

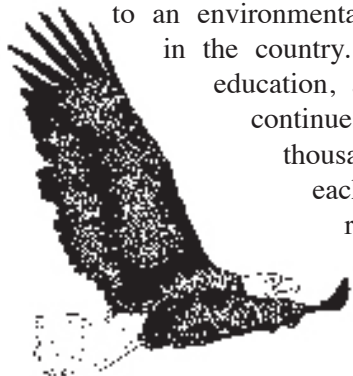
History

In 2003, the Wildlife Information Center (now known as the Lehigh Gap Nature Center) purchased three private properties on the Kittatinny Ridge including land on the west side of Lehigh Gap and on the north slope of the ridge to the PA Turnpike tunnel. We named the combined 750-acre property the *Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge* and opened it to the public for hiking, birding, paddling and other forms of outdoor recreation.

While part of the refuge included forested slopes, wetlands, ponds, and riverside habitat, more than half was barren -- contaminated by air pollution from 80 years of zinc smelting in Palmerton, PA. This part of the land was part of a federal Superfund site and was contaminated by high levels of zinc, cadmium, and lead in the soil.

In partnership with U.S. EPA, the site was re-vegetated with native prairie grasses and the moonscape that had been present for half a century was converted to a thriving grassland community. Along with our conservation work, an environmental education program was established and a network of researchers has developed. We work with more than a dozen colleges and host classes from pre-K to university graduate students for educational field trips. We also have hosted numerous students (including our own Naturalists Club members) doing ecological research on the refuge. A milestone was reached in 2010 when we opened our new Osprey House Visitor and Education Center building.

This is the first Superfund site converted to an environmental education center in the country. Our conservation, education, and research work continues and we welcome thousands of visitors each year for outdoor recreation. All of this was accomplished by volunteers!



BECOME A LEHIGH GAP NATURE CENTER MEMBER

The Lehigh Gap Nature Center is a member-supported organization -- we invite you to join to help support our environmental education and wildlife conservation work through your membership donation and as a volunteer. The Center is a 501(3)(c) IRS approved nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible for federal income tax purposes.

Membership Categories

- Friend of the Refuge..... \$25
(Friends receive semi-annual newsletter; all other categories receive *Wildlife Activist* magazine.)
- Individual \$40
- Family \$50
- Sustaining \$100
- Contributing \$250
- Patron \$500
- Golden Eagle Donor \$1,000

I prefer not to be a member, but here is my tax-deductible donation of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City/St./Zip _____

Email _____

Please make check payable to "Lehigh Gap Nature Center" and mail this form and check to:

Lehigh Gap Nature Center
P.O. Box 198 Slatington, PA 18080
610-760-8889 lgnc@ptd.net
<http://lgnc.org>

LEHIGH GAP NATURE CENTER



**Protecting Wildlife
and Habitat through
Conservation,
Education and
Research**

Membership Application

www.lgnc.org

Lehigh Gap Nature Center

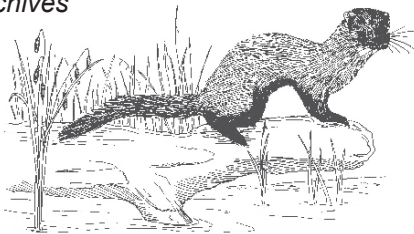
Mission

Our mission is to *preserve wildlife and habitat through conservation, education, and research, for the benefit of the earth and all its inhabitants.*

The Center advocates preservation of biodiversity and encourages wildlife observation and photography, and ecotourism. We own and operate the Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge, which is open to the public. Our office and headquarters are located at the Osprey House in Lehigh Gap, between Palmerton and Slatington, Pennsylvania. Our efforts include:



- *Re-vegetating our barren mountain with native grasses and enhancing that grassland habitat*
- *Environmental education programs for pre-K to university graduate students*
- *Conducting natural history education programs for all age groups*
- *Providing for outdoor recreation that does not impair the natural resources of the refuge*
- *The annual Bake Oven Knob Hawk Count and other citizen science research projects*
- *Advocating for protection of the Kittatinny Ridge*
- *Publishing Wildlife Activist, Lehigh Gap Update, and American Hawkwatcher*
- *Presenting public programs for community groups and service clubs*
- *Working with our academic partners to facilitate scientific research and maintaining an intern program for undergraduate and graduate students*
- *Monitoring our habitats and managing them for high quality and maximum native biodiversity*
- *Maintaining a wildlife research library and archives*



Education

Environmental education is a top priority at Lehigh Gap Nature Center. Our publications educate and inform our members and other readers. Educational displays and interpretive signage at the Osprey House, in the gardens, and along the trails provide information for anyone visiting us or passing through. Our formal educational programs include:



- *Lehigh Gap Environmental Ed. Partnership with area school districts and colleges*
- *Teacher education and training*
- *Young Ecologists Summer Camp*
- *Wonderful World of Wildlife Reading Program*
- *Color of Nature Diversity Program*
- *Internship Program*
- *Public wildlife walks, workshops, and programs*
- *Our website, publications, and brochures*

Conservation

Our conservation efforts are focused locally on the Kittatinny Ridge in eastern Pennsylvania. Conservation opportunities we face include:

- *Ecological restoration and habitat enhancement at Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding areas*
- *Monitoring and adaptively managing the habitats of Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge*
 - *Monitoring and protecting the ecological integrity of the Kittatinny Ridge and Raptor Migration Corridor*
 - *Promoting wildlife-friendly habitat gardens using native plants when possible; conservation of rare native PA plants*
 - *Promoting sound land use*
 - *Providing public education and testimony on environmental issues*
 - *Advocating preservation of biodiversity with all its implications*



Wildlife and Ecological Research

Lehigh Gap Nature Center staff, citizen science volunteers, and our partners conduct original wildlife and ecological research such as:

- *Ecological research on habitats and succession on our refuge*
- *The Bake Oven Knob Hawk Count*
- *Biodiversity Surveys on the Refuge*
- *Habitat Gardens Project*
- *Bake Oven Knob Area Winter Bird Survey*
- *Lehigh Gap Area Feeder Watch*
- *Encouraging and facilitating research by others*



Our ecological assessments (phases 1 and 2) provide a baseline for further research on succession and ecological processes. We have working relationships with ecologists, researchers from the Superfund process, and college and university faculty and staff members. Finally, interns and our Lehigh Gap Naturalists Club members conduct research projects on our Refuge.

Ecotourism and Recreation

In order to increase support for nature, Lehigh Gap Nature Center is an advocate for outdoor recreation and ecotourism that increases the public's appreciation for wildlife and open space. The use of the Lehigh Gap Wildlife Refuge in conjunction with outdoor recreation and heritage tourism opportunities involving the Lehigh River, Appalachian Trail, and the D&L Corridor hold vast potential for economic benefit to the surrounding communities. Refuge activities include:

- *Hiking, walking, biking (see Trail Map)*
- *Birding, botanizing, wildlife watching*
- *Nature photography*
- *Habitat gardening*
- *Self-guided nature trails*
- *Kayaking, canoeing, fishing in the Lehigh River*
- *Guided hikes and programs*
- *Interpretive signage, exhibits, and brochures.*

