



Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter July 2021



Photo by Ellen X. Silverberg

Zoom Talk July 20: Will Migratory Fish Return to Sligo?

Migratory fish like shad and herring once swam up Sligo Creek every spring to spawn, before human development altered our waterways and made them impassable to these fish. Could they return?

Find out during our next online talk on Tuesday, July 20, at 7:00 pm, with Phong Trieu of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). The Zoom link for the event is [here](#) and is also on the FOOSC website calendar of events.

In May of 2020, Phong was called upon to identify schools of fish



reported in Goddard Creek, Greenbelt, at the far northern reaches of the Anacostia watershed.

American Gizzard Shad from Goddard Creek in May (Photo by Jorge Bogantes Montero)

Using videos from local naturalist Liz MacDonald, Phong determined they were American Gizzard Shad, which spend most of their lives in the Potomac River but swim far up into small tributaries each spring to spawn. Jorge Bogantes Montero of the Anacostia Watershed Socet visited Goddard Creek to investigate and confirmed the sighting (see photo above).



The reappearance of these migratory fish in the upper watershed is the result of efforts begun in 2002 to remove fourteen fish blockages from the numerous streams feeding the Anacostia.

By 2006, fifteen miles of stream channel had been reopened to fish movement, including lower Sligo, where evidence of Alewife Herrings has recently been found. This herring is a species of concern for NOAA.

*Above: American Gizzard Shad in Goddard Creek in May.
(Photo by Jamie Jorgensen from iNaturalist.)*

These recent barrier removals were part of mitigations required from the loss of habitat due to the Wilson Bridge project. These, in turn, added to earlier removals by the State of Maryland that started in 1972.

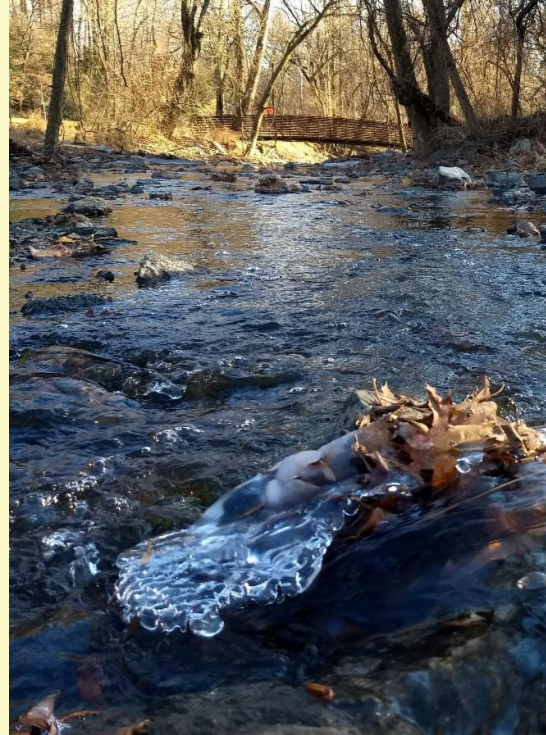
For more information on this talk, contact president@fosc.org.

Join the Board of FOSC

Do you love Sligo Creek and the Park? Do you love that Friends of Sligo Creek helps us protect and enjoy this natural treasure in our neighborhoods?

Did you also know that FOSC has only one part-time contract staffer (to manage our database and website) and that everything else gets done by volunteers, whether it involves litter, invasive plants, water quality, stormwater, advocacy, or natural history? If not, now you do!

One very important way YOU can help is to consider joining FOOSC's board of directors.



Sligo Creek in late winter

We meet every month or two, discuss current and upcoming initiatives, address major issues confronting the park and the organization, monitor the budget, and make important decisions -- always in good company and often with tasty snacks.

It's always a fascinating group of people from all up and down the watershed, with a wide range of skills, passions, and expertise. We'd like as diverse a board as possible to broaden the range of voices that set our priorities, pursue our goals, make decisions, and reach out to the broader community.

If you're interested or want to recommend someone you know, please contact FOOSC president Mike Smith at president@fosc.org.

