



Director's Notes

Staying Connected

As the station continues to expand programs and support a growing number of students, we are always challenged to get the word out on our activities and opportunities for our "Friends" to get involved. Now there are more ways than ever to keep in touch. We invite you to "Like" us on Facebook, browse our new updated web pages, check out our weekly calendar of events, www.services.juniata.edu/station/calendar.html, and visit us in person to join our activities and see what we have been up to.

As you connect through this newsletter, you'll see that we have been busy improving all aspects of our campus on Raystown. We are grateful for your continuing support . . . it enables us to offer more to the next generation of Juniata students that arrive at our door.

Thanks,
Chuck



Dr. Chuck Yohn holding a Northern Flicker that was caught while bird banding.

RFS in a Nutshell

- Offers 3 undergraduate semesters
- Hosts additional classes, labs and field camps for the following departments
 - Environmental Science and Studies
 - Biology
 - Geology
 - Education
 - Chemistry
 - Anthropology
- Sponsors environmental research and conservation including
 - Faculty research programs
 - Student independent studies
 - Research classes for RFS students
 - Visiting researchers
- Supports community education and outreach through
 - Visiting K-12 classes
 - Summer camps and workshop offerings
 - Sponsors summer environmental education internships for visitors to the lake
 - Provide support and programming for community partners such as scouts, Envirothon, and other education and service organizations.
- Hosts campus and community retreats, meetings and conferences
- Sponsors recreational activities for the campus community including
 - Maple sugaring and apple butter making
 - Monthly student outings and float trips

The Field Station Lifestyle

By: Lauren Bauernschmidt, Student Fall 2012

When first walking up to the Field Station you notice a few things: the solar panels, the homey cabins and the wide windows. As a prospective student, I took one look at this place and I was instantly sold. Now that I am at the Field Station as a student I've discovered that this place offers more than I could ever imagine. I will take you through a typical day at the Station so you can see for yourself why this place is so unique.

Classes follow a basic schedule. A morning of lecture followed by an afternoon trip in the field, to places that I would have never known existed otherwise. We eat a great lunch which usually involves us carrying on with our professors. We go back to class for time out in the field or are released for the rest of the day. Our group usually goes outside for a few hours whether it's on the lake swimming, canoeing, kayaking or out hiking on RFS trails. We have dinner, hit the books, and then have a bonfire or watch a movie on the giant projector screen in Shuster. After a

long day, we go to bed and start all over the next day.

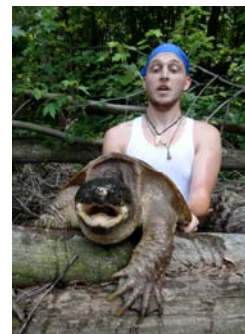
My friends back on campus are very envious of my life out here at the Field Station. The lifestyle allows me to really explore the different career paths that I plan to pursue after I leave here. The research I am doing for my Sense of Place course allows me to gain experience that I think will be extremely valuable for my future. The hands-on portions of our classes are the most valuable experiences I have had so far at Juniata. They are also the parts I most enjoy. There is really nothing better than hiking through the woods first thing in the morning or riding on the Kingfisher (one of our research vessels) in the afternoon sun. We are like a family here; occasionally we have our fights but we can't stay mad at each other for long because there is so much fun to be had. Everything is personal and valuable; something I can take with me for the rest of my life. I came to the Field Station looking for a direction in my future and I'm sure I'm going to find it. In the meantime, I'll continue to set camera traps, drive boats, give tours, set gill nets, and bond with my cabin mates.



Getting life jackets ready for a float trip during Fall Fest

Another Great Raystown Summer

We had a great June semester with record student enrollment in our Ornithology and Mammalogy courses. Most utilized our housing and food services. These field-work intensive courses are targeted to students seeking certification from the Wildlife Society for Associate Wildlife Biologist. Summer highlights included trips to the National Aviary and the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, a turtle ecology river float trip, bird banding, radio telemetry, and small mammal trapping. Course offerings this coming summer include Ornithology, Herpetology and Archeology. Course enrollment information can be found at <http://www.juniata.edu/services/station/semesterprograms.html>



We've Never Looked Better

There have been a number of changes at the station over the last couple years. The walk from Shuster Hall to a parked car has been a walk in the dark due to the inadequacy of our solar lights. Last year we installed new lighting which makes the walk out to your vehicle much safer and easier.

