

Lime Hollow's Woodland Whispers

Volume 11 Number 2

New Opportunity for Natural Connections:

Adopt a Trail Stewardship Program

LHCEC is inviting individuals and families to help maintain it's wonderful seven miles of trails. The goal is to have people develop a connection to a particular part of our trail system and help maintain it. You may be a trail steward for the trail section of your choice on a first come first serve basis. We hope that this will not only help provide a safe and clear trail system for our community, but also will benefit people in many ways. Stewardship over a section of trail can help you and your children develop a sense of place, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment. It will help you develop a more personal connection to Lime Hollow as you get out in the fresh air.

You are invited to please help us continually improve our trail system. We have the tools and supplies and just need "green" sweat. Got green Sweat? Please call Carol at the center and sign up for your section today.

More opportunities to promote LHCEC:

Lime Hollow Needs You!

Lime Hollow needs you too! Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities at Lime Hollow

Are you a birder? Learn how you can lead groups, especially needed when the new building is completed. We will need guides to help us lead budding birders out onto the property to the best birding sites.

Are you a naturalist, an educator? Learn how you can share your knowledge with the Young Naturalists group, or our formal programming or with Day Camp and public programs.

Do you have computer skills and enjoy working in an office? Please inquire how to help us with administrative support for the office and preparations for the new building.

Do you like to garden? See how you can help us beautify our landscape, be involved in cultivating the children's garden and help with Naturescaping.

Learn how you can assist in promoting Lime Hollow with poster placement.

Whatever your skills and interests chances are they can help LHCEC. Please inquire. Call Carol at 758-5462.

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At LHCEC, many hands make light work...

Birds, Bushes & Hands Build Lime Hollow

The old adage, "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush," comes to mind when one considers progress being made on Lime Hollow's new visitor center. However, in this case, it is gifts from families like the Robert P. Bush clan and volunteer hands that will soon make birds more available to LHCEC visitors. Sparked by a grandchild's love for LHCEC, the Robert and Beverly Bush family, from Homer, NY is enabling construction of a bird education room (The Robert P. Bush Bird Education Room) in honor of their recently deceased father. The room overlooks a streamside bird sanctuary allowing visitors to view birds, and other wildlife, in natural habitat. Equipment and materials are being designed to aid identification of birds sited. Visitors will be able to purchase materials and supplies to assist bird watching endeavors at home.

Lime Hollow is also most fortunate to have many volunteer hands at work completing its new visitor center at 338 McLean Road. Following the detailed plans of architect Brian Buttner (ADR Associates) and basic foundation work by Bell Construction; the visitor center is finally approaching completion of its weather-tight exterior under the leadership of volunteer construction manager Scott Steve. Mr. Steve, a retired construction contractor, has taken on construction manager duties in addition to his busy schedule as Chair of the Cortland County Legislature. The numerous volunteers under his direction anticipate a November 1st completion of this phase of building construction.

The final phase of construction involves careful completion of the building's 2400 square foot



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Our Mission

The mission of the Lime Hollow Center for Environment & Culture is to provide year-round environmental education and outdoor recreation opportunities through the utilization and protection of the natural and cultural attributes of the Lime Hollow area.

LHCEC Visitor Hours

Monday – Saturday: 9AM - 4PM
Sunday: 1PM – 4PM
LHCEC Trails: Open during daylight hours
LHCEC Telephone: 607.758.5462
E-mail: limehollow@clarityconnect.com
Web: <http://www.limehollow.org>



Lime Hollow's new visitor center.

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Newsletter

Charles Yaple, Ph. D.
Carol Navarro

Layout

natolidesign

Birds, Bushes and Hands" continued from page 1



interior. The LHCEC visitor center committee (Ready to Grow) is reconsidering initial plans to be certain interior space is efficiently and creatively utilized. Following guidelines from the Museum Store Association and professional experts, the goal is to create interesting exhibits and displays that can be easily rearranged as seasons change and new thematic concepts materialize. A strong effort will also be made to select sale items that support LHCEC's educational mission and earth stewardship philosophies. A visit to LHCEC's new "green building" visitor center will acquaint people with such things as geo-thermal radiant floor heating, photovoltaic solar panels, superior insulation, composting toilets and, hopefully, motivate thoughtful consideration about the size of one's own ecological footprint. A grand opening date will be postponed until Spring 2006 to allow sufficient time to thoughtfully complete the building's interior.

