



# Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter January 2022



*Photo by Ellen X. Silverberg*

## Meet the New President of Anacostia Watershed Society January 18

Meet Chris Williams, the new president of Anacostia Watershed Society, and learn about his vision for the many tributaries of the Anacostia River, such as Sligo Creek and the Northwest Branch, in a Zoom event on Tuesday, January 18, at 7:30 pm.

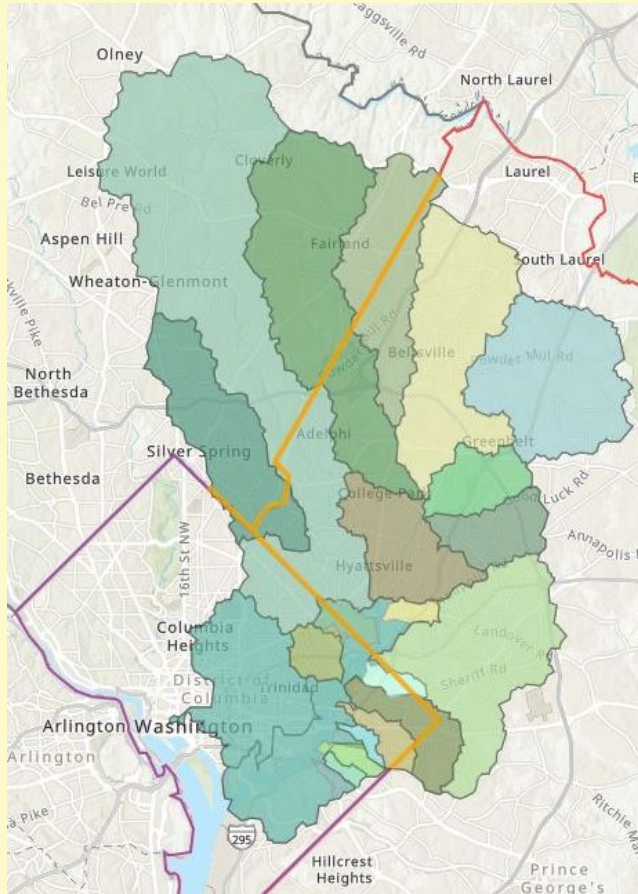
The Zoom link is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81025505985>. Chris will speak for about 30 minutes and then we'll open it up for Q&A and discussion.



Chris was hired in 2021 after a national search and now leads AWS efforts in watershed conservation, restoration, and education by building partnerships,

raising funds, and stewarding all the resources of the organization. At the same time, he directs AWS's work in advocacy and public policy.



Prior to joining AWS, Chris was senior vice president for conservation at American Rivers and director of the freshwater program at the World Wildlife Fund, where he guided watershed conservation programs in the U.S., Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. He holds a B.A. from the University of Washington and a J.D. and master's in environmental law and policy from the Vermont Law School. He lives in Cheverly.

*The Anacostia River watershed. Sligo is the dark blue-green area at left around Silver Spring. The golden line heading northeast divides Montgomery and PG Counties. (AWRP map)*

AWS has been involved in Sligo for more than 15 years. From 2004 to 2009, their water quality specialist, Masaya Maeda, conducted stream assessment for most of the Anacostia's tributaries in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, including Sligo. His data collection was crucial in requiring WSSC to fulfill a 2005 consent decree reached between the EPA, local nonprofits (such as FOSC), and WSSC to patch numerous sewer line leaks and install improvements in watersheds across their service area. Masaya's data also proved key to gaining passage of the Maryland Stormwater Management Act of 2007.

At the confluence of Sligo with the Northwest Branch, Jorge Bogantes Montero, AWS natural resources specialist, has completed major habitat restoration projects and led walks for FOSC.



*Right: New AWS president Chris Williams speaks at a 2021 rally to save Guilford Woods from development on the campus of the University of Maryland College Park.*

Jorge also established an iNaturalist project for the entire Anacostia watershed (including Sligo), which has so far documented nearly 7,000 species of plants, animals, fungi, and protozoans. All observations made on iNaturalist within Sligo are automatically incorporated. You can follow the sightings here:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/biodiversity-of-the-anacostia-river>.

Most recently, in 2020 and 2021, AWS staff worked with FOSC's natural history committee and residents of Chillum to devise management goals and strategies for working with Pepco to improve the shrub-meadow habitat in the powerline corridor that crosses Sligo.