We continue working on Grove Farm and we are hoping to make more improvements in the future. One of the first things you will notice is the gate which controls access to Grove Farm Road. This provides enhanced security. We have been able to improve the energy efficiency, safety and comfort for those that visit. Over the last couple years the windows were replaced with thermo pane vinyl frame windows. We also installed a new exterior door and screen door on the second floor. This will help to cut down on our energy use to heat the house. For the safety of our guests, the top of the stairway on the third floor was reconfigured to create a fire exit onto the porch roof. We give a special thanks to J.R. Watkin for help with these projects. In addition, there is a new monitored fire alarm which will



New lighting

help to insure that everyone can get out in case of a fire. Last spring we were able to replace some of the furniture in the living rooms and the dining room. We are happy for the improvement but we are always looking at the house and thinking of ways to make it better – improved bathrooms, more efficient heating/cooling system, more open space downstairs, new kitchen cabinets, and the list goes on. . . .

The Station's fleet of boats has been upgraded. Over the past year we have redone all of the seating on one of our pontoon boats. The old seats had long ago seen their better days. The new seating is made using materials designed to be out in the weather all of the time. Thanks to the Keeney family, we have also added a 14'-V-hull boat to our fleet. This boat is particularly useful for the students to use when doing research where the bigger pontoon boats are not necessary as this boat gets much better fuel economy. We especially thank the Friends of the Field Station for the continued support which makes these improvements possible.



New seating on the Kingfisher.

Dr. R. L. Fisher Memorial Arboretum



The variety of specimens represented in R.L. Fisher Memorial Arboretum continues to expand and is now near 75 species. A prize species in the collection is a "restoration" genetics, blight resistant American chestnut presented to the station as a gift from the American Chestnut Founda-

tion. Other unusual native species added recently include the paw paw and the prickly pear cactus (yup – it's a native species here). A collection of tribute photos of Bob Fisher is now available on the RFS Facebook page.

Local Veggie Tales



Raised bed garden at Lakeside Center

2011 was the first year for vegetable gardens at the station. They are collaborative effort between the students and the staff. We started out with a small raised bed along the road at Lakeside Center and a potato patch at Grove Farm. We have grown a number of crops that are utilized in the food service for the students. A wide variety of salad greens, peppers, tomatoes, onions and potatoes have been some of our successes. Unfortunately, cucumbers, melons, squash and carrots have been groundhog food! We have been able to supply at least half of the potatoes that the students use since we started growing them and we are soon to dig our late crop.

In 2012 we have expanded our gardens and we are improving our fences. At Grove Farm,

we recently completed a split rail fence with turkey fencing attached to it. At Lakeside, we extended the raised bed to double it in size. We hope to fence it in a similar fashion as the garden at Grove Farm. Two students, Sam Frey and Emily Harakal, have built a small hoop house so we can extend the growing season into the later fall months.

These gardens offer the students the chance to try their hand at growing their own food and there isn't anything fresher than "just picked."



Hoop house at Grove Farm

Sugaring Update

It was a short sugaring season across Northeast U.S. and the Station operation was no exception. Unseasonably warm weather arrived early in March shutting us down after only one week of production yielding only 13 gallons of syrup. By the time of alumni sugaring reunion, the season was over. We were, however, able to add a new ultraviolet light disinfection system tour operation and look forward to next year's sugaring time.

Sugaring Season

Join us on:

March 8-10 for Alumni and Friends
Sugaring Weekend (all welcome!)

If you'd like to know about other
sugaring events, contact
rfs@juniata.edu

RFS Co-Sponsors an Environmental Health Camp

In July, Penn State Hershey College of Medicine and Juniata College faculty and staff worked together to introduce sixteen Susquehanna Township high school students and five high school teachers to the idea of Environmental health conditions with the primary theme around water. The week-long adventure at the field station started with the introduction to the problem that their “local waste water treatment plant needed a new plan (and quickly),” the team of young scientists were charged with learning as much as possible about water and its importance to the health of humans and the environment.

The first morning the students and teachers had the chance to learn about Lake ecology from Dr. Sharon Yohn, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, who also took them out in boats to collect data on the lake’s water quality. That afternoon, they examined water quality at a variety of locations including an acid mine drainage site. They also did bacterial cultures from five sample sites, and were surprised at how clean the water was! The next morning they went out to Crooked Creek and did electrofishing with Dr. Chuck Yohn, Director of the RFS. Dr. Kathy Jones,

Associate Professor of Education conducted macro-invertebrate studies in the same stream and again, the students were surprised by the high quality of the waterways. On Wednesday morning, Dr. Jones led the students to Fouse’s Crossing where the group learned the importance of wetlands to the environment. Thursday’s highlight was a narrated tour of the lake and dam by the recently retired director of Operations at Raystown Lake, Dwight Beall.

The entire week was a valuable learning experience and was well received by all. The parents were treated to the “reports and solutions to the problem” when they came to pick up their children on Friday afternoon.