Meanwhile, the Board of Directors and staff trust friends of LHCEC will continue to visit our 7.5 miles of trails and stop by the new visitor center for personal "sneak previews" as the building nears completion. Fall is a wonderful time (fall foliage, no biting insects) to get outdoors and walk in the natural world. For bird lovers it presents a last opportunity to see many feathered (but fair weather) friends before they begin journeys to warmer territories.

"If I had to choose, I would rather have birds than airplanes"

-Charles Lindbergh

Volunteer Spotlight:

Let's hear it for Sharon!

Meet Sharon Strojnowski, who has been a nurturing and consistent volunteer at Lime Hollow for three years. Sharon has made a lifestyle of helping others. After 20 years of being a nurse, she regularly volunteers for her church, the Homestore, and other organizations in our community. We are very lucky to be one of the recipients of her kindness. When she gives of her time and energy at Lime Hollow you will find her in the office helping us with a myriad of jobs. She is very artistic and we have come to depend on her assistance with craft preparations for our preschool program. Her presence and help in this area frees up the time of the environmental educators to prepare their lessons for the week.

We appreciate Sharon's sensitivity and commitment to environmental education. In the past she has volunteered at other environmental education centers like the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. She also has insight to needs of the staff at Lime Hollow, as her daughter is also an environmental educator for BOCES in Auburn, NY.

Sharon is a professional seamstress and makes beautiful quilts. When something needs a stitch or two, she comes to the rescue with her marvelous sewing skills. She has contributed her own resources to make curtains for numerous windows on Lime Hollow property.

Sharon is also a fantastic cook and works her magic, by baking cookies, cakes, and other goodies for public programs. Many times she has treated the staff with yummys from her kitchen. A budding birdwatcher, she participated in this past spring's ornithology class. The other participants looked forward to learning about the birds, but also to sampling Sharon's wonderful cakes and cookies during their meetings.

Most of all Sharon enjoys being outdoors and spending time with her grandchildren. She is active in the outdoors in every season of the year, gardening, kayaking, biking and cross-country skiing. We are grateful for her and appreciate the wholesome goodness that she brings to Lime Hollow.



Sharon Strojnowski

Something that stirs your soul...

This Old House and a Sense of Place.

The following letters involve a grandmother who has recently lost her husband and is contemplating sale of their home and making a move into an assisted living senior citizen center. Names have been changed, but the people are real individuals from the Cortland/Homer area and, we are proud to say, deeply involved with Lime Hollow. Their words wonderfully illustrate the theme of Richard Louv's book (*Last Child in the Woods...*) reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter.

-Charles

Dear son;

I couldn't sleep all night, thinking about everything. This morning when I got up I fixed a cup of coffee & sat by the picture window to watch the birds & I just knew I could not give up my home & everything I loved about it. I have to be able to see trees & lawn, my flowers & birds & see & hear the brook. You are just looking at four walls & lace curtains in the apartment. All the windows are covered except the one over the sink. You hear the sound of traffic & nothing else. All I could think of was one of my favorite poems.

If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft,
And from thy slender store two loaves alone to thee are left,
Sell one, and with the dole
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul.

I am only happy when I am surrounded by beauty, something that speaks to my soul. That was what made this place so special to Dad & me. It spoke

*I am only happy
when I am surrounded
by beauty,
something that speaks
to my soul.*

to us every day of all the things that God had created on this earth for us to enjoy. We didn't need or want material things to make us happy. We had our faith and our family and each other and our little corner of God's creation to enjoy.

Dad's one wish was that he could end his earthly life in his own home enjoying the view from his picture window of his beloved birds. I can feel Dad's presence here with me yet. I couldn't feel him with me in that apartment.

I know I have to give this place up eventually. But the time hasn't come yet. Dad's ashes are buried in the cemetery, but he isn't there. But he is with me here. I'm sure I will wonder why I was so foolish when the snow is piled high and a cold wind blows, but I will make some homemade soup to share with Misty, and enjoy a good book. Hope you can understand.

