

Susquehanna *Sierran*

September 2018



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EXPLORE, ENJOY, PROTECT THE PLANET

The Pollinator Garden, One Year Later

— Jim Taft

The Fall 2017 *Atlantic Sierran* carried a story [<https://atlantic2.sierraclub.org/content/confluence-park-partnering-community?scv=1513633542809>] describing the Susquehanna Group's pollinator garden project at Confluence Park, Binghamton. Susquehanna Group member and master gardener Sarah Hodder, with Mark Couchman, negotiated with City Parks & Recreation, and directed the project which has 20 participating volunteers. We can now show some before and after.



July 3, 2017



August 26, 2018



July 2018
visitor at
the
garden

To learn more and/or join the project contact Sarah, shaddow@stny.rr.com

Susquehanna Group

(All of Broome, & parts of Chenango,
Delaware, Otsego, Tioga Counties)

Chair	*Scott Lauffer (607)341-3746
Vice Chair	*Valdi Weiderpass
Secretary	Karen Boba
Treasurer	Kathy Cronin
Conservation Chair	*Douglas Gausman
Political Chair	*Allan Hochberg
Chapter Delegate	*Jim Taft
Newsletter Editors	*Chris Rounds, *Jim Taft
Membership Chairs	*Michael Frys, *Chris Harasta
Outing Chair	Erin Riddle
Tioga Coordinator	Erin Riddle
	* Member Executive Committee

To become a candidate for the Susquehanna Group Executive Committee for 2019,

submit a candidate statement of 150 words or less to PO Box 572 Endicott, NY 13760 by November 20, 2018, or email to the Nominating Chair. The Chair will be identified by October 16 via a notification to all members with an email address on file. The Nominating Committee will create a slate of candidates by the end of November 2018, and ballots will be mailed with the December 2018 Newsletter.

PO Box 572 Endicott NY 13760
<https://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/susquehanna>



Typical Susquehanna Group monthly meeting, generally the 3rd Tuesday, 7:30pm at Central United Methodist Church, 17 Nanticoke Ave, Endicott . Club members meet, do a little Group business, learn from experts, discuss, snack.

Essay: A Planet That Was Never Meant To Be – Scott Lauffer

I felt grief when I read it, hit me hard, The planet in 2070, heated and damaged. Unrecognizable in many places. Coastlines submerged, the worst imaginable.

Populations, human and animal, will suffer, many won't survive. I fear for them; they did not create this. These are our future generations.

I suffer from survivor's guilt, knowing I won't see the worst. I burned fossil fuels most of my life. My addiction gave me a good life. I wish I could turn back time and do it right.

Those coming after, will not have it so good. They face catastrophe, ruin, Their world will be unkind, grim, A fight for survival, not so pleasant. I hope it won't be as bad as I fear.

I am sorry to my children and grand children, they depended on my generation. We failed them, passing on the chaos to come. This is not the planet they should inherit: a planet that was never meant to be.

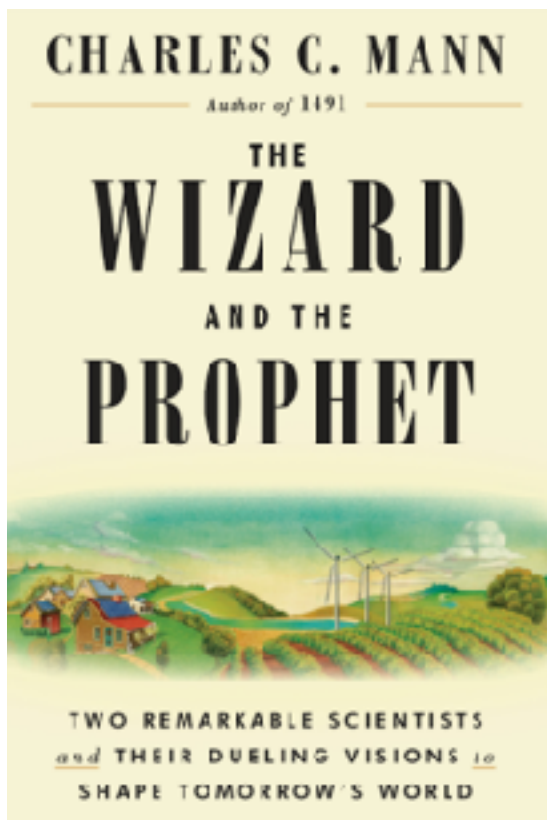
Chris Rounds' Book Corner:

The Wizard and the Prophet, by Charles C. Mann
Knopf, 2018



The author begins with a question: How are we going to support 10 billion people by mid-century without destroying the planet? The question haunted his two protagonists, William Vogt and Norman Borlaug. The often conflicting answers they provided, he argues, still drive the conversation among environmentalists and plant scientists decades after their deaths.