New Bald Eagle Nest at RFS

The phrase “Juniata Eagles” is not just for sports fans anymore. This spring, a pair of bald eagles constructed a nest directly across lake, 500 yards from our recreation area. It was a pleasure for the resident students and staff, as well as visitors, to observe their daily activities as they raised and fledged two “eaglets.” At times it became distracting to teach courses (other than Ornithology) with low flying eagles frequently shuttling back and forth but we still look forward to the birds returning this spring to raise a second brood.



Seven Points Marina Supports the Field Station

Back in 2003, the Field Station, in partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, PA Game Commission and Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, established an Osprey hacking program with the aim of establishing a population on Raystown Lake. During the first three years of this program, we were able to release 14 juveniles into the wild. However, in the years since their release, none of these individuals have returned to establish a breeding population at Raystown. One theory that could explain their absence was the growth of the bald eagle population on the lake, which is now up to four nesting pairs. The increasing bald eagle population caused us to re-evaluate the probable success of future osprey releases and alternative uses of the ageing osprey release tower.

Last spring we received a generous donation from Seven Points Marina to convert the osprey tower into an observation platform. The first phase of the process began right away with the reopening of the harbor trail. Thanks to Ben

Varner and his track-hoe we were able to widen this once difficult-to-navigate trail. The next step began a few months later by stripping the osprey tower down to its bare bones. Although most of the structural components remained, over two tons of debris needed to be demolished, ferried across the RFS harbor, loaded into the Station pickup and then hauled back campus to be disposed of properly. It was quite an undertaking that spanned most of the summer. The composite decking was installed in one hot August day thanks to the help of the Blair family. A few weeks later the remainder of the observation platform was completed in time to debut the project (and wonderful lake views) at our annual Fall Fest.

Additional photos documenting the process are now available for view on the RFS Facebook page. Once again, none of this would have been possible without the funding from Seven Points Marina and the continued support from our Friends of the Field Station.



Before



During



After

Field Station Wish List

Projects, like the one highlighted above would not be possible without the support of Friends of the Field Station. If you are looking for ways to continue to support the Raystown Field Station, here is a short list of items that could go a long way in strengthening our program.

- 4-stroke outboard engines
- Vacuum cleaners
- Basketball hoop
- Patio furniture
- Board games
- Pots and pans
- Keurig single-cup coffeemaker
- DVD's (movies, Plant Earth . . .)
- Chop saw
- Table saw

Meet the RFS Staff (Old and New):



Dr. Chuck Yohn, Director

Chuck officially began his tenure as Director of the station in 1993 but his employment history at the station goes back as far as 1979 when he began working at the station in a student work study position while as a freshman at Juniata College. Chuck completed his doctorate from Penn State University studying the effect of forest management practices on songbird communities. In addition to his administrative duties coordinating the development and daily operations of the station, Chuck also teaches Ornithology, Vertebrate Zoology, Wildlife Management, Forestry and the Sense of Place seminar at the station.

Chris Bomgardner, Facilities Supervisor

Four years ago Chris joined the field station staff as Facilities Supervisor. A graduate of Penn State with a degree in Biology & Plant Science and a wide range of work experience under his belt, Chris was (and still is) the perfect man for the job. The position includes many diverse responsibilities, including keeping the facilities in shape, working with students and alumni on projects and improvements for the station, supervising student help and much more. During our forestry semester, Chris teams up with faculty to teach Forestry at the field station.

Andrew McDevitt, Resident Director

After graduating with a degree in Biology from Penn State in 2011, Andrew returned to the college setting a few months later as the Field Station RD. Here at RFS, he wears many hats. Not only does he carry out the usual RD duties but he is also a lab assistant, station activities coordinator, and assists Chris with various facilities improvement projects.

Talia Valencia, Assistant Director

As a student studying Wildlife Conservation (Class of 2012) Talia worked for the Field Station office for two years but after graduating she decided four years at Juniata were not enough! She continued her work into the summer and will be here through the current semester. On a typical day Talia works behind the scenes to help make things run smoothly during the semesters. On occasion she will lead a canoe/kayak trip, help out with bird banding, electrofishing, and other field-related activities.

Travis Crawford, Executive Chef

Travis joined the Field Station staff in the fall of 2011 after spending 12 years working for Sodexo. From something as simple burgers on the grill to breakfast frittata to his kickin' homemade barbeque sauce, the students all rave about his food. Each week Travis joins the students for dinner to design the next menu. For the students with dietary restrictions or even those who are just picky eaters (within reason, of course), he is willing to work around it as best he can even if it means he has to cook three different meals a night. When not at the field station, Travis stays busy catering for his other lucky clients.



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The Friends Newsletter is a publication of the Friends of the Raystown Field Station. Articles and other submissions are accepted in Word and Text files via e-mail.

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