Love, Mother

Grandma,

Dale sent me the letter you wrote to him the other day. I wouldn't worry too much about wanting to stay in your house. Some of my fondest memories are right there with you. Like hearing the cuckoo clock and knowing we'd be getting up and heading to the diner for a bear claw in just a few minutes. Or the sound your screen door makes when it slams shut as we run out to throw



apples with those fiberglass sticks Grandpa made. Or laying down under the hummingbird feeder to see the hummingbirds up close and personal. The list goes on and on.

And while the house might not be the fanciest and it may be a little old and drafty in the winter, (and I think there is a mouse that lives in the spare bedroom) it was an unbelievable place to grow up and appreciate the wonder of God's creations. I want you to be happy but to be honest the thought of not being able to share the joys of that property with my children breaks my heart. I know that someday we may all have to let the property go as life goes on. But when that day comes a large piece of my heart will go with it, just like it did when my parents moved off of the hill. I too feel Grandpa's presence in that house and as long as you live there I'll be able to drive down the brook road, look across your yard and see him sitting in his chair through the picture window. And that makes me smile.

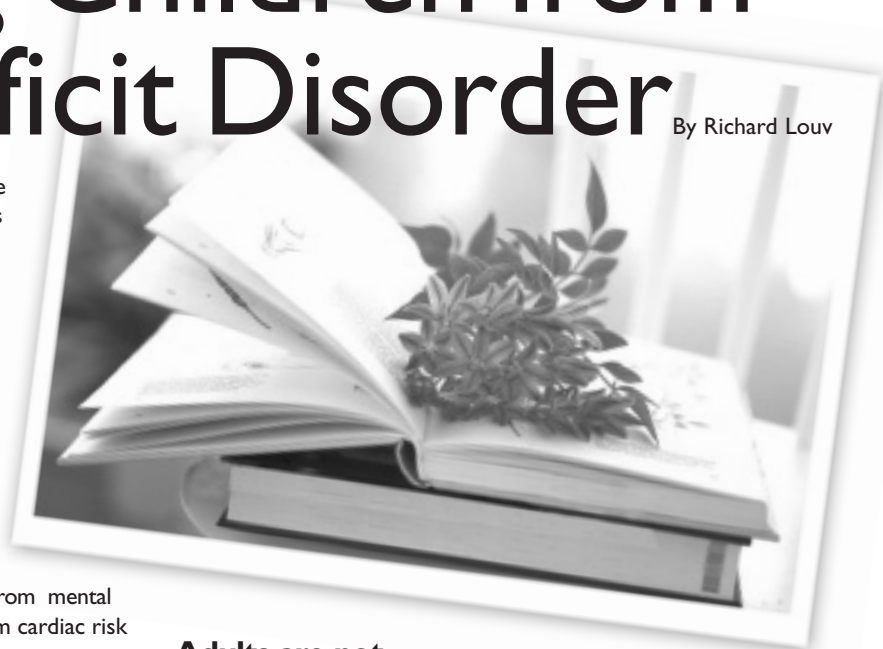
*The thought of
not being able to share
the joys of that property
with my children
breaks my heart.*

Mark

A Book Review by Charles Yapple...

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder

By Richard Louv



What is wrong with this picture? Imagine: a family in a large Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) bouncing through a wilderness area in Rocky Mountain National Park. Two children sit in the back seat playing video games. Several different thoughts could come to mind in analyzing the situation. First, what is a SUV doing in a wilderness area, which, by definition, should be devoid of human made objects and influences? Second, why would responsible citizens drive a gas-guzzler SUV these days? Third, and perhaps most importantly, why are children absorbed with a video game when surrounded by the natural wonders of a Rocky Mountain wilderness? Author Richard Louv believes this scenario illustrates a growing phenomenon in our country called nature-deficit disorder. A country where “nearly 8 million children suffer from mental disorders and 40 percent of five-to eight-year-olds suffer from cardiac risk factors such as obesity.”

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NDD – Alienation from Nature.

Louv defines nature-deficit disorder (NDD) as “an alienation from nature” that results in “diminished uses of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses.” In *Last Child in the Woods*, he demonstrates how it can be observed in individuals, families, and communities. He cites numerous studies that show “a relationship between the absence, or inaccessibility, of parks and open spaces with high crime rates, depression” and other maladies.

