

# The Ovenbird

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation



Winter, 2010



MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!

SNOWSHOE  
BLITZ

@ LILLIBRIDGE

SNOWSHOEING  
SLEDDING  
SNOWMAN MAKING

SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 20  
9 AM—4 PM

## Will We Be Without Bats?

Just as we were preparing this edition of the *Ovenbird*, we received a news release from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regarding the status of our bat population.

Needless to say it was sad news. "Populations of some bat species have plummeted more than 90 percent in Northeast caves impacted by 'White Nose Syndrome,' according to an extensive investigation by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Surveying 23 caves at the epicenter of the bat die-off in early 2009, researchers found an alarming decline – 91 percent on average -- in the number of hibernating bats."

"The most obvious symptom involved in the die-off is a white fungus encircling the noses of some, but not all, of the bats. Called "White Nose Syndrome" (WNS), the fungus (*Geomyces destructans*) is a prime suspect as a causative agent, although not yet confirmed. Impacted bats deplete their fat reserves months before they would normally emerge from hibernation, and die as a result."

When we walk through the old growth forest at Lillibridge we point out the high number of standing snags. Snags are dead trees that are slowly decomposing. Erect snags have bare branches, carved niches in the wood, and usually

bark that is separating from the trunk. Under that bark is a wonderful habitat for an array of over-wintering insects and most importantly, hibernating bats.



If you wonder why you may have bats in your attic, it could be because your surrounding forests either are too young to have developed significant snags or they have been removed in the interest of safety and/or aesthetics.

Bats need habitat! Bat boxes are very helpful to provide the necessary shelter for bats. We've included directions on how to build and locate bat houses in the *Ovenbird* insert.

Although it's too late in the year to attract bats, have it ready to install this spring and you could create a small but meaningful contribution to aid the struggling bat population.

We're not aware of any active citizen science

**Continued on Page 2.....**



### Get Out There And Walk!

We support our local hiking interests! You can reach them on Yahoo! Groups.

Olean\_Area\_Hiking & Southern\_Tier\_Greenway\_Hiking.

## Pfeiffer to Start Speaker Bureau

Pfeiffer Nature Center -- to *Ovenbird* readers this is a household name, and yet there are many people in our community who have never heard of us. Here at the Nature Center we provide free and low cost nature education and experiences to all who are interested. But how can we reach more people? Most of our exposure had been by word of mouth from you, our friends and patrons, and for that we are truly grateful. Now we have an opportunity for you to step up and stand out even more in the community.

As you read this, the staff at the Nature Center is working to create a Speaker's Bureau. This will be a group of volunteers that

will go out into the community and speak to groups and organizations to deliver our message, whether it be on healthy forests, our hiking trails, water cycles, or one of our special projects. The main focus of the Speaker's Bureau is to spread the word to community members in order to grow the Nature Center's support base, encouraging more program attendance, more volunteers, and more members. We look forward to working in conjunction with local businesses, agencies, and individuals to bring all that Pfeiffer Nature Center has to offer to the community. Our

goal is to get this Speakers Bureau up and running by early spring.

We are tentatively scheduling "Volunteer Speaker" training for Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010. We will be having two separate training seminars that day, the first being from 1pm-4pm and the second from 6pm-9pm, at the PNC office in downtown Portville. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer speaker and helping Pfeiffer make its mark in our community, please contact Susan Avery or Joellen Beatty at 716-933-0187.

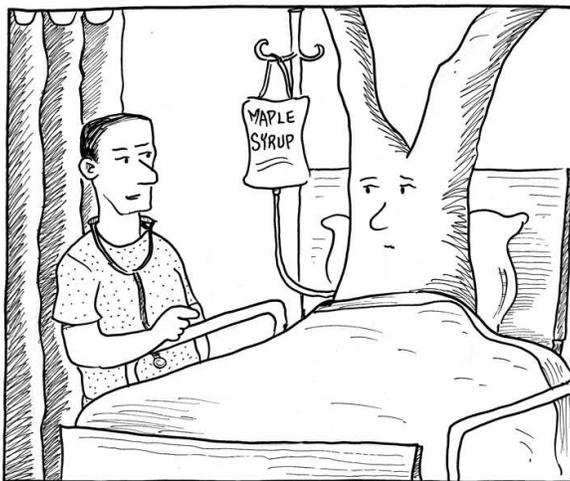


## From the Director



Although I don't think mine were ever as clean as this one, I loved making snow angels as a kid. I continue to try as an adult, and I still enjoy doing it, but I *really* don't have the core strength to get up without messing the otherwise perfect layout. That hasn't stopped me yet. I bet I'll make more this year.

