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CWH extends a warm welcome to those of you who joined us in 2005. Thank you for your support!

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CHESAPEAKE WILDLIFE HERITAGE

Habitat works

The newsletter about restoring and creating habitat for wildlife
Winter 2006

Habitat Works is published by Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to creating, restoring and protecting wildlife habitat and establishing a more sustainable agriculture, through direct action, education and research, in partnership with public and private landowners. We welcome your comments and contributions.

385 Acre Farm Protected in Dorchester County

By Diane Chasse, MET Acting Local Land Trust Assistance Coordinator
Reprinted with permission.

The Maryland Environmental Trust is pleased to have assisted the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage in its purchase of the 385-acre farm in Dorchester County from the Willey family. The farm is the third that the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage has purchased and the second time that MET has assisted with the purchase through its Land Trust Grant Fund—a no-interest loan program. The CWH is a nonprofit organization specializing in wetlands restoration and is based out of Easton, Maryland. For this property, as with previous purchases, CWH will select the areas of the farm that are least suitable for agricultural cultivation and in their place create wildlife habitats, such as wetlands, grasslands and woodlands. Restoration projects of this nature often utilize the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. As a condition of the $400,000 loan, MET receives a conservation easement that protects the restored areas and restricts development on the property.

Richard Pritzlaff, the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage representative who was responsible for the land purchase, said of the project, "Working to restore and protect Maryland's natural resources is very important to me. I believe that if we do not preserve our nation's wildlife habitats, several wildlife species will be irrevocably lost and our ability to live sustainably on the planet will be diminished. It is satisfying to know that the wildlife habitat of the Willey farm will be secured by the conservation easement."

The property is located in Cambridge, along scenic Griffith Neck Road, adjacent to over 50,000 acres of protected land that makes up the Fishing Bay Wildlife Management Area and the Blackwater Wildlife Refuge. It has 130 acres of forest (habitat for Forest Interior Dwelling Birds) and 65 acres of tidal wetlands (habitat for herons, egrets, rails and waterfowl). The protection of this property will serve to protect the water quality ofChesapeake Bay.

(continues on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources recently honored the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage with the Conservationist of the Year Award. The CWH earned this distinction through its accomplishments in 2004, which included the restoration of 110 acres of wetlands, the creation of over 200 acres of warm season grass meadows, and the introduction of 30 acres of woodlands. The Heritage also managed 6,000 acres of Canada Goose Sanctuaries and educated 750 landowners and farmers about their role in restoring and protecting wildlife habitat.

"The folks of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage are restoring Maryland, one property at a time," said MET Director Nick Williams. "Their devotion and steadfast determination for restoring and protecting Maryland's landscape is inspiring."

Note: Please see page 5 to read about another Biophilia partnership.

"We can never have enough of nature."

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU, WALDEN, 1854

PHOTO BY DAVID JUDD

Praying Mantis finds a meal.

Wildlife Profile: Chimney Swifts
Chaetura pelagica

Andi Pupke

Every year during the spring and summer months, large flocks of Chimney Swifts have dazzled and bewildered those who watch their acrobatic flights. Descriptively called flying cigars, bows and arrows, chimney sweeps or chimney swallows, no matter what you call them there is no other bird quite like them. The Chimney Swift is one of four regularly occurring species of swifts found in North America and the most common one found east of the Rockies.

Chimney Swifts were originally residents of the woodlands of North America mainly east of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. As European settlers began their movement across the continent, old-growth forests were cleared for agriculture, and much of the traditional swift habitat was destroyed. Chimney Swifts actually expanded their range during this time as they readily adapted to the brick and stone chimneys popping up in their natural habitats. They could safely nest during the summer months without being harmed by fires.

Adult Chimney Swifts are 5 inches in length with a wingspan of 12 - 12 3/4 inches. The identical males and females are sooty gray to bluish black with a lighter gray throat. Their feet, legs and tail have evolved to allow them to cling effortlessly to textured vertical surfaces when not in flight. This adaptation makes them unable to perch in the familiar songbird fashion and may give the mistaken impression that Chimney Swifts have small, weak feet. They are members of the family *Apodidae* which literally means "without feet." When forced to rest unnaturally on horizontal surfaces, Chimney Swifts assume a more or less prone position and seem rather helpless because they are unable to jump or stand. In reality, their feet and legs are very strong.

The feet and legs of Chimney Swifts are unusual in that they are covered with delicate smooth skin rather than scales. Chimney Swifts' feet are anisodactyle (three toes forward and one toe back), as are the feet of songbirds, but the swifts are able to shift the hallux (back toe) forward for a better grip.

Perhaps the most distinctive physical feature of Chimney Swifts is their tail. The central shaft of each of the ten tail feathers ends in a sharp, exposed point or spine that props against the vertical surface as they rest. The only other bird in North America to have such a tail is the smaller Vaux's Swift.

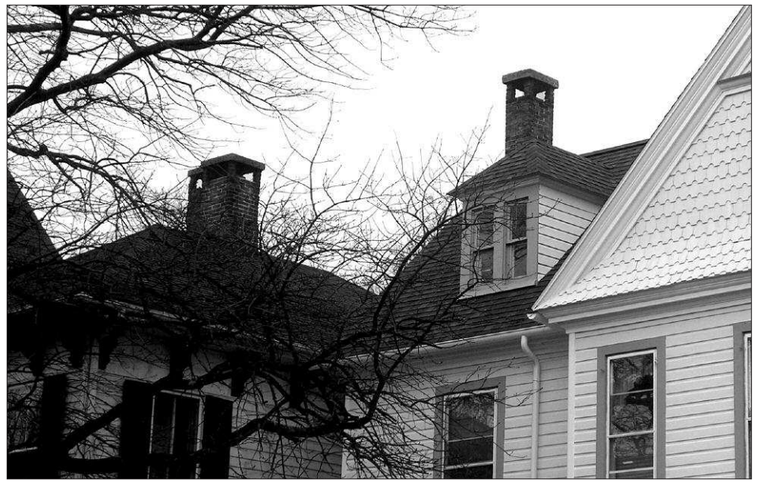
Speed, agility and superior eyesight of the Chimney Swifts are well complemented by their specialized mouth. The tiny bill has an impressive gape that enables it to scoop flying insect prey from the air with ease.

The staccato or batlike flight when flapping their wings is due to short, relatively massive upper wing bones. Extremely rapid wing beats create an optical illusion which makes the wings appear to flap alternately instead of simultaneously--an aerodynamic impossibility!

One of the most intriguing behaviors of Chimney Swifts can be easily spotted at dusk in the early fall. At the end of the breeding season, the swifts' communal instincts peak prior to fall migration. They congregate in flocks of hundreds and even thousands at suitable roost sites. In Maryland, this spectacle usually occurs in September and lasts only for a short period of time. During this spectacular aerial ballet, swifts are most often patrolling the skies for mosquitos and the other small flying insects that constitute the majority of their diet. A sharp chippering or ticking call accompanies the swifts' flight.

Although Chimney Swifts can withstand a few early cool snaps, they will usually ride south on the first major cold front that blows through in the fall. Chimney Swifts winter in the upper Amazon basin of eastern Peru and return to the southern US in mid-March and arrive in Canada by May.

Chimney Swifts collect all of their nesting material on the fly. They approach the desired dead tree twig, pine needle, or other available nesting material, pause to grasp the material with their feet and then fly on. The bird will then transfer the stick to its mouth and head off to the nesting



The acrobatic flight of Chimney Swifts is frequently seen in the skies over the town of Easton, where they can find shelter in chimneys such as these.

site. At the nesting wall the swift will add saliva to the wall and then place the stick in the saliva. The saliva hardens and the birds continue to add sticks to the nest until they form a structure that can accommodate their eggs. There is some evidence that cooperative breeding occurs within Chimney Swift colonies, which means more than two birds of the same species provide care in rearing the young from one nest.