One of the more prevalent-maladies Louv discusses is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHA). Commonly called ADD, this disorder often develops before age seven in children causing them to be restless, have difficulty paying attention, listening, following directions, and focusing on tasks. They may also “be aggressive, even antisocial, and may suffer from academic failure.” The good news is that a growing number of studies suggest nature may have therapeutic value in treating ADHA. One study conducted by Nancy Wells at Cornell University (2000) found that “profound differences emerged ...in the attention capacities” of children when they moved into housing adjacent to natural, green spaces “even when the effects of improved housing were taken into account.” Many parents support this sort of evidence with corroborating comments indicating that their hyperactive child is calmer when taken on nature-oriented outings.



Adults are not exempt from Nature Deficit Disorder.

Adults are not exempt from nature deficit disorder. Husband and wife psychological research team, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan, found in a survey of 1200 corporate and state office workers that those “with a window view of trees, bushes, or large lawns experienced significantly less frustration and more work enthusiasm than those employees without such views.” In a similar study, psychologist Terry Hartig found that nature could help people recover from normal psychological “wear and tear” and improve their capacity to pay attention. In his study, participants were randomly assigned to walk in a nature preserve, an urban area, or sit quietly while reading a magazine and listening to music. Those who had walked in the nature preserve performed better than the other study participants on a standard proofreading task.

Solutions will necessitate a hard look at this culture and our lifestyles.

Lack of space in this issue of *Woodland Whispers* prevents further detail regarding the contents of *Last Child in the Woods*. However, it is a very important book for concerned parents to read and heed. While the author provides many helpful antidotes, and preventives, to nature-deficit disorder, most will challenge the lifestyles embraced by modern families. Solutions will necessitate a hard look at how we choose and outfit our homes, provide child care, allow schools to educate our children, spend our leisure time, and preserve natural areas in our home community.

*A child is full of possibility
Given love, and time and space to be.*

-Farmhouse Greetings

Musings of a Tunison Bird Lover

By Jim McKenna



The LHCEC and the Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Science (USGS) have collaborated to create an extensive trail system. Many birds inhabit or visit the miles of trails that wind along the brooks and woods of the hills there. But how do we know which, and especially, how many, birds are out there? This seems like a simple question, but while many may have looked, few have recorded observations in a way that can be compared from time to time or place to place. So, I have started to do this on a circuit that includes several of the oldest trails and covers a little over a mile through seven different (mostly wooded) habitats in the immediate vicinity of the Laboratory. However, time to do this is limited and so I chose to use a “rapid assessment” method to survey the birds.

I identified birds by sight or call and keep track of each species in each habitat. This survey was repeated 25 times over several years, at different seasons and various times of day. I saw at least 2,315 birds of 71 different species when all the surveys were combined. There were many more than this because only the first occurrence of each species in each of the seven habitats was recorded. In general, Black-capped Chickadees and Slate-colored Juncos are most common, though American Crows are ever present and a dominant component of the winter bird community.

Of the top 20 most common species, all were passerines (perching birds), except for the Canada Goose, which was also most common on the winter surveys. More than half of these most common species were year-round residents of the area. Of the Neotropical migrants that pass through our area, three warblers were most common, Black-throated Greens, Ovenbirds, and Common Yellowthroats. Warblers were also among the rarest species that showed up on the survey. Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, and Blue-winged Warblers were seen only once on the survey route. The survey results clearly show seasonal differences with a huge pulse of migrants in the spring, followed by a very quiet summer period.

Spring bird abundance was almost three times greater than summer abundance and spring species richness [number of species] (68 species) was more than 13 times greater than summer richness (five species). Most birders are familiar with this dramatic change, but why are there so few birds in the summer? Isn't this a great nesting area? Part of the reason is due to the way the survey works and part is due to changes in bird behavior. Our five summer residents were Black-capped Chickadees, Blue Jays, American Crows, American Robins, and Eastern Kingbirds. Many bird migrants move through our area in spring to nest in more northern areas, but there are certainly more than the five observed nesting species. Nesting birds spend most of their time foraging for their chicks and so must stay close to the nest and have little time to mark their territories

(by singing). The much quieter and area-restricted behavior of breeding birds makes it more difficult to encounter and identify them at that time of year.

