight, or public education; or who possess grant writing skills. Members who live outside of Schenectady County are also encouraged to become involved as Board Members. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Bruce Bonacquist at [brucebonacquist@yahoo.com](mailto:brucebonacquist@yahoo.com).

If you have expertise in any of the aforementioned areas, and wish to serve on an ECOS committee rather than as a Board Member, please contact Patrick Clear at [info@ecosny.org](mailto:info@ecosny.org).

ECOS NEWS

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**ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.**

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**[www.ecosny.org](http://www.ecosny.org)**

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**Office Assistant: Judy Smith**

**Fiscal Clerk: JoAnn Clear**

**Editor: Pauline Bono**

**Webmaster: Cliff Rhodes**

**Office Hours: Mon., Wed. & Thurs.**

**10 am — 3 pm and by appointment.**

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*ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is a non-political, not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, to build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and to advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources. ECOS is funded through the support of our members and the community.*

**JOIN THE  
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Contact: Kat Wolfram  
(518) 322-6628  
[www.electriccityfood.coop](http://www.electriccityfood.coop)

**eBay Giving Works**

Did you receive a holiday gift you don't want or need? Sell it on eBay and support ECOS. eBay Giving Works is the dedicated program for charity listings where you can buy or sell items to support non-profit organizations. This program enables you to list items on eBay and donate part or all of the final sale price to your favorite nonprofit organizations. Since 2000, more than \$81 million has been raised for charity from listings sold on eBay worldwide. To learn how the program works visit [ebay.com](http://ebay.com) and click on Giving Works. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is participating in this program.

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Shopping online this Holiday Season? If you are then you can support your favorite charity, AT NO EXTRA COST TO YOU, by visiting [www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com). Over 800 of you favorite stores and catalogs participate in this program in which the retailer donates a portion of your purchase to your favorite charity. In addition, there are special discounts and sales available through iGive.com. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse has raised over \$200 through this program so far.

**RLE Photography & Media**

E-mail: [rle612@yahoo.com](mailto:rle612@yahoo.com)

Website: [rle612.zenfolio.com](http://rle612.zenfolio.com)

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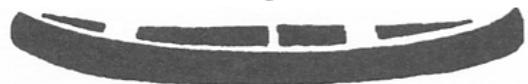


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**Winter Wildlife Tracking Intensive  
Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center**

Immerse yourself in a weekend of wildlife tracking from 6pm on Friday, February 17 through 3pm Sunday, February 19. This course is designed for advanced beginners and above and is ideal training for professionals, volunteers or for personal enjoyment. First, participants will learn and practice techniques and methods that will enhance their ability to find animal signs. Then they will learn to correctly interpret the evidence: tracks, scent markings and other clues. They will visit diverse habitats and enjoy the tranquil beauty of the Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center in winter. Field outings will be complemented by cozy indoor presentations.

Course includes day and evening activities. Rustic camping is available inside cabins. Food and beverages will be provided. Program presented by expert trackers Dan Yacobellis and Josh Wood. Space is limited and pre-registration is a must. Cost is \$250 per participant with a \$25 discount if you bring a partner. Register by contacting:  
<https://flyingdeernaturecenter.org/winter-tracking-intensive>.

**Share Your Favorite ECOS Memories**

During our programs and outings ECOS members have often shared their stories with me of their favorite ECOS memories. They've told me about the places they've enjoyed hiking and skiing, friends they've made and speakers who have motivated and inspired them. We'd like to make those memories part of our regular content in ECOS News so if you have a story to tell or a photo to share please send them to Patrick at ECOS.

**Union College Winter Lecture Series  
Get the Lead Out: Safe Drinking Water  
and Environmental Justice  
Wednesdays 7pm Nott Memorial**

**February 1, 2017 – E. Yvonne Lewis** is Executive Director of Faith Access to Community Economic Development (FACED), which provides services to meet the comprehensive health needs – physical, mental and spiritual – of low-income residents of the city of Flint and Genesee County, Michigan.

**February 8, 2017 - Kelsey Pieper** is a U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture Postdoctoral Fellow at Virginia Tech. Her work focuses on investigating patterns of lead exposure in unregulated well water and evaluating the effectiveness of common remediation practices. Dr. Pieper has been a core member of the Flint Water Study Team at Virginia Tech, conducting in-depth corrosion assessments and analyzing data collected during the citizen-led sampling campaigns.

