Become a Member and Receive:
- 20% discount on programs
- Early registration for summer camps
- Invitations to members-only events
- Facility rentals for your celebrations
- 10% discount in the Nature Shop
- Participate in ANCA reciprocity program and visit nature centers across the nation
- And more!

www.briarbush.org

Spring & Summer Hours
Business Hours:
Monday - Friday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Dede Long Nature Museum:
OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Admission:
Briar Bush Members: Free
Abington Residents: Free
Others: Pay what you can

Griscom Bird Observatory:
OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Pond:
OPEN Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Trails:
OPEN Daily: Dawn to Dusk

Facility hours are subject to change to accommodate privately scheduled programs. Remain aware of trail closures. Call before you visit for the most up-to-date BBNC hours.

Spring & Summer program guide starts on page 4.

The Dede Long Nature Museum, Griscom Bird Observatory, and pond will be closed on Memorial Day, Emancipation Day, and Independence Day.

www.briarbush.org

Newsletter and Calendar

May – August 2023

Making Watershed Education Memorable
By Will Cameron

As the recipient of a 2022 PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Environmental Education grant, Briar Bush Nature Center set out this school year to bring meaningful watershed education experiences to two DEP identified Environmental Justice Areas. As the lead educator for the grant project, it got me thinking: what makes a memorable experience?

If you asked me to describe lessons I remember from elementary school, the list would be short. Most of my time was presumably spent on worksheets, multiplication tables, and whatever an adverb is. But my concrete, retrievable memories are lessons that took us outside of the boring, old classroom. I remember walking quietly down the hall, because everyone else was hard at work with prepositions and subject-verb agreement. We would go outside and see a different grade at recess, some unknown kids using our base for a game of tag - the gall! Then we would arrive at the school garden, or better yet, the tree line at the back of the school grounds where the field ended. This never felt like regular school to me, it was an adventure that defied the laws of primary education, it required attention like no other lesson could.

This is the type of experience I tried to bring to 4th grade students at Roslyn and Willow Hill elementary schools. In January, each student manipulated their own watershed model, complete with environmental pollutants (coffee grounds), industrial chemicals (iced tea), and rain (spray bottles). We talked about storm water while making storms and playing with water. As soon as it was warm enough in March, I returned to bring students outside to explore their school’s grounds: taking watershed walks, studying the contours of the school yard, pouring water on different surfaces and observing the results. With some unpredictable March weather, and a lot of help from the teachers at each school, the students had an memorable adventure with Briar Bush in their watershed.
Support our Staff with a Gift to Our Annual Appeal

Briar Bush has staying power - it’s been a special place to learn and be inspired since the early 1900s. So, what has kept Briar Bush going strong? Really, it is dedicated people, especially longtime volunteers and staff members. In fact, the current full-time staff possesses a combined 75 years at BBNC!

Notably, Director Mark Fallon has reached a remarkable milestone: 20 years at BBNC. To honor this special anniversary, the Board of Directors and Mark have pledged to match annual appeal donations up to $10,000.

Help us keep Briar Bush the vibrant, dynamic place that it has always been by taking this chance to support the depth of experience and commitment of the staff that puts Briar Bush at the forefront of education and to provide nature for all!

Warmly,

The Friends of Briar Bush Board of Directors

Stephanie McKenna, President
Lea Della Vecchia, Vice President
Tara Moore, Treasurer
Pam Olshefski, Secretary
Bonnie Bell

Brenda Branson
Timothy Glencamp, Jr.
Kim Hamm
Norman Marcus
Matt Palmer

Mark Fallon, Director
20 years at Briar Bush

Did you know that some employers match their employee’s charitable donations? Ask your employer today for a chance to double your impact.

Ways to give your gift:
- Visit www.briarbush.org
- Mail a check written out to the Friends of Briar Bush
- Scan the QR code

Heidi Malizia, Educator
15 years at Briar Bush

Katie Fisk, Animal Curator
14 years at Briar Bush

Ehren Gross, Naturalist
14 years at Briar Bush

Melissa Eldridge, Program Director
10 years at Briar Bush

Karen Foster, Development
6 years at Briar Bush

www.briarbush.org 2 215-887-6603
Briar Bush News and Information

Staff News

Kyrstin Schwarz, Environmental Educator
Kyrstin has a Bachelor's Degree in Conservation and Wildlife Management with a minor in Education. While in college and since graduating, Kyrstin has worked as a tutor, pet groomer, camp counselor, and substitute teacher. Kyrstin has also worked with different animals from cats to cows to giraffes. She loves spending time outside with family and friends, camping, traveling the world, and wildlife photography. When she’s not outside, Kyrstin spends her time reading, painting, and playing games. She grew up in New Jersey and moved to Pennsylvania in 2017. Kyrstin now lives in Doylestown with her fiancé, Jeff, and her calico cat, Cheyenne.