Chimney Swifts, like many of our Neotropical migrants, are declining in numbers throughout North America. We should all be concerned about their plight and do whatever we can to encourage their survival. They do not require acres of unspoiled wilderness, expansive wetlands or complicated wildlife management plans. They only require one square foot of unused column like our chimneys during the summer when we don't need them… and a little tolerance.

During modern times most people are intolerant of Chimney Swifts so they cap their chimneys, preventing Chimney Swifts from using them as roost sites or nesting sites. Also, insecticides that are heavily used by many landowners have a grave effect on Chimney Swifts as the flying insects they consume and feed their young are often times tainted by sprays used near nesting and feeding areas.

What can you do to help Chimney Swifts? If you have a masonry or clay flue-tile chimney, keep the top open and the damper closed during the nesting season. Since metal chimneys do not provide a rough surface for swifts, they should be permanently capped to prevent birds and other wildlife from being trapped. Have your chimney cleaned before the Chimney Swifts return from their winter home in South America in March. You may even want to construct Chimney Swift towers near your home.

If you have questions about Chimney Swift towers or would like to report a roost in your neighborhood, please call us at 410-822-5100.

Board Member Profile—John Mathis

Susanna Scallion

In September of 2004 we welcomed to the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage Board of Directors, Eastern Shore resident, John Mathis. Mr. Mathis is Vice President and Associate General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs of Edison Mission Energy. The company is a worldwide developer, owner and operator of electric generating facilities and is also an active marketer of electric power in the United States, Europe and Asia. Prior to joining EME, Mr. Mathis had been engaged in the private practice of law in Washington continuously since 1974, primarily in the field of energy regulation and project development.

Over the course of his career, Mr. Mathis has had the opportunity to represent a wide variety of companies in various sectors of the energy industry, including integrated oil companies, natural gas producers and pipeline companies, and electric utilities and independent power companies, as well as others affected by federal and state regulation of energy.

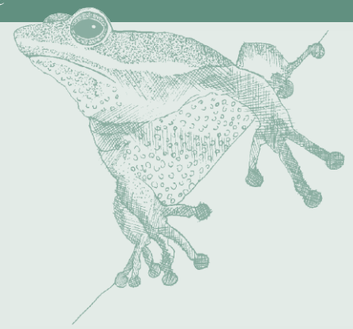
However, prior to his Harvard Law School days, John enjoyed a childhood of growing up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana along a cypress and hardwood swamp. Playing in the trees, watching the birds and hiking kicked off a life-long amateur interest in the outdoors. When asked how he found the Eastern Shore he speaks of the languid and intertwined land and waters of the Eastern Shore that remind him of the terrain of his childhood and youth.

When coming on board with CWH, John noted, "I am looking forward to being able to reclaim this part of who I am. In the five years in which my wife, Karen and I, have owned property on the Eastern Shore, I feel that this part of my psyche has been rediscovered, and these primal interests rekindled. The opportunity to become active in an organization promoting these values and preserving the natural beauties of this unique part of the world is something I find very exciting."

Ask Andi

Questions & Answers about wildlife by Andi Pupke

PHOTO BY SCOTT CAMAZINE



Q: *Every fall I have an infestation of ladybugs in my home. Why does this happen and are they doing damage in my house?*

A: The ladybugs clustering around buildings in the fall are most likely the Multi-colored Asian lady beetle. They are looking for overwintering sites. They will cluster around buildings during the cool nights and become active during the sunny, warm days of the fall. Most native ladybugs overwinter as adults by hibernating in large groups often under leaf litter and other debris.

The Multi-colored Asian lady beetle is a native of Asia and has readily adapted to its new home. As with most ladybugs, it is a highly beneficial predator of pest insects, especially aphids.

The fall invasions are relatively new to this country, the first reports of large invasions in the US were in the early 1990s. The first field populations in the U.S. were found in 1988. Since then the beetle has expanded its range to include much of the U.S. and parts of Canada. From the 1960s through the 1990s, the U.S. Department of Agriculture attempted to establish the Asian lady beetle to control agricultural pests. Large numbers of the beetles were released in several states throughout the country. Some scientists believe that the current infestations in the U.S. originated not from the intentional releases, but from beetles accidentally transported into New Orleans on a freighter from Japan.

Adult Asian lady beetles are oval, convex, and about 1/4 inch long. Their color can vary widely from tan to orange to red. They often have several black spots on the wing covers, although on some beetles the spots may be indistinct or entirely absent. Multi-spotted individuals tend to be females while those with few or no spots tend to be males. Most Asian ladybugs have a small, dark "M" or "W" shaped marking on the whitish area behind the head.

Studies have shown that Asian lady beetles are attracted to illuminated surfaces. They tend to congregate on the sunnier, southwest sides of buildings. Homes that are shaded from the afternoon sun are less likely to attract beetles. House color or type of construction is less of a factor for attraction than surface contrast.

They may be a nuisance, however they are not breeding and therefore not harmful to you or your home, unless they are crushed in which case their secretions can stain rugs and furniture. Using chemicals such as insecticide foggers are an extreme measure. Although aerosol-type foggers will kill beetles that have amassed on ceilings and walls in living areas, it will not prevent more beetles from emerging shortly after the room is aerated. For this reason use of these materials is not considered a good solution to long-term management of the problem. An effective alternative to chemicals are light traps which provide a trapping system for collecting flying insects, especially flying beneficial insects where they have become a nuisance. The insects can be collected alive for later release.

Putting Stock in Wildlife

Donating appreciated stock is an excellent way to support CWH, the Bay and our wildlife. This type of donation is very simple and allows you to take advantage of tax laws to increase your gift to CWH and reduce your taxes. You can donate the full value of the stock transfer from your taxes and avoid paying capital gains. Please call our office and talk with Chris Pupke to learn more about this easy method to support CWH!

Grants Received for CWH Wood Duck Program

Nearby a CWH Wood Duck box, photographer David Judd of Delmarva Photo captured the amazing beauty of the Wood Duck.

We would like to thank the Snyder Foundation for Animals, Fair Play Foundation, Waterfowl Festival, Nathan Foundation, and an anonymous donor for over $32,500 in grant funds for our 2005/06 Wood Duck Box Program. The Wood Duck Box program has installed over 8,400 boxes since 1989 to provide suitable nesting habitat for these beautiful cavity nesting ducks. Each year an estimated 25,000 Wood Ducks fledge from these boxes. The great success of this program is a result of the very strong support of these foundations and our members. Thank you so much for your enduring support!

Visit our website at: www.cheswildlife.org

Waltersdorf-Henson Campaign Challenge

Geordie Newman

Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage has been selected by the Community Foundation of Washington County to participate in the Waltersdorf Henson Campaign Challenge. This challenge was created by the John M. Waltersdorf Family and the Richard Henson Foundation for local non-profits to establish an endowment for each individual organization. The John Waltersdorf family and Henson Foundation each pledged $2,500,000 to be matched 1:1 by local organizations. This will create a $10,000,000 endowment program at the community foundation for a variety of Washington County nonprofit organizations.

CWH was accepted on June 30, 2005 into the endowment challenge and is charged with raising $100,000. There were a total of 16 organizations accepted. CWH was the only environmental organization invited to participate in the challenge. CWH will be allowed to use 5% of the endowment each year for habitat projects in Western Maryland while growing the endowment to create a firm level of support in Washington County.

Geordie Newman, Landowner Services Manager of the CWH's western Maryland branch (CWH-West) said, "We are very appreciative for this important opportunity to establish an endowment. We believe that CWH can provide a valuable and unique service to Washington County by protecting and preserving the rural heritage of the community."

This is a fantastic opportunity for the chosen non-profits to be able to better serve the Washington County community. Not only will non-profits benefit from the greatly needed financial help, but Washington County will benefit from the diverse services provided by the various organizations who were awarded the challenge.

If you are interested in making a donation to help CWH-West reach the $100,000 fundraising goal please contact Chris Pupke.

275 Acres Preserved in Sudlersville

The partnership between the Biophilia Foundation and Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage purchased Mudford Farm in Queen Anne's County. Like the Chic Farm described on the front page, the partnership will restore and protect wildlife habitat on the farm, then resell the property to a conservation investor.

Mudford Farm lies at the headwaters of the Chester River. Located near the town of Sudlersville, it consists of 275 acres, including 113 acres of woodlands. The wildlife habitat management plan for the property includes restoring 30 acres of wetlands, creating 20 acres of warm season grass meadows, and planting 20 acres of trees. This habitat will benefit wildlife and improve water quality in the Chester River.

The property will be placed in a conservation easement which will prevent the destruction of the wildlife habitat from development and protect the habitat from conversion to agriculture. Future farming on the property will be restricted to 90 acres of agricultural land.

CWH's Wildlife Habitat Ecologist/ Director Ned Gerber said, "This farm will provide habitat for wide diversity of wildlife, including waterfowl, turkeys and quail. But in addition to these popular game birds, other wildlife such Scarlet Tanagers, Grasshopper Sparrows and even tree frogs will benefit from our work. We are very grateful for the commitment of the Biophilia Foundation for making this extraordinary project possible."

For more information about the Mudford Farm, please call Richard Pritzlaff at 410-315-9876.sapeake Wildlife Heritage purchased Mudford Farm in Queen Anne's County. Like the Chic Farm described on the front page, the partnership will restore and protect wildlife habitat on the farm, then resell the property to a conservation investor.

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Let's Grow Wild

Susanna Scallion

For thousands of years, people struggled to maintain the boundaries between human and natural forces; to do so was often necessary to their survival. Western civilization in particular has been shaped by the belief that it is the right and duty of human beings to shape nature to better ends. Today few natural disasters can really threaten those of us in the industrialized nations. On a day-to-day basis, we are fairly safe from all but the most serious epidemics and climactic events; earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanoes, floods, plagues, perhaps a meteor. Yet we still cling to a mental model of civilization based on the practices of our ancestors, who hacked and plowed their way through a difficult wilderness. Overwhelming and controlling nature is not only the reigning trend, it has become an aesthetic preference. The hedges or borders of modern lawn sharply distinguish what is 'natural' from what is "civilized." In a city's landscape of asphalt, concrete, steel, and glass, nature's excess may be considered messy, even useless, something to be limited to a few carefully sculpted gardens and trees. What autumn leaves there are must be quickly gathered from the ground, placed in plastic bags, and landfilled or burned rather than composted. Instead of trying to optimize nature's abundance, we automatically try to get it out of the way. For many of us used to a culture of control, nature in its untamed state is neither a familiar nor a welcoming place.

Does this support wildlife?

—CRADLE TO CRADLE BY WILLIAM MC DONOUGH & MICHAEL BRAUNGART, PUBLISHED BY NORTH POINT PRESS.

The chapter of Cradle to Cradle this is borrowed from goes on to describe a woman who had a garden full of vegetables, herbs and wildlife but her town's legislators considered it 'too wild' and asked her to pay a fine until it was 'cleaned up.' Rather than succumbing to the request, the woman decided to continue growing the kind of garden she liked and decided to pay the fine year after year for the right to do so. Ten years later the garden received an award from the town for being one of the town's most beautiful gardens.

Over those ten years there was a shift in the accepted opinion about how yards within town limits should be maintained. *Imagine the fruits of such a shift on a large scale.*

Those of us writing or reading this newsletter, the general public and our public officials all know that the amount of wildlife habitat is declining due to development and the health of the Chesapeake Bay is in jeopardy. We also know that a large portion of Maryland's economy depends greatly on its natural resources. We could also say that most of us know of specific activities we all take part in which most likely damage our environment in one way or another. We as a people are beginning to realize that our ability to deal with the plight of our ecosystem is critical to our own health and well-being.