**February 22, 2017 - Robert A. Bilott** is a partner in Taft's Environmental, Litigation, and Product Liability and Personal Injury practice groups in Cincinnati, OH. Rob has handled not only environmental issues of regulatory compliance, permitting, and corporate/real estate transactions, but all aspects of litigation arising from such issues. He has been directly involved in investigations of contaminated water in and around Hoosick Falls.

More information about the speakers is available at the ESPE web site:  
<https://muse.union.edu/espe/2016/12/08/2017-winter-seminar-series/>

J. Douglass Klein 518-388-6736 [kleind@union.edu](mailto:kleind@union.edu)

**ECOS Membership**

**ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.  
P.O. Box 9118, Niskayuna, NY 12309 (518) 370-4125**

Please check your membership contribution level.

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As a GE employee (or retiree) my contribution is eligible for GE Foundation Matching Funds. I have registered with GE for the matching gift by computer at [www.gefoundation.com](http://www.gefoundation.com). (If you do not have computer access, call customer service at 1-800-305-0669.)

My employer will match my contribution. I've enclosed my matching gift form.

I would like to be a volunteer. Please send me more information.

**Executive Director's Report**

When I wrote my report for the last issue of ECOS News it was raining and today it is raining again. However, unlike last year, we have been able to ski and snowshoe this winter. A big Thank You to Maple Ridge Ski Center for opening early for us to enjoy a morning for cross country skiing and snowshoeing and to ECOS Board President Will Seyse for arranging the outing to Maple Ridge.

I also need to say a big Thank You to Nancy Peterson and Sheila Daniels for their many years as walk coordinators for ECOS. Sadly we are in need of a new volunteer to replace Nancy. If you have enjoyed our outings and would like to help us continue them please consider volunteering. For information see the coordinator needed notice in this newsletter.

I would also like to welcome Patricia Rush back to the ECOS Board and remind anyone who is interested in joining the ECOS Board that we are always looking for new Board members.

And a very big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the ECOS Annual Appeal. Without your generosity ECOS wouldn't be able to continue all the great programs we offer in the community.

Patrick Clear

**Hemlock Woolly Adelgid  
Public Informational Meeting**

Tuesday, January 31, 6:00-7:30 pm McChesney Room  
Schenectady County Main Branch Library  
99 Clinton Street

The hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) is a small aphid-like insect native to Asia that poses a great threat to Eastern hemlock trees and Eastern forest ecosystems. HWA populations have been found in Schenectady County, including the City of Schenectady and the Town of Niskayuna. HWA is responsible for the death of many hemlock trees from Maine to Georgia since its introduction into the United States. When hemlocks become infested, they can die in as little as four years of the initial attack. Dead hemlock trees present safety hazards as well as ecological, economic, and aesthetic losses.

The Schenectady County Invasive Species Committee has convened a panel of experts from Union College, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, New York Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management, and Davey Tree to help you identify and monitor HWA and to provide management options for infested trees. To obtain more information on this event, please contact Mary Werner: mhwner4@aol.com or 370-3099.

The Schenectady County Invasive Species Committee was recently established by the Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council (SCEAC), which advises the County Legislature; evaluates air, water, and natural resources and energy use in the County; and conducts outreach on existing and emerging environmental issues. If you would like more information on SCEAC or the Invasive Species Committee, please contact Kathy Fisher (518-222-7879).

**President's Letter**

The environmental awareness that brought about Earth Day and influenced the creation of ECOS over forty years ago, is in constant need of re-discovery. We focus a major fund raising effort around the work of the late Rachel Carson, and the work that followed her efforts of *Silent Spring*.

Many of you believe as I do that DDT weakened the shells of several types of birds, including the Bald Eagle, and that following the ban of the general use of DDT as a pesticide these birds had a population increase.

Are you aware that Google searches on DDT will lead you to articles that insist Rachel Carson was wrong, that the use of DDT today could save millions of lives of those who are killed by malaria, and that DDT isn't harmful to humans at all?

We have apparently entered the era of fake news and fake facts, and official-sounding organizations that can counter anything we want to say or believe. I am of the opinion that this does not bode well for people who want to live in communities, plan to be members of society, and who want some reason and consistency in their lives. I remember the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan saying in a debate once that his opponent "was entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts", and I wonder now where America is headed.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has just declared that the rusty-patched bumblebee should be on the endangered species list. They decided this based on their "facts" that the bee population had dwindled 90 percent since the late 1990's. One of the ways that some of the food we eat gets pollinated is by the natural occurrence of these bees. How hungry does the population have to get before it becomes a concern that the work by these bumblebees is important? Will someone undo this endangered species designation because they have facts that prove some food production is up during this same period?

