

Appalachian Footnotes

Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club
Summer 2020 • Volume 58 • Number 3



AMC Restart

**Fall Gathering
Postponed**

Bird of Prey

Unlikely Thru-hiker

Tree Pandemics

**Art & Photo
Contest Winners**



Appalachian Footnotes

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Delaware Valley Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club
published using recycled electrons.

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Weekly Activities Bulletin: amcdv.org/mail.html

AMC General Web Site: outdoors.org

Chapter Ombudsman

Questions, complaints, concerns or comments about the Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC should be directed to Chapter Ombudsman, Allen Male at ombudsman@amcdv.org.



Cover: Great Blue Heron, as photographed by Steve Leibrock at the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey. It is one of the winners of our art and photo contest. See some of the best entries beginning on page 9. A story on this large and beautiful native bird is on page 4.

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Begin slowly and smaller for a safe AMC activity restart

Life has changed for all of us in the past few months as the world has tried to adjust to the COVID-19 virus. Like so many other parts of our lives we have missed our cherished opportunity to meet with friends to enjoy the outdoors.

June 14, 2019: Wake up, it's a beautiful day, scan the DV Chapter activity calendar for a good hike, call two friends and arrange a car pool meeting place, pack a lunch and water. Meet at the trailhead with 25 AMC friends, give and get some hugs, enjoy a great hike with some in depth side by side conversations followed by a post hike refreshment stop at a local micro-brewery.

June 14, 2020: Wake up, it's a beautiful day. No AMC activities. Maybe a solo hike. Maybe just forget it all and binge watch Netflix.

While most experts agree that outdoors is the safest place to begin gathering again, there are also significant challenges to keeping people safe as we begin this process.

AMC's Outdoor Leadership Development Committee, in consultation with staff and volunteer groups, has worked hard to develop a framework for slowly restarting in person activities. It is a conservative plan that will require adjustments by leaders and participants, but it is a first step toward what is being referred to as the new normal. The plan is guided by adherence to all state, local, and land management agency rules where the activity is to be held. It is a fluid plan with three phases that may shift forward or reverse related to safety factors and government guidance.

Phase 1 of the plan allows for trail maintainers working alone or in groups with a maximum of 4 participants including the leader. Earliest start date is June 15.

Phase 2 of the plan allows for activity groups with a maximum of 10 participants including leaders. Earliest start date is June 22.

It should be noted that details regarding Phase 3, which will be deployed when government restrictions on movement have been lifted due to significant herd immunity, vaccine, or testing levels being in place, have not yet been formulated. The entire plan may be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Key components of the plan that are still in development at this time are training for all leaders in safe outdoor activity group management related to COVID-19 and a new electronic trip waiver for all activities.

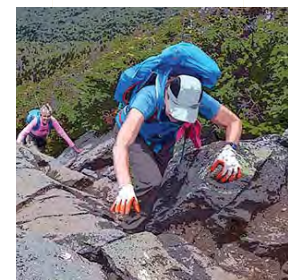
All activities in Phase 1 and 2 will require pre-registration via the electronic waiver system. All participants will need to be screened by the leader for each activity related to a special COVID-19 screening protocol. All participants will be required to bring their own face covering, water, snacks, and hand sanitizer. Leaders will be required to carry additional supplies in their first aid kits. It is recommended that participants not car pool with people outside of their contact group (the people with whom they have been sheltering). There will be no group meals on Phase 1 or 2 activities. Anyone traveling to another state or area where AMC operates will need to abide by all rules of that area.

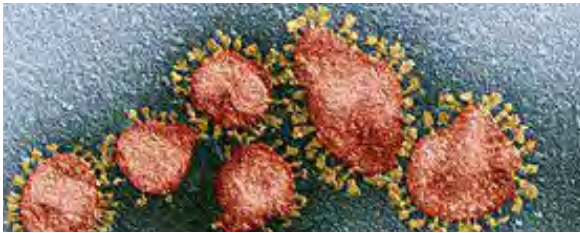
If a participant becomes ill on an activity the group will stop and return to the start point. If it becomes impossible to safely socially distance (i.e., a stream crossing that would require hand to hand assist, other large groups on the trail that are making social distancing difficult) the group will stop and return to the start point.

At this time AMC large group activities of more than 10 persons are not occurring. There will be more information on future activities as we progress through the summer. Meanwhile, sign up for the DV Chapter Weekly message at <http://amcdv.org/mail.html> for information on virtual learning and social opportunities.

We will all need to be flexible as AMC restarts activities. I hope you will join us when you feel comfortable. Please understand that your cooperation with all the guidelines set by your group leader are meant to protect you and others and are being required of all participants. The way we work together as a community will determine how well we all move safely out of quarantine and learn to live with the new challenges we are facing.

Susan Weida
DV Chapter Chair





How I am

By Richard Puglisi

"We are in a war ... I actually think this is exactly what generals or leaders in real ... combat wars feel" — Doctor Anthony Fauci

"I got some groceries, some peanut butter, To last a couple of days " — Talking Heads

Reading a book. Cleaning a closet. Watching the latest Coronavirus press conference. Listening to my heart beat. These are some of the daily activities of my life during these so called unprecedented times. Who would have thought life would come to this. It's like a scene from some apocalyptic movie except without the zombies.

Just like everyone else, I'm trying to remain positive and optimistic but there is only so much cleaning, organizing and reorganizing one can do. My big day comes once every two weeks when in the early morning hours I don my face mask and venture out to the supermarket to restock our supplies.

Believe me I'm very thankful for my health and for not being a COVID-19 statistic. I am hoping the vitamins, exercise and good food along with hand washing and proper social distancing has something to do with it.

The real problem is the isolation. That's the difficult part. Even for an introvert such as myself, it's tough being cooped up in the house 24-7. While sitting on the patio is nice and the occasional walk at the local county park helps, a walk is not a hike.

What do they say, the things you have to do (or you can do) are the things you take for granted. These days I find myself dreaming about the old days when I would grab my knapsack, a couple of energy bars, a bottle of water and head off on the trail.

The thought of someday heading out on the trail for a hike of five to ten miles is what is keeping me going. That feeling of freedom that hiking gives you while being surrounded by nature is the memory that sustains me.

So as the Coronavirus numbers continue to drop and we inch closer each day to the lifting of the statewide lockdowns, I am preparing to declare a small victory of sorts and at my first opportunity take a real hike into the woods.

AMC 2020 Fall Gathering postponed; Our chapter will host in 2021

The cautions and precautions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have forced the cancellation of Fall Gathering 2020.

All is not lost! The Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC is excited to announce that we will be hosting Fall Gathering 2021 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center, in Dingman's Ferry, PA. Events that had been planned for 2020 have been moved to 2021. The Fall Gathering Committee will be welcoming AMC members from all 12 chapters for a weekend of hiking, biking, paddling, nature programs and social activities. We look forward to showing off the beautiful Delaware Water Gap area.

We will be looking for volunteers to help with Fall Gathering 2021. If you have signed up to help with Fall Gathering 2020, we are hoping that you will still be available to help with 2021. We will be actively recruiting for volunteers as we get closer to October, 2021. However, if you have any questions now, please contact, Margaret McDonald at fg-volunteer@amcdv.org

So save the date: third weekend in October, 2021: (October 15-17, 2021). We hope you will plan to come and enjoy the weekend with us!

Bird of Prey, our cover creature

The Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) is one of the most common birds of prey seen along both fresh and salt waterways in our region.

They are big birds, weighing up to seven pounds or more and standing about four feet high. Their broad wings span six feet or more, and are built for maximum lift rather than speed. They fly with their necks curved in an S shape, their long legs trailing.

Hérons hunt by wading along the shore and remaining motionless until they can grab their prey with a quick thrust of their long necks and sharp bills.

Their favorite and most common food is fish, which they capture and sometimes skewer with their long, pointed beaks. They also eat frogs and other amphibians, plus reptiles, insects and even small mammals. They sometimes will capture fish using bait. They drop a bug in the water, then capture a fish that rises to eat it.

Hérons mostly nest in trees in marshes and other difficult to access areas, but will nest elsewhere as the need arises. They produce one brood a year. They are faithful to their chosen mate for the season, but mostly pick a new partner each year. Heron rookeries may contain a few nests, or hundreds. One of the largest in our area is on a branch of the upper Sassafra River, a tidal tributary to the Chesapeake Bay. It is hard to get to; that is why the birds choose it.

Male herons gather sticks and branches from the ground and nearby bushes and trees, and from old abandoned nests and give them to the female who builds a shallow bowl nest which is lined with moss, reeds, dry grass, and other soft material. Nests may be reused for several years.

Females lay three to six eggs, which take about four weeks to hatch. Both parents incubate the eggs, and both feed the chicks with regurgitated food. Herons must eat up to four times their normal diet when feeding young. The chicks fledge about two months after hatching.

Because of their size, adult herons have few natural predators. Occasionally eagles will hunt them. Eggs and chicks are at risk from nest raiding crows and raccoons. Herons are protected, and their population is slowly increasing in our area. In southern Florida, where there is a white sub-species, they are threatened by increased mercury contamination of their food.

— Eric Pavlak

The Unlikely Thru-Hiker *An Appalachian Trail Journey* by Derick Lugo

Published by AMC Books, 2020

Review by Kathy Kelly-Borowski

Since finishing the Appalachian Trail in 1989, I have read many books on Appalachian Trail hikes. Just some of them include *Walking with Spring*, *Grandma Gatewood's Walk*, *A Walk for Sunshine*, *A Walk in the Woods*, *Just Passin' Thru*, *AWOL on the Appalachian Trail* and *The Barefoot Sisters Southbound*.

It would be no surprise to anyone that I would pick up *The Unlikely Thru-Hiker*, especially because of its epic cover.

This is the story of Derick's thru-hike in 2012. What makes Derick an unlikely thru-hiker? Derick is of Puerto Rican and African American heritage, placing him in a distinct minority among thru-hikers. He grew up in New York City, never camping or taking a hike before stepping on the AT.

On March 19, Derick started the Amicalola approach trail, a strenuous 7.8 miles to Springer Mountain, the Southern terminus of the AT. (When I started my AT hike I opted to start at the Springer Mountain parking area and walked one mile south to the trailhead to avoid the approach trail.)

A few days into the hike, Derick is given his trail name "Mr. Fabulous" because on the trail, as at home, he liked "to stay groomed, fresh and well dressed".

Mr. Fabulous was the 438th hiker to start the season. He was given the number 438 by the ranger at Katahdin Steam Campground six months later signifying the 438th hiker to finish the trail that season on September 17.

He started his day by touching a white blaze, "showing gratitude and respect for the markers that guided" him through the wilderness.

Mr. Fabulous was true to his thru-hike by hiking every mile of the trail with his backpack and hiking poles. Most hikers including me leave their backpack and poles at the ranger station before the last 5.2 miles to the northern terminus of the trail.

"Free food and showers is definitely the way to a thru-hiker's heart" is what Derick says about the hiker feed given by the First Baptist Church in Damascus, VA. How true is this statement?

While hiking in PA, Derick gets a text message from his hiking partner for the day, "Can you drown in rocks? Because there is an ocean of them before me!"

Can anyone relate to this? Mr. Fabulous received advice from a guy he meets attending Trail Days in Damascus; "Be kind to all, don't take your friends for granted, and be memorable." This is great advice for all of us especially during the current lock down.

This book is well written and entertaining. I had a hard time putting it down. It is a series of short trail stories instead of covering every state he walked through.

Derick remained positive during his trek north. He signed the shelter journals with the phrase "Peace, Love & All That Good Stuff."

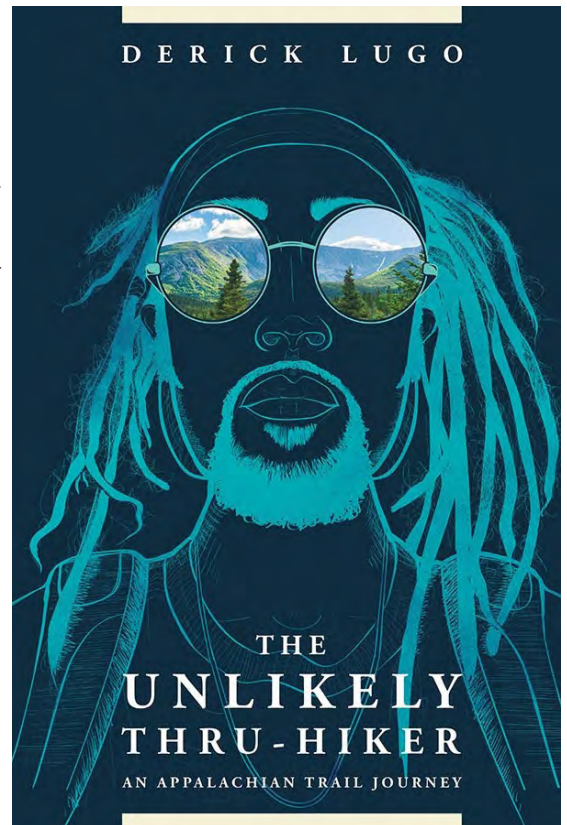
The question the book left me with: Did Mr. Fabulous ever see a moose?

