When you think of summer, you may think of the shore, ice cream, and summer camp. When it comes to the Briar Bush woods, summer means warblers! These brightly-colored melodic bug-eaters are migratory, only making an appearance in our area during the breeding season replacing the white-throated sparrows and slate-colored juncos of winter. At Briar Bush, our warbler patrons consist of the black-and-white and black-throated blue warblers, the northern parula, and many others. They spend their days gleaning the foliage for insects and proclaiming their territories through song, but lucky visitors may catch a glimpse of them as they descend the canopy to take a drink or bathe at the Griscom Bird Observatory stream. Warblers bring about an air of mystery, as they are more commonly heard than seen, making them an extra challenge for even seasoned birdwatchers.

How can you up your birdwatching game and learn the songs of these fleeting foliage frolickers before the summer months fly by? The most helpful and first step is to have a field guide. You can choose a paper guide, such as Peterson or National Geographic, or you can use a phone app such as Merlin or Sibley. The advantage of using an app is that you will have instant access to recordings of each species’ song, including the variation curveballs warblers may throw at you. This is very beneficial for familiarizing yourself with warblers found in your area.

(continued on page 2)
Briar Bush News and Information

In Memory of Ms. Tortellini

We have sad news for our Briar Bush families: our leopard tortoise, Ms. Tortellini, died this past March. Torti spent 16 years as a pet before coming to BBNC in 2004. When she arrived, poor diet, a lack of vet care, and UV deficiency had combined to deform her shell and legs and cause extensive shell infection, among other issues.

Briar Bush staff, volunteers, and vets worked diligently to improve Torti’s life and health. She recovered from the most acute problems and lived at Briar Bush for 18 years. She loved people and was a unique ambassador for thousands, teaching them about tortoises and pet care issues. But, even with exceptional care, she had lasting complications that shortened her normal life span.

Regrettably, dealers often sell exotic animals like tortoises without an honest explanation of the financial, time, and space commitment it takes to keep them healthy. We believe that the sale of most exotic pets should be ended, especially turtles and tortoises. We honor Torti by sharing her story, hoping it may educate everyone to make better choices for pets and their health.

Written by Katie Fisk, Animal Curator
Images by Alison Larsen

Next, either through your phone app or through an online resource such as The Cornell Lab’s All About Birds website, take a shot at learning 3-5 warbler songs. Don’t worry if you don’t have a musical ear, just break it down into a language and pattern that makes sense to you. Perhaps the black-and-white warbler sounds like someone using a squeaky saw on a piece of wood, or perhaps you hear a pair of up and down notes repeated 4 times. The black-throated blue, by contrast, is more buzzy, and each of its notes is higher than the last. Some say the yellow warbler says “sweet, sweet, I’m so sweet,” and a mnemonic device may be the best way for you to remember a song.

Finally, get out and practice! The Briar Bush woods are a fantastic place to tune your ear. If you hear a song you don’t know, jot down the best description you can either using adjectives, numbers, or even drawing what the tune sounded like to you using peaks and valleys, long notes and short notes. This way you can go through your sound library later and try to decode your notes. Once you learn the most common songs, it will be much easier to hear the difference in a new warbler song.

Learning the difference between warblers, and especially warbler songs, may seem like a daunting task, but it is possible no matter what your experience level! With the right tools, practice, and finding your own translation, you’ll be hearing warblers everywhere. And then you’ll be saying of your birding skills, “sweet, sweet, I’m so sweet”!

Written by Katie Fisk, Animal Curator
Images by Alison Larsen
Get Involved at Briar Bush!

Briar Bush could not accomplish its goals without the help of our dedicated volunteers. Whether you have a lot of time or very little, we would love to find a way for you to make your mark at BBNC.

Opportunities for:

- Youth (ages 12-17 can volunteer on their own)
- Families (with children ages 8+)
- Adults
- Groups (businesses, Scouts, schools, faith groups)
- Internships

Possible volunteer roles include: hike guides, animal care, nature restoration, facilities maintenance, and community outreach.

The Friends of Briar Bush is currently seeking Board of Director candidates with backgrounds in community leadership, business, finance, non-profit management, and education.

Interested in helping us grow? Email volunteer@briarbush.org.

Warmly,

Mark Fallon, Director

Ways to make your gift:

- Visit www.briarbush.org
- Mail a check to the Friends of Briar Bush
- Scan the QR code

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United Way

Briar Bush Nature Center
Donor Option 6003

Your contribution supports:

- Environmental education
- Nature preserve & museum
- Bird Observatory
- Over 30 Animal Ambassadors

Many employers participate in United Way or other automatic payroll contribution programs. Some employers even provide extra incentive by matching their employees contributions. Ask your employer today for a chance to double your gift!
Programs for Children

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603. Visit our website to review the Mitigation Plan for Modified In-Person Programming.

Magic Mornings
Modified In-Person Program

2-5 year olds (with adult)

Hey toddlers! Bring your favorite adult to Briar Bush for walks, animals, crafts, games, stories and more. Each week features a new theme, which repeats throughout the week (register for one day per week).

Session Time: 10:30am-11:30am
- Participant Cost: $12/session
- Abington Resident: $10.80/session
- FOBB Member: $9.60/session
- Additional child in same household: $6.00

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Nature Pioneers
Modified In-Person Program

4-6 year-olds (This is a drop-off program.)

Children are invited to join us on their own for age-appropriate activities, walks, animal encounters, crafts, games, and more! Each week features a new theme, which repeats throughout the week (register for one day per week).

