



## Delaware Wild Lands' Board of Directors: *Carrie Lingo*



Delaware Wild Lands is growing and gaining momentum and we remain ever-vigilant about protecting, restoring, and caring for Delaware's highest quality resources. We take pride in our commitment to conservation and our pragmatic and enthusiastic approach to restoration. Our newest Board member is equally strong in her commitment to partnerships and conservation, displaying great tenacity and enthusiasm

for what she believes in. We are pleased to announce our newest Board member, teeming with energy and enthusiasm for all things Delaware: Carrie Lingo.

Born and raised in Sussex County, Delaware, Carrie is happy to call Delaware home. Early on, Carrie made an indelible and lasting mark in Delaware. A rising star on Cape Henlopen's field hockey team, Carrie quickly became known for her smart play, unwavering

commitment to success, tenacity on the field, and encouraging demeanor off the field. Following her collegiate field hockey career, Carrie was invited to represent the United States in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, multiple World Cup tournaments and Pan American games. In 2012, Carrie retired as captain of the USA Women's National Field Hockey Team and returned home to Jack Lingo Realtor, forming a dynamic real estate team with her husband, Murray Padgett.

Carrie now works diligently to fulfill the needs and dreams of her community in Sussex County, throughout the State and beyond. She serves on the Youth and Education Committee for Ducks Unlimited, is active with Delaware Ducks Unlimited, and runs Elite Connection Camps geared towards creating positive experiences for young athletes. Carrie is also a volunteer coach for the Cape Henlopen High School Field Hockey team and was inducted into the Delaware Sports Hall of Fame in 2015.

An avid outdoorswoman, Carrie enjoys barbeques and boating and was featured as a woman in hunting by Ducks Unlimited TV. Delaware Wild Lands looks forward to working with Carrie to engage younger audiences in conservation and restoration and continue to build productive partnerships that will help DWL leverage even more conservation and restoration of Delaware's most critical, iconic, and beautiful natural resources.



## How to give a donation to DWL

*Delaware Wild Lands relies on the support of those who are committed to achieving great conservation in the First State.*

Please support the work of Delaware Wild Lands with a tax-deductible contribution. Contributions can be submitted using the PayPal link on our website or by sending a check to our office.

[www.delawarewildlands.org](http://www.delawarewildlands.org)

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Delaware Wild Lands



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# DELAWARE WILD LANDS NEWS



*The meander of Blackbird Creek and northern boundary of DWL's Roberts Farm.*

## The Big Deal about DWL's Taylors Bridge Roberts Farm

*Another successful partnership with  
The Conservation Fund and Mt. Cuba Center*

The lands and waters surrounding Taylors Bridge -- a vibrant mix of coastal woodlands, freshwater ponds, working farmland, rolling fields and high quality tidal marshes -- provide habitat for abundant Wild Turkey, quail, migratory birds and waterfowl, and many other species of wildlife including mink! Protecting these lands and waters secures vibrant habitats, safeguards and improves air and water quality and ensures the long-term vitality of farms and forestlands...and advances a half-century investment in land protection that began with the proposed construction of the Shell Oil Refinery and Delaware's Coastal Zone Act of 1971

(see related article inside).

For more than 50 years, Delaware Wild Lands has strategically protected land in and around Taylors Bridge, which represents some of Delaware's most pristine and scenic upland and coastal resources.

**In partnership with The Conservation Fund and Mt. Cuba Center we proudly announce the acquisition of the Roberts Farm, which lies next to DWL's existing Taylors Bridge landholdings and the State of Delaware's Cedar Swamp Wildlife Management Area.**

*Continued on center spread...*

*All lands depicted in this photograph, including the Roberts Farm and beyond, are now protected forever.*



# A Time Machine Visits Delaware Wild Lands

*Going deep, deep into Delaware's past*

Many different scientists use DWL properties to conduct research projects, but Dr. Kelvin Ramsey of the Delaware Geological Survey (DGS) was the first one to arrive with a time machine.

Under Dr. Ramsey's direction, since 1998, a team of geologists has brought a large drill rig to collect sediment core samples at three different DWL properties, two in New Castle County and one in Sussex. The core samples brought up by the drill are called borings and are about 50 feet long. DGS has also collected shallow hand-dug auger borings.

As the drill goes down, it goes back in time. Analyzing the soils it brings up tells us what Delaware was like thousands of years ago.