Kathy Kelly-Borowski has led DV Chapter trips for more than three decades. She thru-hiked the AT in 1989. You can read more of her reviews and many other book reviews at <http://amcdv.org/books.html>.

You can purchase this book and others and get a member discount at <https://amcstore.outdoors.org/books-maps>



Mr. Fabulous and Overdrive.



Pandemics are not limited to humans

By Mike Manes

Sitting at home during a pandemic, I think and read about other epidemics, and realize that humans are not the only species that suffer from these horrors. It is unlikely that there are existing animal or plant species that have not suffered from a pandemic.

As a hiker who enjoys the scenery of a forest, I have fallen in love with trees, particularly the big trees that inhabit the local woods. In the last issue of *Footnotes*, I wrote about three pests that attacked a number of species of trees.

In this article I will discuss four species-specific pest or pathogen problems. Two of these four problems are insects, the emerald ash borer and the hemlock woolly adelgid. The other two are fungus diseases, chestnut blight and Dutch elm disease. While there are numerous other species-specific pests and pathogens of trees, these are four of the most aggressive and four that attack the trees of the Delaware Valley. I will discuss them in the chronological order of their arrival in our home area.

Chestnut Blight, *Cryphonectria parasitica*

In the late 19th century the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) was the most common and economically the most important tree in the eastern states. Most mature trees grew straight up from ground level to 50 foot elevation before branching out. The wood was light, easy to split, few knots, and it would not warp or shrink. The best feature of the wood was that it was highly rot resistant. The bark and the wood were rich in tannic acid and were used in leather tanning. It was the tannin and the tannic acid that gave the wood of chestnut its rot resistance.

The first reported case of chestnut blight was in 1904 from the Bronx Zoo in New York City. From there this fungus disease spread rapidly to the southern most limits of chestnut in Georgia about 1940. Well before 1940 the northern limits of the native area had been reached in central Maine and in southern Ontario.

An estimated four billion large trees had been destroyed. In 1904 trees in the Delaware Valley were typically five or six feet in diameter, farther south the diameter was often more than twice this. Now we consider it a large tree if it is four inches in diameter.

The tree's inner bark is called the cambium layer, this is the layer that transports water up from the roots to all higher sections of the tree. The cambium layer also transports nutrients, primarily sugars, down from the chlorophyll containing leaves to the lower parts of the tree, including the roots.

The fungus known as chestnut blight attacks the cambium layer and thus kills the tree. The fungus will not survive in the soil, thus the tree is killed but the roots remain living. Usually, the roots will be able to re-sprout a tree that may live for a short time before contacting blight. There are numerous places in the Delaware Valley where large quantities of small (two inch diameter or less) chestnuts can be found. They are found on sloped, well drained land. Some locations are the Appalachian Trail near the Pinnacle or near Dan's Pulpit.

Another chestnut rich location is the Mill Creek Trail and the Six Penny Trail in French Creek State Park. At all the locations mentioned and several others in the Delaware Valley hundreds of American chestnuts can be spotted.

How does this fungus spread from one tree to the next? The most common way is by the wind, but another is by contact with forest animals or humans. If you see a tree with chestnut blight please don't touch the blight. If you touch it, you are a carrier of this disease, although it will not affect you. *continued*



American chestnut, once king of the forest. USDA photo.

For more on the American Chestnut, go to <http://amcdv.org/chestnut.html>

Tree pandemics, continued.

Dutch Elm Disease, *Ophiostoma ulmi* and *O. novo-ulmi*

In the late 19th and early 20th century the chestnut may have been the king of the hills, but the tree that was the king of the cities was the American elm (*Ulmus americana*). This tree grew very well in the polluted environments of North American cities. This and a second elm called the slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*) are native to the our region and were both nearly wiped out by Dutch elm disease, or DED.

The origin of DED is in Asia, it was first observed in Europe in 1910. The disease was first isolated in 1921 by an all female team headed by Bea Schwarz of the Netherlands, this led to it be given the Dutch name. Unfortunately, the world was not ready to accept work by female scientists at that time.

Until 1928 considerable efforts were made to prevent DED from arriving in North America. These efforts were intensified by knowledge of the epidemic of chestnut blight. Various efforts to control DED were used to contain the fungus in an area within 150 miles of metropolitan New York City until 1941 when the war efforts took priority and the disease spread slowly in all directions, including into Canada.

Originally DED had the scientific name of *Ophiostoma ulmi* and was relatively mild. In 1967 a new more virulent form called *O. novo-ulmi* was discovered in Britain, believed to have arrived from Canada. This spread more rapidly and was more destructive.