-- Kit Gage, Advocacy Director



Jim Anderson Leaves Inspiring Legacy as Invasives Chair

After nearly fifteen years, Jim Anderson has stepped down from his post as chair of our RIP (Remove Invasive Plants) Committee.

Jim agreed to chair the committee in 2007 after the founding chair (and first FOSC president), Sally Gagne, retired from that position. In 2008, he became a Certified Weed Warrior for Montgomery Parks and then a Weed Warrior Supervisor.

According to Parks' statistics, Jim has logged more than 4,100 hours removing non-native invasive (NNI) plants and has led nearly 100 groups doing the same, from scouts and school groups to businesses and religious organizations. In 2020 and half of 2021 alone, Jim devoted 270 hours to invasives work. Jim's passion is a family affair as his wife, Deanna, is also a certified Weed Warrior.

In 2017, Jim was named Volunteer of the Year by the Montgomery County Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. In the photo below from the ceremony, Jim is flanked by Carole Bergmann (Montgomery Parks forest ecologist) and Mike Riley (Montgomery Parks Director).



*Jim and Deanna at our cicada outing in June
(M. Wilpers photo)*

In May of this year, the Voice of America profiled Jim and his Weed Warrior efforts in a ten-minute video you can watch [here](#) (or find it on our website under the tab at the top for "Invasive Plants/RIP").

Jim also served on the FOSC board of directors starting in 2008.

Former FOSC president



Corinne Stephens, who is now Senior Natural Resources Specialist and Weed Warrior Volunteer Coordinator with Montgomery Parks, says it well:

"Between his service on the FOSC Board, as the head of the FOSC RIP committee, and most notably his on-the-ground work clearing numerous non-native, invasive plants from Montgomery Parkland, it's an understatement to say that Jim is an inspiration to all volunteers!

"Jim is a wonderful mentor and excelled at training volunteers on proper plant identification and control methods. His Weed Warrior Workdays were always fun as well as productive and educational. He has personally helped me transform the Weed Warrior Program and even participated in some training videos for us! I called on Jim for help (a lot!) and he always came through! Jim continues to amaze me with his upbeat personality, keen attention to detail and organizing abilities, sense of humor, and overall love of nature."

Longtime section steward Ross Campbell offered this appreciation: "For 14 years, Jim showed us all his North Dakotan character: tough, hard working, and friendly. Little could slow him down, not hip surgeries, oppressive weather, or intimidating thickets of barberry.

"Jim has been a dedicated advocate for the park, particularly when it came to educating newcomers to the mission of invasives removal, whether it was through interactions with passersby or working with busloads of students from Stone Ridge High School. I have been privileged to get to know Jim and to work with him in the park these many years."



Students from Stone Ridge High School, here in 2019, were just one of the many groups that Jim led in removing invasives from Sligo. (Kathleen Treat photo)

Another veteran section steward, Ed Murtagh, notes that, in addition to all his work organizing groups to remove invasives, "Jim studied the science of controlling exotic invasive plants. Using this background from his plant science career at the USDA, he helped motivate and provide direction for the Weed Warriors who work along Sligo Creek and Long Branch. Jim's commitment to Sligo Creek inspired many Weed Warriors to tackle their mandate to manage exotic invasive plants in Sligo Creek Park."

Thank you, Jim, for all you've done to remove NNI plants from Sligo and to inspire so many others in this ongoing effort that is so crucial to enhancing the ecological health of the watershed!



*Thanks to Jim's tireless efforts, staff from Elysian Energy donated time every year to removing invasive plants from our parks (as with this team in Long Branch in 2015).
He supervised nearly 100 such groups!*

Nature in Sligo

*A selection of recent observations from the iNaturalist project titled
"Fauna and Flora of the Sligo Creek Watershed"*



*American Bullfrogs at the Beltway stormwater ponds on June 28.
(Photo by Dan Treadwell)*



*Lace Bug in the genus Corythucha in the powerline meadow on June 26.
(Photo by Katja Schulz)*



*Great Blue Heron maneuvers a Brown Bullhead catfish in order to swallow it head-first
at the Beltway stormwater ponds on May 18. (Photo by Dan Treadwell)*