What is truth? Obviously it is a topic for a much lengthier report. I will still stand with Rachel Carson, who asked questions without knowing fully what the answers were. Our new methods of raising crops, inventing and patenting seeds, creating new pesticides and herbicides without the long term data of how each and any change might affect not just production and profits, but allergies and hyperactivity among children, are the questions for which we need more answers. Let's not trust the first answer in a Google search or an ugly tweet from an angry man as our future's best answer.

Will Seyse

**Green Infrastructure in the Capital Region**

**Wednesday, February 1 8AM-12PM**

**Albany Law School 80 New Scotland Avenue, Albany**

The forces that threaten water quality in the Capital Region include urban development, contamination in rivers, and the presence of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that discharge untreated sewage and storm water runoff into the region's rivers and lakes. In response to these threats, local governments and environmental experts have identified significant opportunities for investing in green infrastructure projects that incorporate nature-based solutions that capture, retain, infiltrate, and divert rainwater.

On Wednesday, February 1st, the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund will host local, state, and federal experts and policymakers at a public policy forum to discuss projects in the region and around the state that illustrate the value of green infrastructure and its promise for improving New York's water quality. Panelists will include policymakers and green infrastructure experts from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission, Cornell University's New York State Water Resources Institute, Riverkeeper, and more. We will examine recent green infrastructure projects, explore ongoing work in the region and across the state, and discuss how municipalities can further leverage federal, state, and local interest in green infrastructure programs to foster sustainable economic development.

NYLCV Education Fund forums bring together policymakers, advocates, business leaders and the general public for discussion on timely environmental policy issues. Our forums focus on finding solutions to sustainability issues, and helping municipalities adopt these solutions. We hope you'll join us for this great event, which is free and open to the public.

[www.facebook.com/nylcv](http://www.facebook.com/nylcv)

**Free Workshop on Tree Planting,  
Pruning and Care**

Life is better for both us and trees when we give our plants some help. ReTree Schenectady and ECOS have teamed up to provide a free and informal public workshop on how to care for your trees. Participants can meet up at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, starting at Union Street and Erie Boulevard, at the entrance to the Stockade. The rain date is Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. No pre-registration is necessary. Serving as guide will be Clarence "Rennie" Fountain, an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist with over 35 years caring for trees as a professional and passionate Regenerative Plant Care advocate. He will focus on many aspects of a tree's life, including how to plant, prune, and manage your trees.

ReTree Schenectady is a not-for-profit, all volunteer organization dedicated to the planting, care, and conservation of Schenectady's trees. In the past 25 years, ReTree Schenectady has helped to plant over 3,500 trees in Schenectady, thanks to funding from the City of Schenectady, National Grid, New York's Department of Environmental Conservation, and private donations. For more information, see [www.retreeschenectady.org](http://www.retreeschenectady.org).

ECOS is a non-profit, non-political association of people dedicated to understanding and preserving our natural environment. It is supported by membership contributions, donations, grants, and volunteers. The mission is to provide environmental information and education to enhance appreciation of the natural world, build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and advocate informed action to



**A PLACE FOR FOLK 2017**  
 Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady  
 1221 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady 12308  
[www.aplaceforfolk.org](http://www.aplaceforfolk.org)

Join Us For  
**CHRIS WILSON**  
 Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm

A native of New York, Chris has gained celebrity status for his vocally driven songwriting and passionate live performances. His songwriting serves his voice perfectly with a blend of power and simplicity. Chris's music is, simply put, honest and emotional.

Opening for Chris will be Judy Kass. New York based singer-songwriter Judy Kass quickly draws in her audience with soulful vocals, no-nonsense lyrical storytelling and genre-bending exploration of guitar and piano. Her original music blends generous amounts of folk, jazz and blues with songs that cover the full gamut of mood and experience.

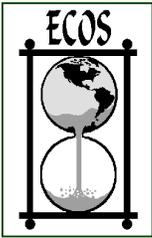
For tickets and information visit [www.aplaceforfolk.org](http://www.aplaceforfolk.org)



ECOS Outing at Maple Ridge Ski Center



ECOS Holiday Party



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**ECOS Single Stream Recycling Tour**