I'll also once again love looking at a freshly-fallen, untouched expanse of snow, and conversely (or is that perversely?) at stomping a design of my own creation on that blank canvas. Actually, it's never totally my own design, since my dog always wants to help and add his own style to the artistic process, generally throwing in a bit of color as well as pattern.



"THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU'RE OUT OF THE WOODS. I'M AFRAID THAT'S ALSO THE BAD NEWS."

Margaret Shulock lives in Friendship, NY. Her "Sticks" cartoons can be seen in the Olean Times Herald. Visit her website, [www.thesixchix.com](http://www.thesixchix.com) to see more of her work.

Making snow angels is just one of the many pleasures that winter in western New York brings me. I enjoy everything from snuggling under a blanket with a great book to hiking, making soups to admiring animal tracks. I believe wholeheartedly in the importance of getting some sun on my face, even if it's very cold out. Fifteen minutes of sunshine stimulates my pineal gland and goes a long way toward improving my outlook. As an added bonus, my house always feels warm and toasty after some time spent outdoors! If you're looking for another reason to get outside, add to your winter repertoire by joining our Snowshoe Blitz on February 20.

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We're continuing our practice of including the entire 2010 program calendar in with this edition of *The Ovenbird*. Tack it up on your refrigerator, *and* check our website regularly for changes and additions. We want to see *you* at our programs this year.



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**Thanks to everyone who helped make the 2009 wreath sale a spectacular success.**

We outdid ourselves once again, selling a whopping 338 wreaths. Volunteers collected and dried flowers, seeds, and cones from May through November, all so more than two dozen pairs of hands could creatively combine them on the wreaths. Almost 275 beautiful bows, made from donated ribbon, were hand tied by volunteers, bringing more color to our firs and boxwoods. Hundreds of supportive wreath buyers purchased our wreaths, choosing our creations over those sold by other local groups and the mass-produced discount store offerings. Thanks to everyone's gracious help, we netted almost \$5,000 on this event that builds friends as well as funds, all to help us maintain and expand our program offerings.



Looking forward to snow,

Peg Cherre

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### Bats (continued)

projects in western New York to track bats, but Cornell University has partnered with the State of Wisconsin to monitor bats.

Scientists can't be everywhere to collect data, but citizens can. You can learn more about this by going to <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/citcitoolkit/projects/beavercreek/batmonitoring> or call the office for more Bat information.

The Little Brown Bat, *Myotis lucifugus*, is the most abundant bat in the Northeast. Although it's hard to get a good number, sources say a single bat can consume between 600 -1200 mosquitoes an hour.

If our recent wet summer is a predictor, we can expect a heavy mosquito season next year. We'll need bats!

Want to know more? Check out NYS DEC website on the Little Brown Bat—<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/59376.html>.

# Pfeiffer and AmeriCorps Team-Up

Over the past year, Pfeiffer Nature Center has been fortunate enough to garner the support of two different AmeriCorps workers, Sarah Dominsky & Joellen Beatty. AmeriCorps is the domestic side of the Peace Corps, wherein a person can serve up to a two year term in a volunteer capacity, doing various tasks to help not-for-profit organizations and schools. These AmeriCorps members receive a small bi-weekly stipend as well as a small educational award at the end of their term. There are three different time commitment levels for an AmeriCorps worker; they are 450 hours, 900 hours, and 1,800 hours.



## AMERICORPS

The Southern Tier AmeriCorps Resource Team (START) is administered by the Cattaraugus County Youth Bureau. START places AmeriCorps staff members in various locations throughout Cattaraugus and Allegany counties. In our area, the majority of AmeriCorps staff members work with at-risk children, providing educational support and life skills for those children who may not receive it at home.

Sarah has helped us over the past year through the 2009 Film Festival, as well as creating the plan for the Children's Garden for our Eshelman property. She has also organized clean-up efforts with the

help of volunteers for our Lillibridge property. Joellen has been working to update our database and also on volunteer recruitment. She is also in the process of organizing a speaker's bureau which you can read about in this edition of *The Ovenbird*, as well.