**The borings are also being used to build maps about underground secrets we need to know today, such as location of aquifers, mineral composition, salt water intrusion, and coastal flooding.**

Radio carbon dating and other tests of drill borings from the Great Cypress Swamp have revealed that **the modern Swamp started about 5,000 years ago, when much of the rest of southern Delaware was covered by wind-swept dunes.** The borings also show evidence that dinosaurs once roamed the area, causing Dr. Ramsey to joke, "If there were ever any mastodons in Delaware, they would be found at the Great Cypress Swamp!"



*Dr. Ramsey uncovers underground soil composition and secrets.*



*A boring shows various soils, each one associated with a different time period.*



*DGS' drilling rig prepares for time travel.*

# DWL Hosts Middletown Christmas Bird Count

*by Anthony Gonzon, Delmarva Ornithological Society*



Part of the larger 116th Christmas Bird Count, the Middletown Christmas Bird Count (CBC) convened on December 27, 2015. Although it is difficult to say how the unseasonably warm weather affected overall species diversity during this year's count overall, several bird species were underrepresented, including diving ducks and lingering migrants like Pine Warblers and Baltimore Orioles. However, the count did tally four species of wren and uncommon winter visitors like American Tree Sparrows and Fox Sparrows. Big surprises included a Red-headed Woodpecker in Lums Pond and Little Blue Heron and Glossy Ibis in Thousand Acre Marsh. **The biggest surprise and find during the count might not have been tallied without the generosity of Delaware Wild Lands.**

This year, notable species at DWL's Betts, Armstrong, and Sharp Farms included Wild Turkeys, Belted Kingfisher, Barred Owl, and eight Bald Eagles. **The most exciting discovery, and a first in the history of this count, was three Sandhill Cranes!** Not typically associated with Delaware and certainly not in winter, these cranes have been present in the Augustine Marsh/Port Penn area for several months. Only time will tell if these cranes will establish themselves as Delaware's first documented breeding population.

*DOS thanks DWL for providing access to some unique and diverse places to improve Christmas Bird Count coverage for the Middletown CBC and being a part of the count's success!*

# Our Thanks to the Brandywine Zoo Chapter of American Association of Zoo Keepers!

*An evening of cocktails and cattails raises nearly \$500 for DWL*

What's the connection between zoos and land conservation? Animals need habitat!

And that's why Brandywine Zookeeper Kate Belnome organized a painting party and fundraiser for DWL at Pinot's Palette in Glen Mills, PA. The event was sponsored by the Brandywine Zoo Chapter of American Association of Zoo Keepers (BZAAZK).

**Thank you to BZAAZK, Kate, and more than 30 artists for raising almost \$500 for the conservation of wildlife habitat in Delaware!**





# DWL's Annual Wild Game Dinner

*A Monday and a menu to remember*

Event veterans and new faces alike joined DWL for this year's annual Game Dinner at The Bank Building of Cantwell's Tavern in Odessa. Chef Matt Anderson and his staff created a five-course culinary extravaganza that exceeded our already high expectations. The menu included Smoked Duck Terrine, Grilled Skate Wing, Quail Bacon Confit, and Deconstructed Venison Wellington. A hearty thanks to Marc Ashby, Patty Luckini, and all the staff at Cantwell's Tavern for making the evening another delicious success!

**A sold-out crowd of outdoor enthusiasts and longtime supporters shared a spectacular meal - all to benefit DWL's conservation and restoration projects statewide.**

**A special thank you to Greg Pettinaro, Porter Schutt, Dan Hackett, Kate Hackett, and our mystery man for sharing their bounty. And three cheers to our sponsors for continuing the tradition, quality, and fundraising success of the evening:**



**Turners Creek and Bombay Hook Farms**  
**Bob Rosenberg**

*Guests enjoyed lively conversation over five delicious courses, each paired with a beer or wine.*

*Cantwell's Manager Marc Ashby and Executive Chef Matt Anderson set up the oyster bar.*



*A decadent dessert of Flourless Chocolate Torte with Quail Egg Gelato.*

## Baldcypress Bluegrass Festival

**Fun & foot-stompin' music at the Great Cypress Swamp**

24558 Cypress Rd., Frankford, DE 19945

**Saturday, May 21st, 12:00 noon - 6:00 pm**

Sponsorship opportunities available  
Band lineup & more details coming soon!

Visit us online at [DEwildlands.org](http://DEwildlands.org) for details.

**SAVE THE DATE**

# A Bird's Eye View of the Great Cypress Swamp

*11,000 acres of increasingly wet and diverse forested bird heaven*



*A Great Egret alights at DWL's Great Cypress Swamp.*



*Water is returning! Our wetlands restoration is working and this site is the wettest we've seen it - exactly what the plants and animals need.*

The Great Cypress Swamp is a well-documented birding hotspot on the Delmarva Peninsula. Although we are not open to the public, we accommodate birding groups, wildlife watchers, professionals, students, and researchers. Birders, in particular, are perennial visitors to the Swamp over the years, and it's no wonder why: At nearly 11,000 acres, the Great Cypress Swamp is Delaware's largest contiguous forest and home to numerous bird species, many of which are dependent on large tracts of forest interior.

**The Swamp has even been designated by the National Audubon Society as an "Important Bird Area." And in the past 10 years, more than 100 species of bird have been identified in the Swamp.**

From 1996-1998, the Delaware Natural Heritage Program surveyed forest-dwelling birds at the Swamp and shed some light on the tremendous biodiversity there. **Seventy-three species of forest-dwelling birds were found during these breeding season surveys.** Some of the numerous Warbler species included the Worm-eating, Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, Swainson's, and Black-throated Green Warbler.

In recent years, with the unprecedented success of our wetland restoration efforts in the Swamp, portions of the forest have been changing; and with this change, we've seen a tremendously positive impact on the bird population. Bald eagles and other raptors are increasing in abundance with new wetland hunting grounds; wood ducks and mallards are commonly spotted in newly flooded woods and emergent wetlands; sightings of large numbers of Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons are a common occurrence; and woodpeckers, including the increasingly-rare Red-headed Woodpecker, are on the rise and nesting in tree snags created by the increased water levels.

**With the perpetual protection and restoration efforts of Delaware Wild Lands, we expect the Great Cypress Swamp will continue to be a hotspot of bird biodiversity** on the Delmarva Peninsula and in the region. We look forward to hosting tours and continued work with community groups, researchers, scientists, birds and wildlife enthusiasts!

*An unusual sight in Delaware: DWL's Great Cypress Swamp, 11,000 acres of contiguous forestland and home to many forest-interior bird species.*



# The Big Deal about DWL's Taylors Bridge Roberts Farm

*Another successful partnership with The Conservation Fund and Mt. Cuba Center*

*Continued from front page...*

With development pressure encroaching from the north and west, and once slated for construction of 250 single-family homes, this 1,250-acre property will forever remain one of the most pristine and diverse tidal marsh complexes in the State. Recognizing the value of this property to the successful propagation of Delaware's notable migratory birds, waterfowl, and wildlife in the State and throughout the region, **DWL eagerly joined with The Conservation Fund and Mt. Cuba Center to permanently protect the iconic beauty and benefits provided by these lands and waters.**



*A wintery morning at the Roberts Farm.*

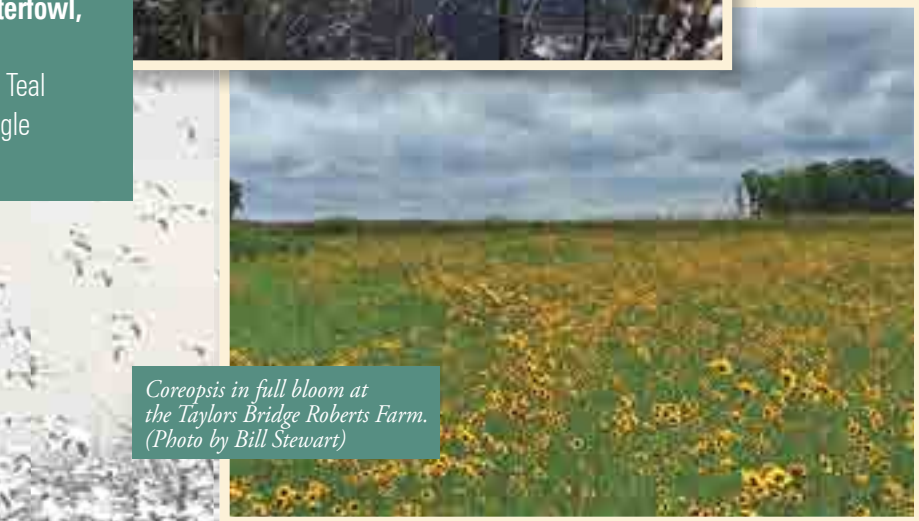
**The Roberts Farm is well-known as a haven for diverse species of waterfowl, songbirds, migratory shorebirds, and wildlife including:**

Ring-necked Ducks • Pintail • American Black Ducks • Mallards • Gadwall • Teal • Wood Ducks • Northern Shoveler • Coastal Plains Swamp Sparrow • Bald Eagle • Otter • Wild Turkey • Muskrat • Northern Harrier • Tundra Swan, and more!

