

Mill Grove Field Notes - Fall 2016

Our Norristown Schoolyard Habitat program, in its fourth year, aims to dramatically increase the number of young people actively participating in conservation in their own communities. Our program is multidisciplinary, incorporating science, reading, math, technology and the arts through deeply exploring the local environment. We are focusing on native plants to develop healthier schoolyards and increase the water quality.



The lessons engage students in hands-on, active, experiential learning activities that are effective at impacting behavior change and individual learning. They are also learning to use citizen science tools including eBird, Project Feeder Watch, and Cornell Nest Watch.

Two new partners joined our collaboration to provide additional STEAM education in the Norristown Area School District. Students in three more elementary schools received

new or increased Audubon lessons in environmental responsibility and the scientific method. All fourth grade students received their own Audubon workbook to track their learning thanks to support from PECO. In addition, The ERM Group Foundation provided new tools to enhance programming for elementary and high school students along the Stony Creek. Activities have included the removal of 200 pounds of invasive plants and the addition of 35 natives along the riparian buffer. We are grateful for our new and existing partners who make it possible for Norristown students and teachers to learn about birds, the value of native plants and environmental stewardship.



We know you have missed visiting the historic house, the centerpiece of Mill Grove. Walkers and birders on the grounds have enjoyed watching master stonemasons rebuild the historic walls around the barn and historic house – perhaps the first comprehensive work done in over a century! **Historic architects and stonemasons** have worked closely together to



create the perfect recipe for the mortar that is well suited for the times. Where possible, we are using colors and materials more in keeping with the original colors of the 1760s house and barn.