

Appalachian Footnotes

**Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club
Spring 2022 • Volume 60 • Number 1**

Neshaminy Creek Rich Pace photo

A new format, new look for Footnotes!

**100 mile activity participants • Top leaders • Book review • Worlds highest mountain?
and more in this issue.**

Leadership training 2022, Saturday and Sunday May 7-8 at Nockamixon State Park If you want to become a leader and lead trips, this course is a must. Whether it's hiking, backpacking, cycling, paddling, skiing, conservation projects or trail work, this is the program you need to get started. <https://amcdv.org/activities/leadership-training/>

Lehigh Valley group returns to in-person meetings. After two years of online meetings, they will once again take place at Illick's Mill in Bethlehem on the third Wednesday of most months. Online participation will still be available. See the activities calendar for upcoming events.

Pennsylvania appoints its first director of outdoor recreation, Nathan Reigner, who will be part of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Read more at:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/GoodNatured/pages/Article.aspx?post=191>



If you love butterflies, don't plant butterfly bush!

Rip it out, if you have some. Butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) helps exterminate butterfly populations, and is detrimental to songbird populations, too. Native to China, it is not edible by the caterpillars of our butterflies. Sure, it attracts them with its nectar, but the butterflies lay their eggs on the plant and their offspring starve to death.

Songbirds, even the vegetarian species, feed their young almost entirely on caterpillars. It takes at least 2,000 caterpillars to raise a nest of cardinals. Doves are the only exception.

Plant milkweed! Common milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*, a native plant that produces beautiful fragrant flowers will attract many butterflies. There are also many other native species of milkweed that are equally good. If you care about butterflies and songbirds, a good rule is to plant native species. You would be amazed at how many beautiful garden plants are native to our area,

Left: Monarch Butterfly, milkweed flowers

The Third Pole

Mystery, Obsession, and Death on Mount Everest

by Mark Synnott, Dutton Books, 2021

Book review by Kathy Kelly-Borowski

Who has not heard of the 1996 Mount Everest Disaster? *Many books have been written about that deadly season: Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer, *The Climb: Tragic Ambitions on Everest* by Anatoli Boukreev, *Left For Dead: My Journey Home from Everest* by Beck Weathers, *Climbing High: A Woman's Account of Surviving the Everest Tragedy* by Lene Gammelgaard, and *After the Wind: 1996 Everest Tragedy, One Survivor's Story* by Lou Kasischke. I have read the first three mentioned.

Mount Everest is referred to as the "third pole" because it has the biggest ice mass after the earth's north and south polar regions. Mark Synnott is an experienced professional climber who became part of a team that went to Mount Everest using Northeast Ridge. The group was trying to solve the mystery of the 1924 British Expedition to be the first to summit the mountain. Did George Mallory and Sandy Irvine actually stand on the roof of the world on June 8?



George Mallory's body was found in 1999 and detailed in the book *The Lost Explorer: Finding Mallory on Mount Everest* by Conrad Anker and David Roberts. Sandy Irvine's body was never found. It was believed that a Kodak camera was carried by one of the climbers to record their attempt. No camera was found on Mallory's body, so it was thought if Irvine's body was found he may have the camera. If the film was still viable, the mystery might be solved.

Before the 2019 team's summit push, Renan Ozturk, a professional mountaineer and filmmaker, used a drone that weighed only one and a half pounds and fit in the palm of his hand to photograph the terrain and map the mountain. These photographs were used to locate the area where they believed Irvine's body was located. Renan had to hack the drone's safety functions, allowing it to descend quickly and operate at high elevations.



Synnott weaves the history of Everest, Mallory, Irvine, and other climbers throughout the story while describing "the year Everest broke." Traffic jams on the Northeast Ridge and South Col Route occurred during summit attempts in 2019. There were eleven deaths that season, with four deaths blamed on overcrowding. Avoiding spending extra exhausting hours in the "death zone," Mark and his team waited until those crowds cleared to make their push.

The National Geographic documentary *Lost On Everest* was released about the expedition and is streaming on Disney Plus

Photos are from the 1924 Everest expedition

Chimborazo: the highest mountain in the world

That is, if you measure from the center of the earth. This extinct stratovolcano is 20,549 feet above sea level, but because it lies on the equator in Ecuador, it sits in the maximum part of the Earth's equatorial bulge. Its peak is the farthest from Earth's center, and the closest point on our planet to the Sun. Measured from sea level, it is only the 37th highest in the Andes. Aconcagua in Chile at 22,283 feet is the highest.

The biggest mountain in the world by far is Denali, in Alaska. It is a "mere" 20,310 feet high, but it rises from a 2,000 foot base with an immense bulk that dwarfs all other mountains in the world. Denali means "the great one" in the indigenous Koyukon language. However...