Bryna Steele, Environmental Educator
Bryna has an undergraduate degree in Landscape Architecture awarded by the University of Edinburgh and an MSc in Biodiversity and Plant Taxonomy awarded by the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. During her undergraduate degree, Bryna worked at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh in the Glasshouses with both display and research collections specifically in the temperate glasshouses, Begonia collection, and quarantine glasshouse. In her MSc, her dissertation was researching conservation translocation methods in lichens. Professionally, she has worked in horticulture at a variety of gardens, both in the US and in the UK. In addition to being a part time educator at Briar Bush, Bryna works as an Estate Guide at Winterthur. In her free time she enjoys spending time with family and friends, going on walks, reading, engaging with art, and thrifting. Bryna currently lives in Philadelphia.

Get Involved - Volunteer at Briar Bush Nature Center!
Briar Bush could not accomplish its goals without the help of dedicated volunteers. Learn more about the variety of opportunities and make your mark at BBNC.

Families (with children ages 8-11) - Building/Grounds Maintenance and Bird Club
Youth (ages 13+) - Year-Round Building/Grounds Maintenance and Bird Club
Scouts - Eagle Scout and Bronze/Silver/Gold Award Projects/Troop or Individual Service Projects
Adults (ages 18+) - Docents, Hike Guides, Building/Grounds Maintenance, and more!
Groups - Volunteer with your organization, corporation, Greek Organization, Scouts, etc.

If you are interested in any volunteer opportunities above, email volunteer@briarbush.org.

Friends of Briar Bush Board Member - 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 this leadership opportunity? Email info@briarbush.org with "Board Candidate" in the subject line to learn more.
**Children’s Programs**

Registration is required. To register, visit [www.briarbush.org](http://www.briarbush.org) or call (215) 887-6603. Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

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**Magic Mornings**

*2-5-year-olds with adult*

Hey, toddlers! Bring your favorite adult for walks, animal encounters, activities, and more! Each week features a new theme; register for one day per week.

**Day:** Tues, Wed, Thur, or Fri (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 10:30am-11:30am

**Cost per Session:**
- Participant: $12.50
- Additional child in same household: $7.50
- Abington Resident: $11.25
- Additional child in same household: $6.75
- FOBB Member: $10.00
- Additional child in same household: $6.00

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**Nature Pioneers**

*4-6-year-olds*

Children can join us on their own for age appropriate activities, crafts, games, animal encounters, and more! Each week features a new theme; register for one day per week.

**Day:** Wed or Thur (See chart for dates.)

**Time:** 1:00pm-2:30pm

**Cost per Session:**
- Participant: $15.00
- Abington Resident: $13.50
- FOBB Member: $12.00

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**Storybook Trail**

*Children of All Ages*

Visit the Briar Bush trail all summer long to read an extra sweet book by Rick Chrustowski. Find out why bees behave the way they do and learn more about the waggle dance too!

Remember to look for bees along the way. If you spy any, leave them be so that they can make honey for you and me!
Children’s Programs

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603.
Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

Woodland Explorers
Grades K-5

Connect with fellow nature lovers in Briar Bush’s Woodland Explorers After-School Club! Children will experience the wonders of their favorite backyard nature center through live animal encounters, guided hikes, nature play, crafts, and more.

Day: Tues (See chart for dates.)
Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm
Cost per Session:
- Participant: $15.00
- Abington Resident: $13.50
- FOBB Member: $12.00

School’s Out, Get Outside!
Grades K-5

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. Be sure to pack a lunch, snacks, water bottle, and full change of clothes.

Day: Select Holidays (See chart for dates.)
Time:
- Full-Day Session: 8:30am-3:30pm
- Half-Day Session: 1:00pm-3:30pm
- After-Care Session: 3:30pm-5:30pm
Cost per Session:
- Full-Day:
  - Participant: $75.00
  - Abington Resident: $67.50
  - FOBB Member: $60.00
- Half-Day:
  - Participant: $30.00
  - Abington Resident: $27.00
  - Briar Bush Member: $24.00
- After-Care: $12.00

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Programs for All Ages

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603. Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

Hot S’more Nights

All Ages

Bring your family and friends to Briar Bush 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 is required.)