As we near the end of term for one of our AmeriCorps workers we are now in need of volunteers who can help in day to day operations at the Nature Center, and also persons interested in helping with the 2010 Film Festival. Any person completing five or more hours of volunteer time with us will also receive a certificate of recognition from AmeriCorps and any hours will be tracked on your behalf.

# Pfeiffer Offers Family Nature Literacy Nights

It started last fall as a one-night reading program on the children's classic, *The Mitten*. Ninety-one children and parents later, families have demonstrated their enjoyment of a nature-oriented literacy program!

This year the Nature Center will offer three different family nature literacy events. Each event includes a reading of a children's nature classic, followed by four literacy activities that children and parents do together that increase their awareness of the natural world while building simple reading skills.

It's a fun way to spend a chilly evening! The three books featured this winter are *The Mitten*, adapted

by Jan Brett; *Fletcher and the Falling Leaves* by Julia Rawlinson; and *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein.

All three books tie into nature-related activities and encourage an appreciation of the outdoor world.

The Nature Center will schedule these events upon requested. The one-hour program is \$100 for up to 60 participants and is geared for children K-2 and their parents.

*The Mitten* is scheduled at the Cuba Library at 11 AM on January 16 . *The Giving Tree* is scheduled at the Almond Library March 20 at 11 AM.



For more information, contact Susan at the Nature Center office at 716-933-0187.

### Pfeiffer Nature Center & Foundation

Administrative Office:  
14 S. Main St. Portville NY 14770  
Mailing Address:  
PO Box 802 Portville NY 14770  
716.933.0187  
www.pfeiffernaturecenter.org  
info@pfeiffernaturecenter.org

### Board of Directors

President: Wendy Brand  
Vice President: Marcia Storch  
Secretary: Sarah Larson  
Treasurer: Mike Patton

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Mike Ermer Jeff McMullen  
Ed Reisman Ray Valeri  
Vicki Schmidt Bob Weber  
Bob Wood

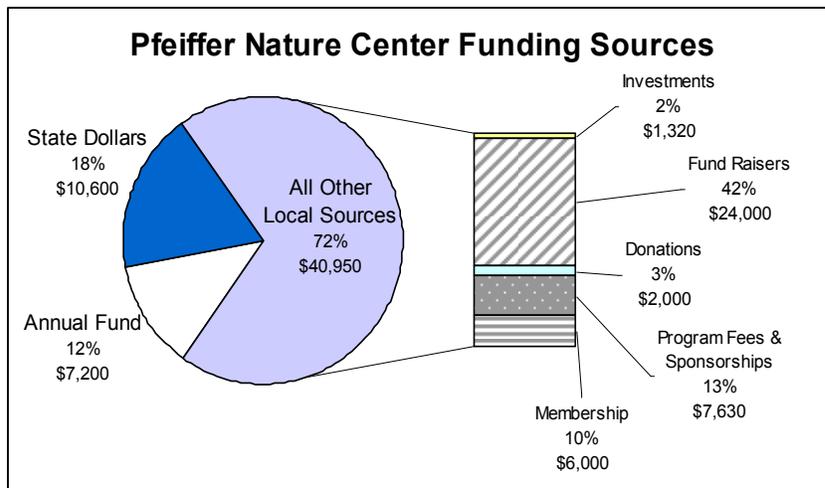
### Staff

Margaret Cherre, Director  
Susan Avery, Naturalist

# Money Makes the World Go Round

Like every organization and household, Pfeiffer Nature Center has financial obligations – expenses that come around monthly or annually. Thanks to the work of a small army of volunteers, we are able to manage on a relative shoestring, with a budget of less than \$60,000 this year. That fact is notable in and of itself, but what's even more amazing is the fact that 84% of our funding comes from local sources – businesses and individuals who understand the importance of our work and value the benefits we provide to the community.

As you can see from the graph below, \$7,200, 12% of our total funding, comes from our Annual Fund. You may have already received our request for your support of our annual fund drive. If we somehow missed you in this special mailing, we hope you'll still contribute. Call the office (716-933-0187) and we'll get a packet right out to you. Or even easier, simply complete and mail the form below to the office with your contribution.



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***Thanks for your support of local nature education programs, hiking trails, forest preservation, wildlife habitat, and more!***



Please print your name exactly as you would like it to appear in our publications: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please do not use our name(s) in your publications.

All gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Enclosed is my annual gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed -or-

Please use this credit card information:

Visa  Mastercard  Discover

CC #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***Your dollars make a difference!***

***Please mail to: Pfeiffer Nature Center Po Box 802, Portville NY 14770***



## Office & Program Needs:



- 5/8" beads (all colors) for Project WET***
- Heavy duty 3" magnifying glasses w/ covers***
- Peterson Field Guide to Wildflowers***
- External DVD drive for our PC***



# Thank You to Our Dedicated Volunteers

## In Memory of Harold Wright

On November 29th, the Pfeiffer Nature Center lost a very supportive member: Harold Wright. His support was not in administration, as a board member, as a committee chairman, not even as a member of any committee but as a hands-on VOLUNTEER.

He was involved in the planting of maple trees, the building and installing blue bird nest boxes, the community garden preparation, trail maintenance, the cabin's old water system, both spring and fall, grass mowing and weed whacking, general grounds-keeper around the pavilion (you can not believe the number of rocks her picked up), setting 4 x 4 posts on the trails at the Lillibridge site, and the list goes on and on.

His volunteer work was carried out quietly and with a sense of pride in the positive effect it would have in keeping with the Nature Center's mission.

He was genuinely happy to see how the Nature Center was taking on a respected place in the community and he felt honored to say he was one of our volunteers.

For the people who had the good fortune to know Harold, we are blessed.

Joe Schueckler

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Reflecting on the loss of Harold Wright underscores how valuable volunteers are to the Nature Center and our community.

It takes a tremendous amount of effort to keep the nature center operating and many volunteers make that happen in their own quiet way.

I think of Rod Silliman who drives by the Lillibridge property and stops to pick up trash left in the parking lot or Sue Stevens who will make a trip up to the cabin to tidy up before an event.

We use this space to thank those that have participated in organized

activities to help the Nature Center but we want you to know that all the effort that occurs quietly and without fanfare is greatly appreciated.



We had a wonderful fall clean up day at Lillibridge with pleasant weather and many new faces helping out. The residents of Weston Manor Community Residence pitched in to construct new walking paths from Wendy's Tree to Kay's Cove and through the Adopt A Tree Forest.

Several helped Sue Stevens, Mike Ermer, Joyce Ermer clean out the cabin in preparation for winter.

They also stripped the donation tube and repainted the surface.

Many thanks to Gerald Holland, David Tarquin, Jeremy Greene, Anthony Moore, Gregory Redd, Jeremy Preston, and Josh White from Weston Manor!



We had the pleasure of having Leon Buckwalter and his Building Trades class from SUNY College of Technology @ Alfred visit to construct and install braces for the cabin wall and ceiling.

The group worked a full day preparing the braces. They also removed an interior wall and re-installed the original French doors in it's place. Lunch was provided by

Leon, Irene Ilustre, and Sue Stevens.

We had another fantastic effort from our volunteers to create 339 holiday wreaths. Our thanks to the crew at Pleasant Valley Nursery for hosting this project.

Decorators on Friday: Carol Bradley, Vickie Schmidt, Joni Greene, Sue Stevens, Judy Patton, Peg Cherre, Kathy Bess, Lynn Fitzpatrick, Sue Camus, Sarah Lyons, Martha Nenno, Tonya Reisman, Laura Shields, Sarah Larson, Roberta Baker, Wendy Van Curan, Susan Avery, Lynn Knowles, Tina Bailey, Sarah Dominsky and Steve SanFilippo from SBU.



Decorators on Saturday: Carol Bradley, Susan Avery, Laura Shields, Karen Dickerson, Martha Nenno, Sue Stevens, Judy Patton, Wendy Brand, Peg Cherre, Theresa Schueckler, Diane Canada, Charlene Granger, Joellen Beatty, Mary Monteville, Sarah Dominsky, Eileen Gorczynski, and Elizabeth Wordlemann.

Helpers on Delivery Day: Joe Schueckler, Mike Ermer, Sarah Dominsky, Judy Patton, Joellen Beatty, and Peg Cherre.

You'll see a new face when you visit the office! Farzana Haq, of Allegany is our newest office volunteer helping with our database and other office functions.