Timing is everything with these “rapid assessments” and time of day affects survey results. Species like the Black-throated Green Warbler that nests here and sings nearly every morning throughout the summer might be missed during a mid-day survey. The Eastern Phoebe that nest at several places along the trail were just away from the nest at the times the surveys were done. I can hear or see Ovenbirds, Juncos, Red-eyed Vireos, and several species of thrush (just to name a few) any day of the week during the summer. To add to the contrast, very few summer surveys were done (it is a very busy time at the Laboratory) and more effort is needed at that time to properly document the breeding birds and do justice to the full annual cycle in the Tunison Woods.

Despite the shortcomings, this type of survey helps to paint a true picture of the natural resources in our backyard and will help managers and other decision-makers appreciate the value of and protections needed for those resources.

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Two of our five summer residents include Black-capped Chickadees and the American Robin.



On the Move

By Matt Young

Here's the first of many quarterly columns to come named "On the Move". This resurrected column featuring birding and migration through the seasons was part of a local birding newsletter a few years back.

Unfortunately, this past spring's stalled Arctic high-pressure system blocked us from having southern winds that normally transport many migrants our way. This pattern is what meteorologist refers to as the "blocking Omega High phenomenon". This was responsible for keeping migration to a trickle. I must say that spring waterfowl and land-bird migration was the worst I've seen in the last 10 years.



Many species of southbound warblers also start heading or their winter haunts sometime between August and October.

For me the first signs of fall migration are flocking

European Starlings and migrating blackbird flocks. We can only hope that after a very slow spring migration that officially ended around June 10th there will be a strong fall migration, which believe it or not commences in mid-July with arctic breeding shorebirds such as Hudsonian Godwits, Short-billed Dowitchers, Solitary Sandpipers, Black Bellied Plovers, all our wonderfully hard to indentify peeps, and others moving back through on their way towards the southern US and Central and South America. Unfortunately there are few locations for good shorebird viewing in central NY, but Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge offers excellent opportunities since it's one of the main stopovers for these delightful mudflat inhabitants. Sometime between mid-August and October be sure to visit Montezuma. Places to check are the Main Pool, Benning Marsh, N. Spring Pool, Tschacke Pool, and May's Point Pool. The latter site is the best at the refuge, but make sure you get there either very early morning or late afternoon for viewing since the angle of the sun often doesn't cooperate. However, there's significant turnover of shorebirds there throughout the day, so multiple stops at May's Point Pool can prove fruitful. Oh, be sure to bring a good field guide and a spotting scope to May's Point Pool. If you don't own an expensive scope yet, don't fret, great looks at shorebirds can be had via binoculars at Benning Marsh (located at the backside of the MNWR auto loop). Other worthwhile shorebird locations to check more locally are the mudflats at George Road Pond, and the spits at Myers Point and Stewart Park, in Ithaca. Myers Point. often yields excellent looks at shorebirds.

More towards the later part of July to early August look for songbird migration to pick up in earnest. One of central NY's jewels, the

Cerulean Warbler, is of the earliest to depart our area as it heads for South America where it spends its winter. This high canopy bottomland or ridgetop oak forest inhabitant is a regionally significant species. It was nominated to be federally listed because it's declining at greater than 4% annually across much of its range. Why, you might ask? The heinous practice of mountain top mining has led to this species' decline. For those of you not familiar with mountaintop mining, it is a process where mining companies cut the top of a mountain off to be pushed into local watersheds. How this practice can be legal continues to baffle me to this day! Local nesting areas to see this sky-blue warbler are Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; The Finger Lakes Land Trust's Salmon Creek (Lansing) and High Vista Preserves (Scott); and other areas at the south ends of Skaneateles and Owasco Lakes.