If you include the undersea part of mountains, the Big Island of Hawai'i, topped by Mauna Kea at 13,803 feet above sea level, is even taller and bigger, rising more than 32,000 feet from the depths. In geologic terms it is a youngster, only about a million years old



Most active participants in 2021

ranked by mile equivalents:

Hiking – 1 mile = 1 mile

Backpacking – 1 mile = 1 mile

Snowshoeing – 1 mile = 1 mile

Biking - 1 day bike ride = 10 miles

Paddling – 1 day paddling = 10 miles

X-C skiing – 1 day trip = 10 miles

Alpine skiing – 1 day trip = 10 miles

Trail work – 1/2 day = 15 miles

Conservation - 1/2 day = 15 miles

Shelter Watch – 1 visit = 10 miles

Volunteering – 1 outing = 10 miles

Jane Richter	1141.7
Gregory Bernet	702.75
Jay Gross	696.3
Jerry Taylor	416.4
Nancy Marciniak	369.95
Susan Weida	351.95
Adrian Noble	338.3
John Rogers	321.6
Richard Einstein	312.55
Dave Hoke	308
Robert Hileman	303.5
Annette Sheldon	284.8
Stan deRiel	284.8
Christine Filippone	260.5
Elizabeth Depenna	260.2
Jerald Srodes	249.9
Larry Priori	242.87
Kathy Ciliberti	226.8
Cameron Smith	225.4
John Rowen	221.6
Dave Schofield	210.8
Lois Rothenberger	203.1
Mary Morley	201.9
James Bloom	180.9
Michelle Thompson	177.2
Paul Schulke	176
Holly Adams	169.65
Robert Willenbucher	169.45
David Rabold	167.2
Joanne McDonald	156.2
Sue Auyeung	155.5
Mike Manes	154.2
Karen Rossino	153.1
Peter Jarrett	145.2
Lynn Fraser	143.9
Jeffrey Schrager	142
Diane Ullmer	137.9
R. Phelps	137.52
Walter Auyeung	135.5
Richard Hudson	135.3
John Buzdygon	135
Geraldine Chmiel	132.6
Michael Ahern	132
Lisa Kleiman	126.45

Most active leaders in 2021

four or more leads

Michael Ahern
Katie Barok
Gregory Bernet
Theresa Berntsen
Susan Bickford-Martin
Steven Campanelli
Paul Davis
Stan deRiel
Richard Einstein
Judy Farrell
Jay Gross
Blase Hartman
Peter Jarrett
Raun Kercher
Lisa Kleiman
Denis McCartan
David Mong
Adrian Noble
Rich Pace
Janet Penner
Larry Priori
George Rockett
John Rogers
Karen Rossino
Lois Rothenberger
John Rowen
Daniel Schwartz
Annette Sheldon
Jacob Sitkin
Kayleen Soffer
Lennie Steinmetz
Jerry Taylor
Diane Ullmer
Jill Watkins
Julia Watson
Susan Weida

Martin Mersky	125.15
Lennie Steinmetz	124.65
Rich Pace	123.77
Jesse Gusler	120
Susan Bickford-Martin	119.4
Scott Holloway	112.5
Amy Newman	111.5
Dorothy Knaus	111.2
Kathy Gill	110
Blase Hartman	107.1
Susan Mosley	106.6
Midori Wakabayashi	106
Carol Broadbent	104.3
Kayleen Soffer	104.3
George Rockett	102.5
Allison Hudson	101.8
Lisa Schustak	101.35
Paul Schott	101

Snakes in a Park

By Richard Puglisi

Copperheads! Hard to believe, but that's what the sign said during a recent hike at Ringing Rocks Park. Wow, and Ringing Rocks has always been such a nice safe place. The ideal location for a fun family outing.

It seems the signs resulted from a July, 2021 incident where a teenager was bitten by a copperhead at the park. It was so bad that she needed to be sent to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to be treated with anti-venom treatments every six hours. Her hand had swollen to four times its original size.

Maybe not so unusual when you consider that copperheads along with timber rattlesnakes, both venomous, are common across Pennsylvania. There was an incident in 2015 when two people were bitten at Ohiophyle State Park. A copperhead struck when a rafter stepped on one in a rocky area and another when a person was walking near the restrooms.

An adult copperhead can reach 2-3 feet with a body color of copper or hazel-brown. They like wooded hillsides, stone walls and piles of rock, not to mention rotting logs and large, flat stones located near water. They are fond of rodents, especially mice.

Copperheads are said to be quiet creatures and usually do their best to avoid trouble. Though if threatened and they feel the need to protect themselves, they will strike out vigorously. Venom is injected through two hollow fangs connected to glands located on each side of the head. The injection of venom is painful but with prompt medical attention seldom poses any serious threat to human life.

According to the Penn State Poison Center, if you are bitten by a poisonous snake, the most important thing is to stay calm and call 911 or go to a hospital immediately.

In the vast majority of snake encounters, people have ample opportunity to stop, backup or otherwise avoid the snake. If you give snakes a bit of respectable space, you should be fine. Don't poke them with sticks or throw things at them. Be careful, be cautious and let's enjoy our parks and the outdoors.



Eastern copperhead, *Agkistrodon contortrix*

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A book that might interest you

Tales from the Trail: Stories from the Oldest Hiker Hostel on the Appalachian Trail by Sherry Blackman pays tribute to those who dare the grueling and soul-satisfying adventure of the 2200-mile hike from Georgia to Maine.

The Presbyterian Church of the Mountain in Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania, is home to the oldest, continuously-running Hiker Hostel on the Appalachian Trail (AT), offering sanctuary to over 1200 hikers per year. Blackman is a spiritual-investigative reporter in her new book, relying on decades of experience as a prize-winning, globe-trotting journalist, poet and author. She brings a keen observational eye, an inquisitive intellect, and deep-down compassion to those who shared their stories and longings for answers, healing, and transformation in this cathedral of the wild.

Tales from the Trail, part memoir and part spiritual reflection, chronicles the adventures—some humorous, some deeply moving—of those who dare to strip life down to its bare bones to discover or rediscover their humanity.