William Vogt, the 'prophet' of the title, might fairly be called the father of environmentalism. His argument was simple: dominant species rule the world until they eat themselves out of house and home...their very dominance leads to their downfall. He urged us to learn to live within the limits set by our environment. We need to leave room for other creatures.



Norman Borlaug, perhaps the more familiar of the two, was the father of the 'Green Revolution.' Working in Mexico in the years following World War II, he initiated the development of wheat varieties reliant on irrigation and fertilizer that dramatically increased productivity. The same strategy, when applied to rice, had comparable results. Starvation, which seemed inevitable as the world's population exploded, was avoided. Borlaug thumbed his nose at Vogt's prophecies of doom. For a while, the wizards seemed to have the upper hand. But soon enough the true costs of technological fixes emerged as the techniques Borlaug championed led to soil impoverishment, water pollution by fertilizer runoff, and the domination of agriculture by a few powerful corporations. Farmers were pushed off the land and the size of farms exploded. Cities became choked with displaced farm workers.

When I first picked up this book, I was skeptical; asking readers to choose between two extreme positions too often leads to over-simplification and false choices. Mann avoids this trap by acknowledging, early on, that Vogt and Borlaug represent different points on a spectrum. As with John Muir and Gifford Pinchot on forestry more than a century ago, these hard-working scientists were describing different parts of the same elephant. Vogt's indifference to scientific and technological creativity would have doomed millions to starvation. Borlaug's indifference to the downsides of technological innovation while trusting the free market to choose winners sacrificed the complex ecology of soils along with the delicate balance of rural life.

From his starting point with Vogt and Borlaug, Mann deftly explores four central, classical topics in some detail: Earth, Water, Fire and Air. He asks the reader to apply lenses provided by both the wizard and prophet to each, and concludes by looking at the futures we face. Mann does not offer easy solutions. He challenges the reader to think outside the boxes created by Vogt and Borlaug.

Atlantic Chapter Info – Jim Taft

Sierra Club was founded 1892 in California by Scottish immigrant John Muir. In 1950 the Atlantic Chapter became the first chapter outside California and initially encompassed most of the east coast. Over time additional eastern chapters were formed and Atlantic Chapter territory shrunk to New York State. Our chapter now has over 50,000 members, and an annual budget of about \$500,000. Staff include a full-time conservation director and a full-time chapter coordinator. There are plans to hire a 3rd person.

As with our local Group, the Chapter is governed by an Executive Committee (ExCom). It is made up of delegates from the 11 Groups, and 9 at-large members elected by all of us in the Chapter (the Fall 2018 *Atlantic Sierran* publication will run candidates' statements and provide voting instructions).

Committees

Administrative committees govern Chapter organization, finances, etc.. In addition, Conservation Committees include:

Adirondacks	Air Quality
Beyond Fossil Gas & Oil	Biodiversity
Carbon Tax	Clean Water
Climate Crisis	Energy
Environmental Education	Environmental Justice
Farm & Food	Indian Point Task Force
Hudson River	Great Lakes
Nuclear	Open Space/Sprawl
Population, Environment & Consumption	Sterling Forest/Highlands
Sustainable Forestry	Toxics
Transportation	Westchester Airport
Wetlands	Wildlife & Wilderness
Zero Waste	Water Sentinels

Each committee provides an opportunity for Chapter members to learn more about specific issues and to work with other members to influence research, public education and public policy. The Chapter's ExCom approves committee rosters. Committee information and contact info can be found at: <https://atlantic2.sierraclub.org/conservation>



Teddy Roosevelt with Sierra Club founder John Muir, Yosemite CA, 1906

UPDATE: Hope for Hemlocks – Douglas Gausman

'*Hope for Hemlocks*' in the June 2018 *Sierran* discussed possible biocontrol of the invading Hemlock Woolly Adelgid fly (*Adelges tsugae*) which is killing local eastern hemlock trees. The Nature Conservancy, Cornell University, and NY DEC together are testing biological control by various predators which might stop or slow the HWA invasion. Two potential controls have been identified: silver fly (*diptera chamaemyiidae*) and the beetle (*laricobius nigrinis*)—pictured at right. These insects are from the Pacific Northwest where they have controlled HWA infestations.