It never ceases to amaze me the endless acres of grass that we plant, water and fertilize each year, only to be cut short as soon as the water and fertilizer take hold to help the grass grow. Think of how we bag up leaves (natures own mulch) so the garbage collector can take them to the landfill. We then go to a home & garden center to spend money on shredded trees to put down as mulch. If an alien saw us go through this process season after season to cultivate our yards, he would laugh!

Imagine the fruits of a large scale shift in thinking about our own yards. What would happen if we stopped mowing just half of our lawn? What if we all dug up our ornamental plants and only used plants native to the region in which we live? What if we decided that tall elegant brown grasses bending in the breeze were far prettier than the nonnative short green grass that we never bother to walk around barefoot in anyway?

Much of the work of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage counters mainstream thinking. Uncontrolled IS beautiful, a tree's waste IS bounty, less IS more. At CWH we frequently ask ourselves how we can make people WANT the unprocessed, natural look of warm season grasses on their field edges to encourage songbirds and the almost forgotten quail. How can we make people WANT to convert a field of controlled, straight and neat rows of corn into a much more productive and profitable wetland with a diversity of plants of varying heights and textures, buzzing insects and a daily glance into the natural beauty of the UNcontrolled.

You would be shocked to know how many people think this idea is preposterous, but to CWH, the uncontrolled look makes every bit of sense. It invites wildlife. It cleans the Bay.

CWH has had much success with landowners willing to shift their thinking and we have been able to make many thousands of acres of land less controlled. The result is astounding. Songbirds, hawks, eagles, waterfowl, rabbits, frogs, dragonflies, butterflies and more grace the fields and skies above. Nearby waterways are cleaner because of it. Lives of inquisitive children and adults have been changed by seeing the fruits of a shift in thinking. **What could be more beautiful?** *Imagine the results to our environment, the Bay, its wildlife, and each of our lives if such a shift in thinking happened on a large scale.*

Or does this?

"Taking an eco-effective approach to design might result in an innovation so extreme that it resembles nothing we know, or it might merely show us how to optimize a system already in place. It's not the solution itself that is necessarily radical but the shift in perspective with which we begin, from the old view of nature as something to be controlled to a stance of engagement."

—CRADLE TO CRADLE BY WILLIAM MC DONOUGH & MICHAEL BRAUNGART, PUBLISHED BY NORTH POINT PRESS.

CWH invites you to 'engage' nature on your own property. Give us a call!

Thank you for your Annual Appeal support!

Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage would like to thank our members for their support in 2005! Membership and Annual Appeal donations for 2005 totaled $204,760, up from $176,596 in 2004. Thank you for your confidence in our ability to do the best we can with your dollars for wildlife habitat.

Donations from our valued members help to support a wide range of projects designed to protect our Bay's natural heritage. The bulk of our revenues, derived from private foundation and government grants and project income fees, are usually restricted to the specific habitat project for which they were requested. Unrestricted contributions from our members are crucial to CWH so we can match grant funds, cover costs of underfunded habitat projects as well as continue to pay staff salaries, utilities, etc. Thank you for your support so we can continue to speak up for wildlife!

☐ *Yes! I would like to join with Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage to help build and preserve wildlife habitat.*

I am enclosing $ _____ as my tax deductible contribution.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

☐ Please send me information on the Planned Giving Program.

Please make your check payable to Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, or charge to:

☐ Visa ☐ M/C Account # _____

Signature _____ Amount $ _____ Expiration Date _____

☐ $30	Individual Habitat Guardian
☐ $50	Family Habitat Guardian
☐ $100	Habitat Protector
☐ $250	Habitat Sponsor
☐ $500	Habitat Benefactor
☐ $1,000	Habitat Conservator
☐ $2,500	Habitat Steward
☐ Other	_____

Please mail to: Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, P.O. Box 1745, Easton, MD 21601

CWH is a private nonprofit organization designated 501(c)(3) by the IRS. A financial statement is available upon request.

CORPORATE MATCHING: Don't forget corporate matching contributions. The company you work for or are retired from may be able to match your donation to CWH. Check with your personnel office to obtain a matching gift form. Mail the form to us along with your tax-deductible donation. We do the rest.