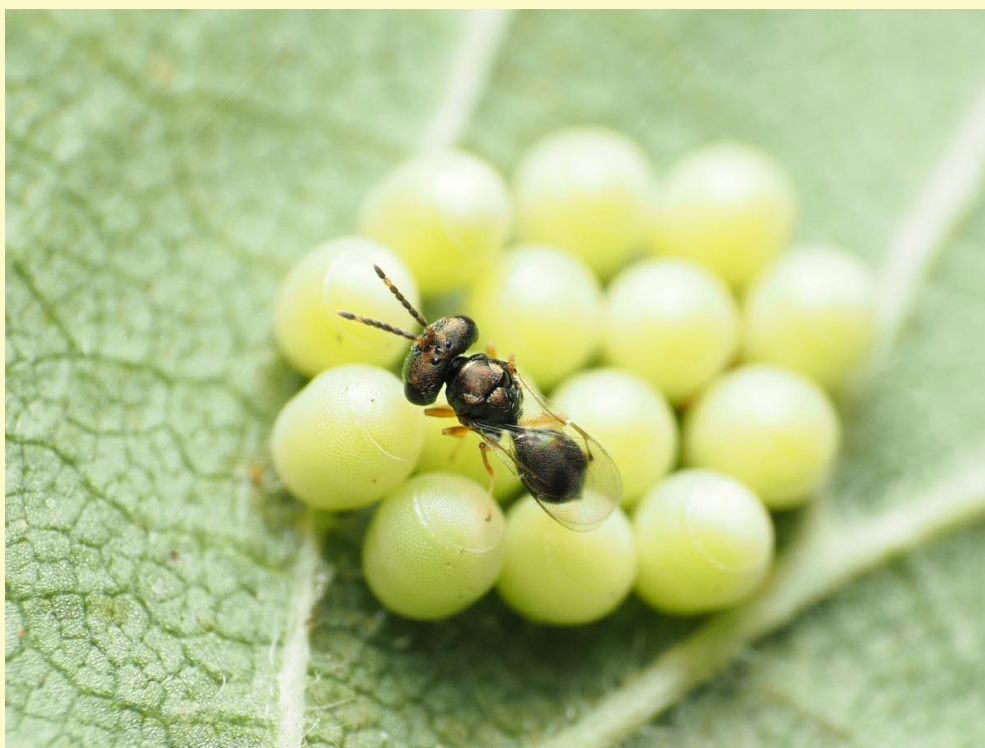
Common Green June Beetle in Carole Highlands on July 8. (Photo by Kristin Zimmer)



Yellow-billed Cuckoo at the Wheaton Branch ponds on July 4. (Photo by Stephen Davies)



Fall Webworm Moth caterpillar in Takoma Park on July 1. (Photo by A. van den Beemt)



*A wasp called *Acroclisoides sinicus* on eggs of a stink bug in the powerline meadow on June 26. A female of this wasp lays its eggs through holes it pokes into the eggs of stink bugs, but when the wasp eggs hatch, the larvae feed not on the stink bug egg but, instead, seek out and eat the pupae of another wasp species that does eat (parasitize) the stink bug egg. Thus the wasp above is a hyperparasitoid insect. (Photo by Katja Schulz)*



Indigo Bunting in the powerline meadow on June 17. (Photo by Tony Fatcher)



A Leaf-footed Bug (see appendanges to its lower legs) at the Wheaton Branch stormwater ponds on July 7. (Photo by Stephen Davies)



*Hummingbird Clearwing moth nectaring from bee balm in Carole Highlands on July 6.
(Photo by Kristin Zimmer)*

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, July 20, 7 pm: Migratory Fish in Sligo Creek?

What are the prospects for migratory fish like shad and herring returning to Sligo Creek? Find out at this Zoom meeting with Phong Trieu of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Anacostia Program. He will describe his findings and observations about these migratory fish entering the Anacostia watershed tributaries in recent years. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85385459500?pwd=K3QxaW1YR3ZxTXB4VFZjQ0tibjRDUT09>.

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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.

Join FOSC