## Thank You To Our Financial Supporters

### Thank You & Welcome to New & Renewing Members September 23, 2009— November 30, 2009

William & Kay Anderson

Ruth & Rollie Bray

Margaret Cherre

Betty D'Arcy

James Frair

Anthony & Carol Gallo

Joe & Cecily Higgins

Barbara Johnston

Michael & Marcel Kelly

David Kindzia

Joe & Sharon McLarney

Rich & Pat McNeil

James Meyer

Richard & Barbara Scott

Melvena Smith

Lois Stives

Gary Swetland

Ellsworth & Ann Swift

Steve Teuscher

### A Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Donors

All wreath buyers

Anonymous

Kathy Bess

First Presbyterian Church of  
Portville

Irene Ilustre

Erick & Marianne Laine

Mr. & Mrs. Fran Mahar

Rich & Pat McNeil

Olean Area Federal Credit Union

Olean Medical Group

Paul Brown Motors

James Pomeroy

Ried's Market

Southern Tier Arthritis &  
Rheumatism

Lou & Sue Stevens

Marcia & Henry Storch



*We are grateful for your generosity and support! Kind acts and thoughtful gifts such as these assist us in fulfilling our Mission. If we have inadvertently omitted your gift from these lists, please bring it to our attention and we will happily correct our oversight.*

## Create a Lasting Tribute

You can honor your family and friends in ways that will have lasting impacts on Pfeiffer Nature Center and therefore the local community. Gifts can be either memorials or tributes to the accomplishments of someone still with us, and all gifts will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

Gifts to the **Kay Pfeiffer Gerkin Endowment Fund** are maintained and managed separately from our operating funds. The principle in this fund is retained exclusively for investments and income generation, with only interest and dividends available to support our ongoing activities. Check with your financial or legal advisor to name Pfeiffer Nature Center in your estate planning.

Gifts may be made specifically to our sugar bush expansion project. We will plant sugar maples on our Eshelman property annually. While donors will not be able to identify "their" tree, they will have the benefit of knowing that their gifts provided a source of ongoing income. Maple seedlings are \$35 each.

Gifts of any size may be made to the Nature Center to honor or memorialize relatives, friends, or pets. With no minimum donation, this option provides giving opportunities for all.

**We hope you'll make a gift soon!**

## Seasonal Stirrings

### January ~

- 29th—Mars at opposition and will be closest to the earth and fully illuminated by the sun. This is the best time to view and photograph the red planet.

### February ~

- In late February, the northbound migration at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge begins with ducks and shorebirds, and warblers. Time for a field trip!
- Look for our groundhogs to emerge from hibernation, and the greatest prognosticator of spring—Punxsutawney Phil on February 2nd!

### March ~

- Prepare for the Salamander "Big Walk" ~ most individuals in the area arrive at the breeding site (vernal pool) on the same night. The specific trigger for this coordinated migration is determined by a combination of factors including ground and air temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, and darkness. In general, the first rainy night over 45 degrees Fahrenheit, after the ground has thawed, is sufficient to trigger the migration.

### Pfeiffer Nature Center Mission

- To preserve the integrity of the old-growth forest
- To provide an area for scientific research
- To promote community-based nature study programs for grade school, high school, college and adult students
- To further natural resource stewardship

# YES, I'D LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF PFEIFFER NATURE CENTER!

## Membership Levels and Benefits

All members receive a subscription to *The Ovenbird*, our quarterly newsletter, delivered to your home.

Student/senior	\$10	1 \$5 off program admission coupons
Individual	\$25	1 \$5 off program admission coupons
Family	\$35	3 \$5 off program admission coupons
Conservator	\$100	4 free family program admissions
Patron	\$250	Same as Conservator, invitation to wine & cheese reception, 1 tree planted
Guardian	\$500	Same as Patron, plus 1 decorated fir holiday wreath
Benefactor	\$1,000	Same as Guardian, plus unlimited free program admissions
Additional Donation	\$_____	

All members also receive discounted admissions and gift shop purchases at many other nature centers. *Your contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowable by NYS Tax Law.*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a \_\_\_\_\_ new or \_\_\_\_\_ renewing membership? (Check one)

May we contact you about volunteering? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No, thank you.