For questions about this event, contact [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org).

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## **MLK Day Cleanup of Parks around NH Estates Elementary**

Celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday by joining a cleanup of local parks near New Hampshire Estates Elementary School on Monday, January 17.

Cleanup teams will work from noon to 2:00 pm removing trash from roads and neighborhoods near the school as well as four Montgomery County parks, depending on how many volunteers show up:

- New Hampshire Estates Neighborhood Park (directly behind the school)
- Quebec Terrace Neighborhood Park (which borders the south side of Piney Branch Rd. from Carroll almost to NH Ave.)
- Seek Lane Park (two blocks west of University Blvd.)
- Long Branch-Garland Park

The school is located at 8720 Carroll Avenue, between University Blvd. and Piney Branch Rd. Student service learning hours can be earned. All participants must show proof of vaccination in order to participate. This event is organized by Montgomery Parks, CHEER, DEP, Friends of Sligo Creek, and NHE/OV Linkages to Learning.

For more information on the cleanup, visit this [Parkswebpage](#).  
Sign up for the event here: [Register](#).

If you can't attend on January 17, consider signing up for the January "Plogging Challenge," which runs from January 15 to 22 and includes these and many other parks in Sligo. Learn more or register here: [Plogging Challenge](#).

For questions on the cleanup or plogging event, contact [valeria.espinoza@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:valeria.espinoza@montgomeryparks.org).



*Three of the four parks that will be targeted during the MLK cleanup on Monday, January 17:  
NH Estates Park (upper right), Seek Lane Park (lower left), and Long Branch-Garland Park (far left)  
The meeting place, NH Estates Elementary School, is at far right.  
The major north-south roadway is University Blvd. just below Piney Branch Rd.*

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## Welcome to New FOSC Board Members

Friends of Sligo Creek is thrilled to welcome two new members to its Board of Directors. Lima Abdullah and Vanesa Pinto each bring invaluable connections to the wider Sligo community as well as deep experience in community service and organizing. With their arrival, the board now consists of thirteen members, whom you can see on our website [here](#). Welcome Lima and Vanesa!



**Lima Abdullah** is president this year of the East Silver Spring Elementary School PTA, and she and her husband are the proud parents of two ESS "Pandas." She is the chairwoman of the MCCPTA



**Vanesa Pinto** is director of the empowerment and leadership development program at CHEER (Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research), a grassroots nonprofit

Advocacy Committee, the Welcoming Committee chairwoman of the East Silver Spring Civic Association, and a longtime Girl Scout leader of Troop 34024.

Her life's work has revolved around ensuring that people understand and feel empowered to help shape policies and politics that impact their lives. Her particular focus, both as a community leader and as a veteran political journalist, has included a focus on inclusivity in highlighting the lives and experiences of the BIPOC community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), women and girls, and those whose narratives have not always been at the forefront.

She and her family enjoy hiking and biking trails in the greater Washington D.C. area and cultural travel. She is looking forward to helping organize events that bring our community together around the shared importance of environmental awareness.

where she organizes programs for community building and networks of support in Long Branch.

Before finding her passion in community organizing, Vanesa was an accountant in Bolivia. Since arriving in Silver Spring, she has volunteered in community organizations and elementary schools. Since 2018, she has taught Spanish literacy and basic computer classes to adults since 2018 in the YMCA's Linkages to Learning program.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, Vanesa, with other community members, has been leading weekly food distribution at New Hampshire Estates, helping more than 400 families and individuals.

For over 20 years as a Long Branch resident, she has also volunteered with the PTA and Impact Silver Spring. She serves on boards of the YMCA and the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board.

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## Support FOSC

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## Nature Photos from Sligo

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

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fauna-and-flora-of-the-sligo-creek-watershed>

Photographers' names are those provided to iNaturalist.

Send comments or questions to Michael Wilpers via [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org).



*Hooded Merganser on the Wheaton Branch ponds on Nov. 20 by Stephen Davies*



*Above: Two young male White-tailed Deer (8- and 6-point) at play near Long Branch at Carroll on Dec. 17 by jimdella.*



*Right: A very rare piebald White-tailed Deer near Mississippi and Hilton on Nov. 1 by anneelyse*



*Left: Violet-toothed Polypore mushrooms near Wayne and Sligo on Jan. 2 by hughbrand*

*Above: Lion's-mane Mushroom just north of Park Valley Drive on Dec. 31 by david\_olson1*



*Two life stages of the Variegated Fritillary butterfly:*

*Left: Caterpillar on Dallas near Lanark on Dec. 15 by angelawang2*

*Above: Adult in the powerline corridor in Chillum on Nov. 21 by Kristin Zimmer*



*Three hawks with prey in Sligo:  
Above: Cooper's Hawk struggling with European Starling near Franklin & Sudbury*

on Jan. 3

Right: Sharp-shinned Hawk with unidentified  
bird at Wheaton Branch ponds on Dec. 22

Below: Red-tailed Hawk with squirrel

All photos by Stephen Davies



*Red-tailed Hawk with squirrel prey above the Wheaton Branch ponds on Nov. 20 by Stephen Davies*



*Above: Ground-Ivy at Belle Ziegler Park on Nov. 6 by  
carrieseltzer*

*Right: Osage-Orange near Blair Rd. and Rittenhouse on  
Nov. 24 by ae\_caughlin*





*Two late-flying butterflies on Dec. 4:  
Above: Clouded Sulpher  
Left: Orange Sulpher  
Both at Wheaton Branch ponds by S. Davies*



*Eastern Red-backed Salamander at Dale  
Neighborhood Park on Dec. 2 by marsrevolt*



*Dekay's Brownsnake near  
Long Branch at Carroll on Nov. 11 by jimdella*

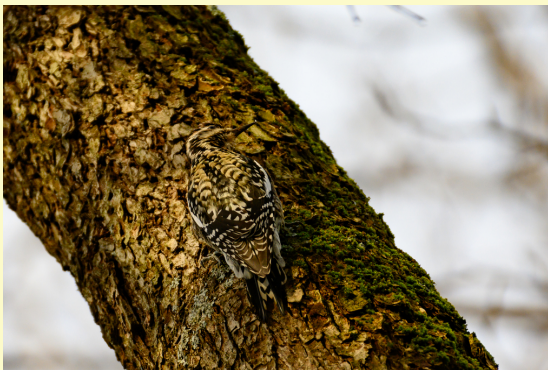


*Above: Egg of insect in the subclass Pterygota on a privet species in Carole Highlands on Jan. 2 by Kristin Zimmer*

*Left: Organ-pipe Mud-dauber Wasp nest (over graffiti) near Wayne and the paved trail on Jan. 8 by hughrand*



*Three more birds with prey:  
Left: Eastern Bluebird with insect prey at the Wheaton Branch ponds on Dec. 14 by S. Davies  
Above: Great Blue Heron with American Bullfrog prey at the Beltway ponds on Nov. 8 by Dan Treadwell  
Below: Belted Kingfisher with fish*



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker well disguised by cryptic coloration against tree bark near the Wheaton*

*Belted Kingfisher with fish prey at the Wheaton Branch ponds on Dec. 9 by Stephen Davies*



*Evidence of fly caterpillars at work:*

*Above: Openings left by the Oak Shothole Leafminer near Wayne and Cedar on Dec. 17 by maragay*



*Right: Trails left by Phytomyza opacae on American Holly at the foot of Yates St. by Wilpers*



*Above: Greenbottle Fly near Wayne and Cedar on Nov. 10 by maragay*



*Right: Golden-crowned Kinglet at the Wheaton Branch ponds on Nov. 6 by Stephen Davies*



*Black Gum (Nyssa sylvatica) along the Parkway just south of Wayne on Nov. 1 by M. Wilpers  
This species was nominated last fall to be named the official county tree.*

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## Need to Reach Us?

President (Mike Smith): [president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)

Invasive Plants (Walter Mulbry): [invasives@fosc.org](mailto:invasives@fosc.org)

Litter (Ed Murtagh): [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org)

Advocacy (Kit Gage): [advocacy@fosc.org](mailto:advocacy@fosc.org)

Natural History (Bruce Sidwell): [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org)

Stormwater (Elaine Lamirande): [stormwater@fosc.org](mailto:stormwater@fosc.org)

Water Quality (Pat Ratkowski): [waterquality@fosc.org](mailto:waterquality@fosc.org)

Outreach (Sarah Jane Marcus): [outreach@fosc.org](mailto:outreach@fosc.org)

Treasurer (Betsy Proch): [treasurer@fosc.org](mailto:treasurer@fosc.org)

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Newsletter Editor (Michael Wilpers): [editor@fosc.org](mailto:editor@fosc.org)

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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**