Date and Time: Select Wednesdays in July & August from 7:00pm-8:30pm
Cost: $9.00/participant; $6.00/FOBB Member

Creepy Crawlies - Wednesday, July 5, 2023
Some have six legs, some have eight, and some have many, many legs - they are the creatures that creep in the night! See some of Briar Bush’s insects and their relatives up close before heading out on the trails for a creepy crawly scavenger hunt.

Woodland Fairies and Gnomes - Wednesday, July 12, 2023
Welcome to the enchanting Briar Bush forest filled with wonder and excitement! On this night, help create a fairy and gnome village with items that Mother Nature has provided. Hear the tale of the Briar Bush fairies, meet some woodland creatures, and hopefully catch a glimpse of a fairy or gnome!

Wizards and Potions - Wednesday, July 19, 2023
Discover the magic of nature and become a wizard of the Briar Bush forest. Create your own magic wand. Meet Briar Bush’s resident creepy crawlies and search for some on the trails. Create your own magical pet, like a rat, owl, or lizard, with natural materials. Learn about the magical properties of plants and other forms of nature around you. Wands at the ready!

Give Me Some (Outer) SPACE! - Wednesday, July 26, 2023
Constellations and Moon Sand and Aliens, oh my! Join some of our stellar educators as we journey through our solar system and beyond. Test your knowledge of astronomy, discover your astrology sign, design your own planet, and get to meet some animals whose ancestors were among the first animals in space!

When Animals Wake Up - Wednesday, August 2, 2023
Wake yourself up to the different schedules of animals! Meet several live examples of three types of animal alarm clocks: nighttime, daytime, and dawn/dusk. Come activate your curiosity learning about animal activity.

Oh, Deer! - Wednesday, August 9, 2023
It’s not very surprising to see deer in your neighborhood, but how much do you really know about them? Learn how deer communicate, where they go during the day, how their fur helps them to survive, and more through deer-themed games and activities!

Water Olympics - Wednesday, August 16, 2023
Put water to the test in Briar Bush’s Water Olympics! Perform experiments and activities that explore water’s extraordinary properties. Then, head to the pond to search for some amazing animals that deserve gold medals of their own.
Programs for Adults

Registration is required. To register, visit www.briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603.

Programs take place indoors and outdoors for varying durations of time dependent on the weather.

SAGE Sessions
Adults
Join Briar Bush for a discussion of interesting and relatable environmental topics.
Light refreshments will be served. Ample parking is available.

The Fungus Among-Us
Date and Time: Friday, May 12, 2023 from 1:00pm-2:00pm
Cost: $6.25; Abington Resident: $5.56; FOBB Member: $5.00

Mushrooms have been named one of the top trends for 2022, but cultures around the world have valued mushrooms as a source of nutrition and medicine for centuries. Join us this afternoon to learn more about mushroom biology, basic identification, and their importance to our ecosystems.

Adventures in the Field
Adults

Warblers at Briar Bush Nature Center
Date and Time: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 from 1:00pm-2:30pm (Rain Date: 5/11/2023)
Cost: $15.00; Abington Resident: $13.50; FOBB Member: $12.00

You don’t have to go far to find spring warblers in our area; Briar Bush is bursting with the songs of warblers at this time of year! Warblers teach us that there are always far more birds around us than you will ever notice with your eyes. A listening ear can reveal the identities of black-throated blue, black-and-white, and black-throated green warblers. We may also hear sparrows, vireos, thrushes, towhees, and other songbirds that call Briar Bush home in the summer. Join us as we put the Merlin app's song identification feature to the test!

Notes: This session will require a short walk of a few hundred feet on level trail, with an optional short hike on steeper, rougher terrain along the Briar Bush trails.

Save the Date
The Friends of Briar Bush’s 33rd Feather Our Nest Gala
Friday, September 29, 2023
At the Abington Art Center
Dinner & Drinks
Entertainment
Silent and Live Auctions

Plus, our online auction begins September 15, 2023!
Weekend Walks
All Ages

During our last event before summer, explore the pond and help conduct a pond study, complete with pond dipping and macroinvertebrate counts. You might even get to observe a turtle basking or a frog up close. Plus, Link, our resident red-eared slider, will be sure to make an appearance. It’s going to be a splash!

Day: Saturday, May 20, 2023 (Last for the season!)
Time: 9:30am-10:30am
Cost: FREE (Registration is not required.)

Nature Playdates
All Ages

Families are invited to join us at the BBNC Nature Playscape for unstructured nature play. Special play materials will be provided by BBNC staff and volunteers during each event.

Dates and Times: View the chart below.
Cost: FREE (Registration is not required.)

Call ahead during inclement weather.

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Call ahead during inclement weather.

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