Send your completed form to: Pfeiffer Nature Center, PO Box 802 Portville, NY 14770

## SKILL BUILDING SESSIONS FOR VOLUNTEER NATURALISTS

Adults interested in the natural environment and serving the community are invited to participate in the upcoming skill building sessions offer by Pfeiffer Nature Center.

The programs are designed to promote awareness and citizen stewardship of our local natural resources through science-based education service.

Sessions can be taken individually or as a series. Session one is a highly interactive introduction to learning and nature interpretation. It will be held at Pfeiffer Nature Center's Office January 30 from 9 AM – 3 PM. The training is free for volunteers and \$10 for the general public.

The second and third sessions are jointly conducted by Pfeiffer Nature Center, Cattaraugus Allegany Teachers Center, and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Session two is an orientation to the international award-winning program,



Project WILD. Participants receive a manual containing 124 lessons appropriate for children in grades K-12. It will be offered March 9 from 12 – 3:30 PM at the Portville Presbyterian Church.

Session three presents the interdisciplinary program Project WET (Water Education for Teachers). Participants receive the curriculum containing 90 lessons. Project WET will be held on April 6 from 12 – 3:30 PM at the Portville Presbyterian Church. Teachers and volunteers



receive the training free. The general public can

participate for \$5.

Join the ranks as a volunteer naturalist, ready to lead science-based nature walks with children and adults about topics like habitats, water, plants, insects, and natural history. Volunteers lead nature walks at Pfeiffer Nature Center and provide nature education to scouts, church groups, school children and the general public.

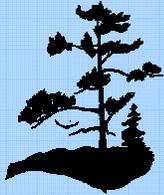
No prior experience is necessary, just a love of nature and kids! Becoming a volunteer naturalist is a great way to spend time outdoors, learn the natural history of the area, meet like-minded people, and gain experience teaching.

Please call 716-933-0187 to register, or email Susan Avery at [naturalist@pfeiffernaturecenter.org](mailto:naturalist@pfeiffernaturecenter.org). Space is limited. For additional information, visit: <http://cateach.org/pfeiffer-nature-center/>.

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

PO Box 802  
Portville, NY 14770

Phone: 716.933.0187  
Email: [info@pfeiffernaturecenter.org](mailto:info@pfeiffernaturecenter.org)



**Pfeiffer Nature Center—  
where science, art, and  
nature come together!**

Non Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #5  
Portville, NY



**Hours of Operation**

**Office, 14 S. Main St. Portville:**

Generally Tue-Wed, 8am to 4pm;  
other times by chance or  
appointment

**Lillibridge Road Property:**

Trails open to non-motorized  
usage dawn to dusk, 7 days a  
week, year round.

**Yubadam Road Property:**

Trails open to non-motorized  
usage dawn to dusk, 7 days a  
week, year round EXCEPT during  
*hunting season Oct —Dec , when  
all trails are closed.*

Staff is available for questions,  
tours, and programs as scheduled  
or by prior arrangement.

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Check our website or call for the  
most up-to-date information and  
upcoming programs:

**[www.pfeiffernaturecenter.org](http://www.pfeiffernaturecenter.org)  
716-933-0187**

**JOIN US FOR OUR WINTER SNOWSHOE BLITZ!**

Ready to head out and enjoy the outdoors in winter? If you can walk, you can snowshoe! Snowshoeing is a fantastic way to explore the beauty of the winter landscape. Join Pfeiffer Nature Center and Paths, Peaks, & Paddles for their **Introduction to Snowshoeing**, Saturday, February 20 from 9 AM – 4 PM.

Instructors from Paths, Peaks, & Paddles will properly fit you in a pair of snowshoes followed by practice of the simple techniques to get around. Then it's off to the woods to enjoy a 30-minute winter wonderland walk!

Snowshoeing is a great sport for the whole family! We provide the snowshoes—you bring your sense of adventure.

The event will be held at Pfeiffer Nature Center's Lillibridge property at 1974 Lillibridge Rd, Portville NY. The program fee is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children under the age of 10. The fee includes snowshoes, instruction, walk, and cocoa. Trip operates rain or shine unless conditions are unsafe. For more information or to register contact Pfeiffer Nature Center at 716-933-0187.



Be sure you don't miss out on any of our exciting programs! Simply write [programs@pfeiffernaturecenter.org](mailto:programs@pfeiffernaturecenter.org) with the subject line **Count Me In** and we'll add you to our e-mail distribution list.