Many species of southbound warblers also start heading for their winter haunts sometime between August and October. One amazing migratory story is that of the Blackpoll Warbler. This New York High Peaks nesting warbler leaves its sub-alpine Catskill and Adirondack nesting grounds for South America between late August and early October, with their peak migratory movement-taking place in mid September. As northern winds become more common in fall, the Blackpoll Warbler begins its journey south. Radar and banding information has led to the discovery of these birds' fall migratory route. Apparently, Blackpoll Warblers funnel into Chesapeake Bay in the autumn - if northern winds are strong enough, where they begin a non-stop oceanic flight from Delaware to northern and central South America - pretty amazing feat for this 5-inch chickadee look-a-like! Great places to view these tropical jewels as well as sparrows, fly-

Astronomy for the Whole Family continued from page 4

catchers, thrushes, and vireos during fall migration are Lime Hollow Nature Center, Hogs Hole (south end of Cayuga Lake), East Ithaca Recreation Way (Cornell Hawthorn Orchards), and Mundy Wildflowers - the latter two being found on the campus of Cornell. Look for sparrows, warblers, thrushes, flycatchers, and shorebirds to be moving through the area in numbers though mid-October. The middle weeks of September are the peak time for fall migration. One word of caution; many fall birds are less colorful and thus harder to identify. Furthermore, you might also need to see your neck and back specialist at the end of the season from "warbler neck".

In addition to information on how to set up a winter "feeder garden" in the next column of "On the Move", look for more on waterfowl, gulls, owls, hawks, and finch movements.

Till next time,
Matt Young

Thanks to New LHCEC Members

The following have become new members since our last newsletter. Congratulations to them for their sense of vision about the environmental and outdoor education needs of present and future generations.

- Berry, Ben & Brenda
- Carver, Mike
- Closson, Barbara
- Compagni, Michelle & Stephen
- Divers, Kos & John
- Fish, Eugenia
- Fregosi, Laura & Kevin
- Gage, Barbara
- Goddard, Marc & Tammy
- Graney, Jim & Heidi
- Harris, Mora
- Herting, Sarah
- Jensen, Kerri
- Kilts, Steve & Diane
- Mallinson, Todd
- McDonough, Kathleen
- Michiel, Robert
- Moranda, Scott
- Morgan, Meghan
- Mulherin, Jim
- Neerbasch, Lenore
- Osbeck, Phyllis & Richard
- Poole, Rebecca
- Riley, Chad & Lisa
- Root, Melissa
- Ryan, Barbara
- Stafford, Tracy
- Tummino, Theresa
- Williams, Roger & Kathy
- Wojcik, Ed & Patti

SPECIAL SALUTE TO NEW LIFE MEMBERS –
THANKS FOR BELIEVING IN LHCEC
SO STRONGLY!

Thomas Knobel

Many thanks also to all renewing members especially to those who renewed at a higher level of giving. Continuing support of this sort will help LHCEC make the transition from relying on grants from business, industry, and government into an organization that is supported by its own programs and committed individuals.

Housing Boom at Lime Hollow... Wood Duck Wonders at Lime Hollow

By Ryan Butryn

I volunteered to help Lime Hollow attract more wood ducks to their property, little did I know exactly how attracted the ducks would be

"I think I heard something up here last night," I said to Dale as we went up the steps to the attic of my house. Half expecting a squirrel to explode out of the storage room, I opened the door very slowly. To my absolute dismay, a female wood duck was sitting in front of the window -very alive. Dale and I tried to catch the duck with our hands but neither one of us could stand up straight and scared ducks are not very slow moving. This comical battle was short lived when Dale cornered the duck, grabbed it, and released it unharmed outside.

We searched all over the attic and even outside the house trying to find how the wood duck entered. There was no evidence at all explaining this mystery; no broken glass, no missing boards, no holes.

While this event was a total shock, it is also incredibly ironic that it happened to me. The week before I had installed three wood duck nest boxes on Lime Hollow property, but apparently they were not up to the standards of Mrs. Wood Duck.

This past spring, wood ducks were on nearly all of the beaver ponds on LHCEC property. It was impossible to walk down the Lehigh Valley trail without flushing at least one pair of woodies. I have seen newly hatched wood ducks in

several locations near the LHCEC property, so hopefully providing nest boxes will entice several pairs to take up residence in the coming years. I wouldn't mind having the wood ducks for house-mates but my cat might not agree.



One the many Wood Duck nesting houses at LHCEC.