The most common way this disease is spread is by a variety of insects known as bark beetles. Use of insecticides does help to prevent the spread. Another control method is to mechanically remove and burn the infected parts. Like the American chestnut, the roots from a dead tree are likely to re-sprout, but DED does affect the roots.

Both the American elm and the slippery elm can be found by the careful tree hunter in various nearby hiking locations. The slippery elm is the more common of the two elms. With one exception I have never seen a clump of more than two of these elms. The one exception is a large clump of American elms in the 21.5 acre municipal Stony Creek Park in Lansdale, PA. This Stony Creek clump was planted with the tallest trees now about 25 feet high. In disease-free areas the tree will often reach a heights of 70 feet.



American elm, beloved urban tree.
Msact, Wikimedia Commons.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, *Adelges tsugae*



Helmlock forest
Northumberland County
Nicholas A. Tonelli photo.

The hemlock is the only conifer included here. It is a tree that grows well in areas of low light. Less light reaches ground level in a hemlock forest than other conifer or deciduous forests at our latitudes. Hemlocks can often be found near streams that cut through hills and mountains.

The hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) was first reported in North America in 1951 near Richmond, VA. It is a small brown insect that feeds on hemlocks (genus *Tsuga*) and some spruces (genus *Picea*), in the Delaware Valley it only attacks one species, the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*).

The eastern hemlock ranges from northern Georgia to southern Canada, 90 percent of the range of this hemlock has been attacked by HWA. The HWA eggs sometimes will not survive harsh winters. This has slowed but not stopped the spread. Evidence of the presence of HWA can be viewed from the

small white, woolly egg clusters that are deposited at the stems of the green needles on the underside of the hemlock branches. *continued*

In our region hemlocks are not common south of the Lehigh Valley, but can be found in locations like Hemlock Point in Green Lane Park. and in Evansburg State Park Further north, hemlocks are plentiful on several trails in the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) in the Delaware Water Gap area.

Other locations with a large quantity of hemlocks are the lower extents of the Coppermine Trail near Camp Mohican on the Jersey side of the Delaware Water Gap and at Ricketts Glen State Park, west of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Emerald Ash Borer, *Agrilus planipennis*

In 2002 near Detroit, Michigan, the first reported incident of the emerald ash borer (EAB) was listed. It is sized and shaped like the lightning bug but with a beautiful shiny green color as the name implies. It has now spread to 35 states, the District of Columbia, and five Canadian provinces. Numerous quarantine rules have been enforced on relocating wood, particularly fire wood in the affected areas.

In our area the ash borer destroys three species of trees that belong to the same genus, these are white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), green ash (*F. pennsylvanica*), and black ash (*F. nigra*). Black ash is also called swamp ash. Adult female EAB will lay their eggs in crevices on the ash tree's outer bark on trees that are approximately eight inches in diameter or larger. When they hatch, the small larva will penetrate the bark and start consuming the inner or cambium layer. In early summer the larva will bore out of the bark forming a D shaped hole and become a flying insect. The adult insect will feed on the leaves from ash and mate several times before dying.

Three years ago I would have listed Peace Valley Park, Nockamixon State Park and Natural Lands Gwynedd Preserve a good places to see a variety of ash trees, now we can see many large dead ash trees or stumps from these trees. Small trees still exist, and hopefully a good method of protecting them will be found.

The future

The blight that reduced the chestnut population was first reported in 1904, almost a century before the insects that reduced the ash population were first reported in 2002. In those years there were several other severe challenges to various trees, and the future will have more. The most serious challenge in the future will be global warming.

To the youngest of AMC members, I believe when your grandchildren turn 90 years of age there will still be some wild chestnuts, elms, hemlocks and ashes growing although the range may change.

Tree pandemics, conluded.



Green ash trees
Chris Light, Wikimedia Commons.



Art & Photography

contest winners



Winner: Photography
Driftwood in Shadow
Boneyard Beach
Bulls Island, Charleston, SC
Rebecca Hone



Winner: Graphic Art
Shenandoah National Park: An old tree recycles new life.
Watercolor by Linda Ahern



Most Striking and Original
Pulsating Sun. That same day as the hike
to Wolf Swamp, it was dry and hot and the
sun was beating down.
Woodcut by Dave Hoke

Best Wildlife
Blue Heron
Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, NJ.
Steve Leibrock

This our cover page image.





Best Composition
Boardwalk on the
Appalachian Trail
Vernon, NJ
John Loyer



Best Snapshot: Doggy Dunes,
Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park, Utah
Nina Trimble