This large block of land at Taylors Bridge is comprised of 4,500 acres of land owned by Delaware Wild Lands and 5,500 acres of the state-owned Cedar Swamp Wildlife Area. Protection of the Roberts Farm completes a crucial piece in the larger conservation puzzle by creating more than **10,000 acres of contiguous and protected wildlife habitat in one of the most rapidly developing areas of the state.**

Delaware Wild Lands will be coordinating management of the Roberts Farm with our neighbors including the State of Delaware, Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, and private landowners. One important management tool for this farm is prescribed fire. Marsh burns help improve early successional and grassland habitats by removing invasive species and promoting the growth of flowers and other herbaceous plants important to many species of birds, waterfowl, and wildlife.

We invite you to see this spectacular property firsthand at our Roberts Farm Open House (at 170 Staves Landing Road, Townsend 19734) on Saturday, May 7th from 11:00am to 4:00pm.



*Coreopsis in full bloom at the Taylors Bridge Roberts Farm. (Photo by Bill Stewart)*



*We are pleased to present another DWL Taylors Bridge conservation success: acquisition of 1,250 acres of land in southern New Castle County, located along Blackbird Creek and the Appoquinimink River.*

## GENESIS OF DELAWARE'S COASTAL ZONE ACT

It can be argued that Delaware's environmental movement was born at Taylors Bridge.

In 1961 Shell Oil Company began purchasing land to construct an oil refinery along the northern shores of the Delaware Bay. This project threatened to undermine a way of life within Delaware's coastal communities and posed detrimental impacts to this fragile ecosystem. Galvanized in opposition, Delaware Wild Lands began acquiring strategic parcels around Taylors Bridge, **preventing Shell Oil from amassing the acreage needed for refinery construction.**

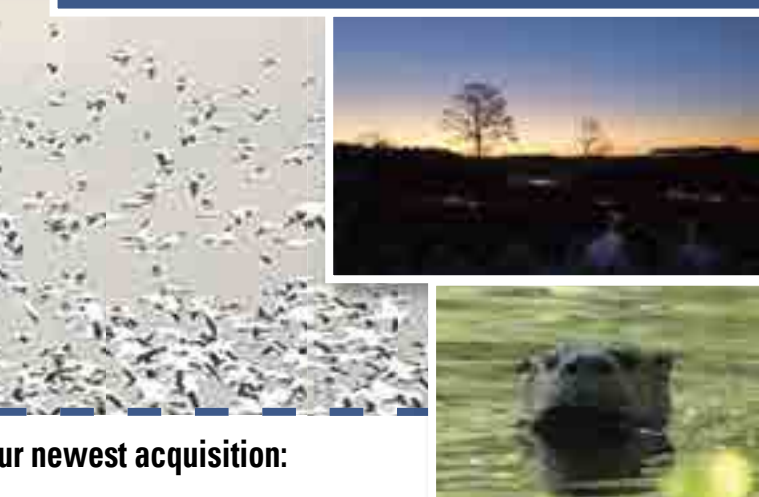
Recognizing the need for regulatory protection that would complement and bolster land acquisition efforts, the environmental visionaries of Delaware Wild Lands worked in earnest alongside Governor Russell Peterson to pass **Delaware's Coastal Zone Act in 1971.**

In the wake of this success, Governor Peterson appointed a Board member of Delaware Wild Lands to chair the committee that accomplished the signing into law of **The Wetlands Act in 1973**, ensuring further protections for tidal wetlands and larger freshwater areas.

In the following years, Shell Oil mounted several unsuccessful legal challenges to the Coastal Zone Act and eventually abandoned its plans to build a refinery complex in Delaware. In 1984, Delaware Wild Lands and the State of Delaware celebrated a major victory and purchased 2,700 acres from Shell Oil. **Today, protection of an additional 1,250 acres at the Taylors Bridge Roberts Farm represents another exciting chapter in Delaware's conservation history.**



## OUT AND ABOUT ON DELAWARE WILD LANDS' PROPERTIES



**Visit our newest acquisition:**

### Celebration & Open House at Taylors Bridge Roberts Farm

170 Staves Landing Rd., Townsend, DE 19734

**Saturday, May 7th, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm**

Hayrides, Bird Walks & Boat Tours

Free & open to the public

**SAVE THE DATE**