Session Time: 1:00pm-2:30pm
- Participant Cost: $15/session
- Abington Resident: $13.50/session
- FOBB Member: $12.00/session

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Programs for Children

*Registration is required. To register, visit [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org) or call (215) 887-6603. Visit our website to review the Mitigation Plan for Modified In-Person Programming.*

### After School Sessions
*Modified In-Person Program*

**Grades K-6**

Join our educators in nature play and scientific discovery during our After-School Program! After-School Sessions offer an opportunity to safely experience the wonders of nature at your favorite backyard nature center.

Session Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm  
- Participant Cost: $25.00/session  
- Abington Resident: $22.50/session  
- FOBB Member: $20.00/session

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### School’s Out? Get Outside!
*Modified In-Person Program*

**Grades K-6**

When school is not in session, students can spend a day at Briar Bush exploring the outdoors, meeting live animals, making crafts, playing in nature, and more. (Pack a lunch and snacks.)

Session Time: 8:30am-3:30pm  
- Participant Cost: $75.00/session  
- Abington Resident: $67.50/session  
- FOBB Member: $60.00/session

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### Homeschool Sessions
*Modified In-Person Program*

**Grades K-2** *(Select Mondays)*  
**Grades 3-6** *(Select Tuesdays)*

Enrich your homeschool science curriculum! Join us for engaging lessons, live animal encounters, scientific discovery, and more.

Session Time: 1:00pm-2:30pm  
- Participant Cost: $25.00/session  
- Abington Resident: $22.50/session  
- FOBB Member: $20.00/session

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Programs for All Ages

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603. Visit our website to review the Mitigation Plan for Modified In-Person Programming.

Hot S’more Nights

Modified Outdoor In-Person Program for All Ages

Bring your family and friends to BBNC for summer nights of nature-based fun! Join the Briar Bush educators in games, activities, live animal shows, guided hikes, and more, all relating to the theme of the night. Campfire and s’mores are weather dependent. (Registration Required; No Walk-Ins)

Time: Wednesday nights in July & August from 7:00pm-8:30pm
Cost: $8/participant; $5/FOBB Member

Pond-apalooza! - Wednesday, July 13, 2022
Discover what is living (and swimming!) in the Briar Bush pond! Use dip nets to catch and examine the aquatic creatures that are hoppin’ in the summer!

Micro Hike - Wednesday, July 20, 2022
When we think of ecosystems, we think of forests, oceans, and deserts. But there are entire tiny worlds right beneath our feet! We’ll meet some of the smallest residents of Briar Bush both under the microscope and out on the trails in this program that encourages you to think small!

Summer Night BioBlitz - Wednesday, July 27, 2022
Become a scientist for the night and help the Briar Bush Staff survey all of the living creatures, big and small, that are found on the trails. Be sure to bring your keen observation skills!

Edible and Medicinal Plants: Stories of Plants and People - Wednesday, August 3, 2022
Come get a taste for the bounty of the big backyard. Join us on a plant walk to rediscover plants that people have used for centuries as food and medicine. Taste samples of pine needle tea and more!

Go Batty! - Wednesday, August 10, 2022
Join us to learn more about bats, your nocturnal neighborhood friendly flying mammal! Hear stories, play a game, and go looking for bats at Briar Bush. Get ready to go batty!

Skits and Songs - Wednesday, August 17, 2022
What’s a campfire program without skits and songs? Join educator Will Cameron in hilarious skits, catchy songs, and some all-around fun!

Amazing Adaptations - Wednesday, August 24, 2022
Adaptations are special features organisms have that allow them to fit like a puzzle piece into the ecosystem. Learn why some animals look and behave the way they do and discover how amazing these adaptations can be through games, activities and more!
Programs for Adults

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603. Visit our website to review the Mitigation Plan for Modified In-Person Programming.

A Walk in the Woods
Modified In-Person Program
Tailored for Adults and Seniors

Time: 2:00pm-2:45pm
- Participant Cost: $5.00
- FOBB Member: FREE

Join Briar Bush educators on interpretive hikes around Briar Bush and Alverthorpe Park.

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Save the Date
Feather Our Nest
The Friends of Briar Bush’s 32nd Annual Gala & Auction
The Enchanted Forest
Friday, September 30, 2022
At the Abington Art Center

Great Escapes

Join us in exploring natural and historic locations throughout the region. We’ll be traveling by Briar Bush van to popular hotspots, local favorites, and places well off the beaten path.

John James Audubon Center

- Saturday, May 7, 2022 from 7:00am-1:00pm
- Participant Cost: $40.00
- Abington Resident: $36.00
- FOBB Member: $32.00

Join Audubon Center and Briar Bush naturalists for a guided bird walk, guided tour of the historic house, and take a self-guided tour of the museum! Binoculars will be available for use.

Notes: Participants will meet at Briar Bush at 7:00am. The group will arrive back at Briar Bush by 1:00pm. This trip will require walking and standing over paved or uneven terrain to participate in the guided and self-guided tours. Choosing weather appropriate clothing and comfortable shoes will contribute to a great experience. Participants are responsible for bringing a packed lunch. Although this is a rain or shine event, this trip is subject to cancellation due to dangerous weather conditions.

Masks are required during transport in the BBNC van. Questions? Please call Briar Bush at (215) 887-6603. Participants must come prepared for the weather.

www.briarbush.org
Join us at BBNC’s Nature Playscape for **Nature Playdates**

Select Saturdays and Sundays
10:00 am - 12:00 pm
(Visit our website to view the full schedule.)

**FREE Drop-In Programs**

Nature Playdates offer families an opportunity to put time aside for unstructured nature play. Special play materials will be provided by BBNC staff and volunteers during each event.

*Special thanks to BLBB Charitable for sponsoring Nature Playdates and Nature Playscape renovations.*