Silver flies were released at 10 sites in New York this spring and have become established at all sites. The beetles were carefully raised in a lab at Cornell this summer, successfully emerged from the pupal stage in August, and are feeding hungrily on stored HWA-infested hemlock branches. The next step is to release the beetles at control sites in New York forests this fall. The release is scheduled for the fall because HWA is not active during the summer. Hopefully this promising collaboration will successfully limit the HWA destruction of our native Eastern hemlock trees.



Exploring Stream Biology

— Chris Harasta

Editor: Susquehanna Group's Chris Harasta reports on the Club's joint project with the Waterman Center.

This child-oriented educational event at African Road Park on July 28 was open to the public. Chris Audette of the Waterman Center and I co-hosted. We had a great turnout, around 12 children with their parents along with a few adults without children. The weather was perfect and the water of Willow Run Creek was just high enough for good sampling. We discussed (1) how to do proper macro-invertebrate sampling and (2) the importance of citizen involvement in these types of studies. Everyone got to go shin-deep in the stream, nets in hand, and learn about healthy stream ecosystems. I believe the most important take-away of programs like this is getting kids out there learning about and enjoying nature. That's exactly what happened!



AUDUBON 30th SEASON HAWKWATCH BEGINS

— Chris Rounds with Andy Mason

The annual southbound migration of birds through the upper Susquehanna region and the Catskills has begun, and with it comes the start of the local Audubon Society's Hawkwatch at the group's wildlife sanctuary on Franklin Mountain near Oneonta.

This season marks the 30th consecutive year of counting raptors at the site, according to Andy Mason, co-president of the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society. The hawk watch is one of the prime spots in the eastern U.S. for observing some species in the fall. "We get excellent numbers of red-tailed hawks and golden eagles," said Mason. "Franklin Mountain is always near the top among hawk watches in the Appalachian region for those birds." The first wave of hawks passes in the period between September 15 and 25, and consists primarily of broad-winged hawks.



Broad Winged Hawk

Franklin Mountain's reputation is well established in hawk watching circles, said Mason. "We get 20 or 25 people on the mountain, particularly on a good day for golden eagles--a rare bird in the East," he said. The peak for this large species is late October through November

The Audubon sanctuary provides a panoramic view of the Susquehanna Valley and Oneonta--another draw in the fall, said Mason. Visitors are welcomed to the site, which is staffed nearly every day through mid-December. The best conditions for raptor migration are north or northwest winds, often the day or two following passage of a cold front. Warm clothing is recommended, especially later in the season as the location is exposed and often colder than anticipated.

The DOAS sanctuary can be reached by following the signs from Southside Dr. and Swart Hollow Rd. in Oneonta. For further information on the Franklin Mountain Hawkwatch, including directions, contact Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, salothomas@gmail.com; or Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net, or visit www.franklinmt.org.

Recommended Reading

Mike Frys: From the Organic Consumers Association, "Monsanto to Pay \$289.2M in Landmark Roundup Lawsuit Verdict" <https://www.organicconsumers.org/blog/monsanto-roundup-trial-verdict>

Scott Lauffer: : From AccuWeather, "2017 Shatters Global Climate Records..." <https://www.accuweather.com/en/weather-news/2017-shatters-global-climate-records-including-highest-sea-levels-hottest-year-without-el-nino/70005662>

Outing Report: Grey Towers – Scott Lauffer



Six of us visited Grey Towers in Milford, PA on Saturday July 7, in the scenic Delaware River valley. Grey Towers was the primary home of Gifford Pinchot, America's first forester and founder of the US Forest Service. The site is now administered by the Forest Service and open to the public. We toured the many gardens and the house where a guide provided us a glimpse into the life of Pinchot and his family. The library was especially impressive. We also hiked into a forest at the upper part of the grounds where there was an exhibit of the Yale Summer School of Forestry.

I was struck by the dedication to public service that the Pinchot family practiced. As a family they advanced social, political and conservation ideals.

Pinchot is known as one of the nation's foremost conservationists. He found himself at odds with John Muir however over the protection of natural resources. Pinchot's conservation beliefs centered on managing natural resources as a form of protection while Muir advocated more of a wilderness approach—i.e. leaving them alone. Our nation developed both managed public lands and wilderness, as the systems of each man found their way into public policy.



For more information on the site, which is worth visiting, see <http://www.greytowers.org/grey-towers/> Check out their special events.

Coming Events

General Meetings are open to all and held at Central United Methodist Church, 17 Nanticoke Avenue, Endicott, 7:30 PM on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, with the exception of July and August.

November 3 Outing to Franklin Mountain for **Hawk Watch** (see page 6). Rain date November 4. Contact Chris Rounds, chrisrounds45@gmail.com



Susquehanna Group
PO Box 572
Endicott NY 13760