



Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter November 2019



Ellen X. Silverberg photo

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Learn About Mussel Restoration in the Anacostia Nov. 7

Find out how mussels are being planted by the thousands in the Anacostia River to help filter the water and provide food for aquatic birds when habitat restoration specialist Jorge Bogantes Montero of the Anacostia Watershed Society speaks on Thursday, November 7.

His presentation takes place at 7:30 pm at

the Silver Spring Civic Building on Ellsworth Drive. Parking is free after 6:30 pm in the county garage across the street. Come at 7:00 pm to socialize with others who care about the ecological health of the Anacostia watershed, which includes Sligo Creek.

Jorge will introduce us to fresh-water mussels with an overview of the eight species currently found in the Anacostia, their ecological interactions with other wildlife, and ongoing efforts to restore their former abundance here.

Mussels are the most imperiled group of animals in North America with 70 percent of native species considered vulnerable, imperiled, endangered, or extinct. Of the approximately 300 surviving species in the U.S., most are found in the Deep South and Southeast. Maryland is home to 16 species, Virginia 82 species, North Carolina 60, and Alabama 180 (some species occur in more than one state).

The tidal portion of the Anacostia contains an abundance of microscopic nutrients for mussels to feed upon, including plankton, leaf detritus, and bacteria. In a good sign for the restoration project, 97 percent of 5,850 mussels survived at least their first three months in the river.

See this [story](#) in the Washington Post from October 24 about the AWS efforts to restore mussels in the Anacostia. For more information about the talk, email president@fosc.org.



Jorge Bogantes Montero adding mussels to the Anacostia River (AWS photo)



Multi-colored mussels ready to be added to the Anacostia River (AWS photo)

Rachel Carson Lived Here

A window display about environmentalist pioneer Rachel Carson and her years living in the Sligo watershed is on view at Historic Takoma. You can visit the display through Thanksgiving Day at 7328 Carroll Avenue, near the intersection with Rt. 410 and the Takoma Park Coop.

The map, photos, and text are the product of research and design by Laura Mol, who also created our web resource on the same topic, which you can explore [here](#) (or by searching "Rachel Carson" on our website home page). Laura was a founding board member of FOSC and continues on the natural history committee.

Rachel Carson lived in the Sligo Creek watershed from 1937 to 1949 (Highland Drive, Flower Avenue, Maple Avenue, and finally Sutherland Road) before moving into the watershed of the Northwest Branch mainstem.



(Wilpers photo)

Sligo Creek Reaches Barcelona

Visitors to a prestigious art gallery in Spain have enjoyed creative views of Sligo Creek this fall, thanks to the award-winning photography of Sligo resident Julius Kasovic.

His photos of dramatic reflections in the creek's waters have been exhibited in galleries from Vermont to California (as well as the Takoma Park Civic Center). His recent display at the FotoNostrum Gallery in Barcelona was his first exhibit in Europe. His work was on display there for the month of October.

This high-profile opportunity resulted from his work being selected by the Pollux Awards, an annual and international photography competition. Julius entered three of his photos (below) and all three were not only selected by the juror but also won Honorable Mentions in the category of landscapes and seascapes. To learn more about Julius' amazing photography, visit his website at www.photojulius.com.



GLOAMING (2008)

I've been intensively photographing in the creek since 2005, and Gloaming was one of my early shots from 2008. It shows the reflection of a tree, sky, and clouds on the still water of the creek. The golden color is from a bright autumn sunset. The leaf is floating in the water, passing the tree.



LAMINA (2018)

A tree, reflected and distorted by water flowing over the abandoned and exposed water-runoff sewer just downstream from Piney Branch Road. Rocks are under the water in the pool formed by the sewer pipe dam.



LITHIC (2016)

A tree, blue sky, and white clouds reflected on the shallow water near a rocky bank under the old bridge at Park Valley. Rocks on the creek bottom are clearly visible in the shadow of the tree.

Nature Highlights from October



*Palm Warbler at the Wheaton Branch ponds
(Mandrake Sumner photo)*

October was a productive time for nature photographers in Sligo.

The Palm Warbler at left was photographed by Mandrake Sumner at the Wheaton Branch ponds on October 12, presumably on its way south for the winter, which it spends along the Caribbean coast in Mexico and South America. Dan Treadwell photographed the same species at the Kemp Mill stormwater ponds, where Ann Hobbs spotted one on October 16.

At the Wheaton Branch ponds from October 21-23, Robert Cantor observed three Eastern Phoebes, two Eastern Bluebirds, four Black Vultures, and eight Wood Ducks, among other birds. His great shot of a Bluebird is below.

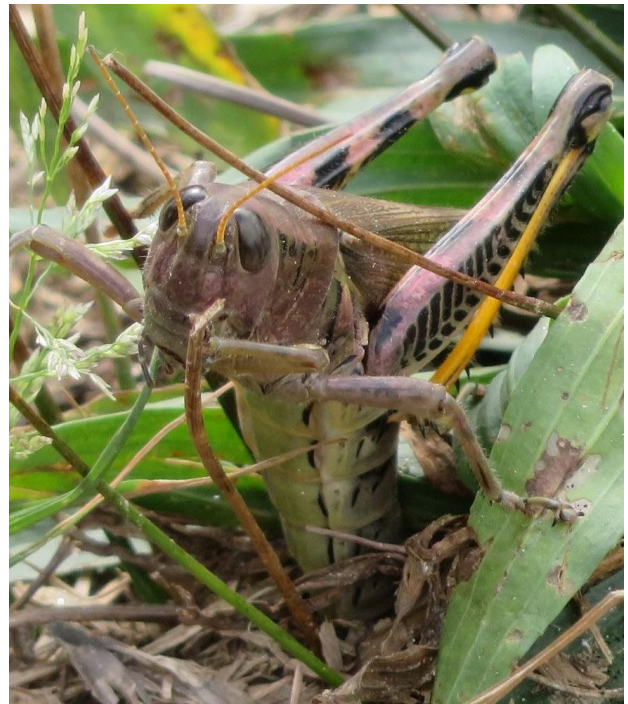
On October 6, Stephen Davies counted no less than fifteen Chimney Swifts, which were stopping by Sligo while heading to their winter habitats on Caribbean islands and in northwest South America.



Eastern Phoebe showing its winter yellow plumage October 5 at the Kemp Mill stormwater ponds (Dan Treadwell photo)



Eastern Bluebird at the Wheaton Branch ponds on October 23 (Robert Cantor photo)



Differential Grasshopper at the Kemp Mill stormwater ponds on October 5 (Dan Treadwell photo)

At least twenty Red-eared Sliders were sunning themselves when Dan Treadwell took their photo (above) on October 25 at the Kemp Mill stormwater ponds. This species is native to the southern U.S. but has been released widely by pet owners and now thrives in the Baltimore-Washington area at the expense of native species.

In the photo below, Robert Cantor captured a Red-tailed Hawk (far left) being chased away by a group of crows after it made an unsuccessful dive at a Great Blue Heron at the Wheaton Branch ponds.



Despite the long drought, plants in the powerline meadow (below) were showing nice colors on October 19, with plenty of grass-leaved (aka flat-top) goldenrod (foreground), late boneset, winged sumac (red), and small white aster.



(Wilpers photo)

Need to Reach Us?

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Friends of Sligo Creek is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to protecting, improving, and appreciating the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed.