



Volume 33
Issue 2



Westmoreland Conservancy

Protecting Nature's home, enriching yours



Spring 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 8: Solar Eclipse Viewing Party



Looking for a great LOCAL place to view the April 8th solar eclipse? How about Westmoreland Conservancy's Morosini Reserve?!! The Pittsburgh region will have a great view (90% totality) of what will be the last solar eclipse to cross North America for 20 years. It is expected to display a spectacularly active corona!

Join us at the Morosini Reserve Monday, April 8 to view the solar eclipse. We have the recommended protective viewing

eyewear.

Let us know you're coming! Limited parking & glasses available. REGISTER:

<https://www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration>

April 20: EARTH DAY @ PSR Join us at 9AM Saturday 4/20/24 at the Peaceful Stable Reserve on Diana Mae Lane. (Diana MAR on google maps)

We will be working at the stable and installing boundary/perimeter markers. Bring gloves, rakes, boots & brooms!

Park in the lot at the end of Diana Mae Lane and inside the open fence line of the property.

Community service hours are available and encouraged.

www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration



April 24: ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING & ELECTIONS will open at 7pm with a review of the proposed slate for the election of our Board Westmoreland Conservancy's Annual Members' Meeting and Elections are Wednesday, April 24th, 2024. The meeting



will be held at the Delmont Public Library and on Zoom.

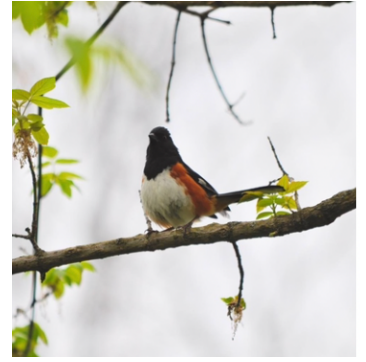
Should you choose to attend via Zoom, please send an email to contact@westmorelandconservancy.org so that we can send you the link.

This election is by our general membership, so please plan to attend. Your voice is important to us. At the close of the Members Meeting, the Organizational Meeting will commence with the Board members electing the 2024 officers. The April Board meeting will then come to order.

May 19: Spring Migration BIRDWATCHING

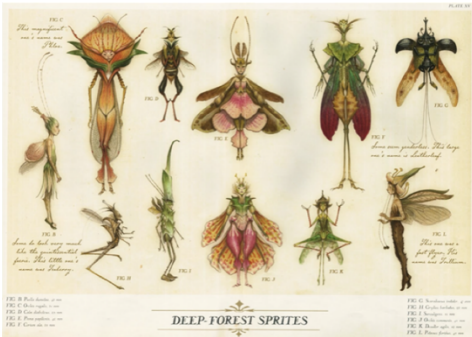
w/Alex Busato Join Alex Busato for a birdwatching walk Sunday, 5/19 at 8AM at the Morosini Reserve. Alex is an avid birder, talented photographer and excellent guide. He is also familiar with the various habitat areas present at the Morosini Reserve and knows where to look! This walk is limited to 20 participants, so register early to reserve your place!

Or, join us for a casual Sunday late afternoon walk to see the birds and enjoy the Morosini Reserve at 5PM. (no limit).



June 1: ENCHANTED FOREST

Westmoreland Conservancy invites you to join us at the Morosini Reserve from 11AM- 1PM Saturday, May 27th. Find fairy houses and troll huts in the woods. Learn about the mysterious magic of Nature! Discover all sorts of cool things! Join us at the UPT lot at the end of Morosini Farm Court. Come dressed as your favorite fairy, sprite or woodlands creature! We'll make a fun craft for everyone to take home! www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration FREE



June 20: SUMMER SOLSTICE WALK The Summer Solstice is the longest night of the year. What better way to observe this than to enjoy a magical evening outside? Join us at 8:30PM at the Universal Pedestrian Trailhead for an evening walk to the pond and around to the field trails. We'll stop at the scenic view observation platform to watch what is often a spectacular sunset. The waxing crescent moon should make it a relatively dark night, so flashlights may be needed by the end of this evening walk.



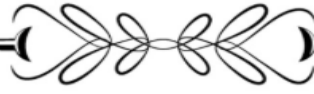
July 27: ENCHANTED EVENING / FIREFLY WALK Another summer evening walk... A Family-Friendly Firefly walk. Who can resist a smile when seeing these magically glowing little bugs? We don't catch them, but marvel at their light show. And who knows.... There may be some pretty magical sights along the trail as well!



Join us at 8:30PM at the Universal Pedestrian Trailhead Kiosk for an evening walk along the trail to the pond and around to the fields. The longer you stay, the more fireflies you'll see mingling with the fairies. The moon should be reasonably bright, being a not-quite-half-full crescent moon.



**You can follow us on our Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as our calendar and newsletter. We enjoy sharing our news, our events, and our plans with you, and you can stay up-to-date with events added AFTER the newsletter publication!
Get to know us! We're good to know!**



2024 First Quarter Activities

1st Day Hike at Caywood 1/1/24



Vernal Equinox/1st Day of Spring at McGinnis 3/19/2024



Cleanup at Caywood 3/30/2024



April 2023 – April 2024 President's Report

I am **ALWAYS** proud to say that I am affiliated with Westmoreland Conservancy... It is the **ONLY** nationally accredited land trust/conservation organization in Westmoreland County, PA, and I have been honored to be part of its history and growth. I believe that the best is ahead of us. The organization manages a very active schedule of events, maintenance days and project cultivation, all while protecting and improving quality habitat.

April 22 annually kicks things off our year with Earth Day. The Morosini vernal pool along the south trail had been damaged by trespassers on recreational vehicles, which are strictly prohibited and clearly posted as such. As was mentioned in the January issue of our newsletter, George Erny made a generous donation in memory of his late wife to repair the area and to better protect our boundaries from such trespasses. Our team of



volunteers smoothed out the damage, put down riparian buffer seed mix, fenced in the restoration area, and waited. The pool began retaining water as nature intended, and the area was allowed to reestablish itself. The fencing was removed in March 2024 and we immediately began to see

wildlife activity.



May is peak Spring Migration.... Migratory activity is fun to observe at the Morosini Reserve at the Wildlife Observation Blind, located along our Universal Pedestrian Trail. Our friend Alex Busato led a Mother's Day Birdwatching Walk May 14th, observing some less- commonly seen visitors along the extensive trail system. We are excited to know that this reserve is becoming recognized for the variety of birds attracted to the habitat areas via e-bird and other apps.

As of July 2023, **Westmoreland Conservancy owns 10 reserves**, protecting 609 acres. Our newest parcel is known as the Peaceful Stable Reserve and is located off Cherry Lane on Diana Mae Lane. It was donated by a very generous neighbor, Barbara Molicki, who wanted to ensure that the area remain open for all to enjoy. Earth Day 2024 is scheduled to be held at this reserve, with the focus being on cleaning out the structure and installing boundary markers around the periphery. There are plans in the works to remediate the runoff issues and manage the property in a way that will not only suit the neighborhood but enrich it as well.



We have made good progress on the **Graft Pollinator Project** in the north field of the Morosini Reserve. The fenced enclosure for the beehives was installed with the help of this hard-working BHEGTS volunteer team last October. The solar array has been installed to power the fence



(Bear!!), and the area surrounding the fence has been prepped and is ready to seed. The first few seasons will feature primarily annual pollinator flowers as we continue to work to eradicate the switchgrass that has

monopolized the fields for so long. As the forsythia and native shrubs become better established, we'll also transition the field(s) to perennial grasses and pollinators.



Our Accreditation Team completed our application to renew last October and are awaiting the next phase of the process: addressing specific queries by the Commission.

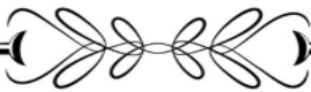
Nature and beauty are present ANY time of year, and WC schedules hikes and projects throughout. From hiking the Don Harrison Community Trail on the day after Thanksgiving; Winter Solstice walks in December; First Day hikes each January 1st and a Vernal Equinox walk on the first day of Spring, we enjoy being out on these beautiful properties. We

rehab apple trees in February (although our annual event was canceled this year because of the 7" of snow we received overnight and into the morning hours!)

As our Annual Members Meeting & Elections are fast approaching, I hope that our donors consider how very important your input is to us. Your support makes all of these programs and projects possible. Your voice helps determine our direction. As we look into new properties to protect and new projects to pursue I hope you will join us. Help us continue to make a difference in our communities and keep nature available to EVERYONE.

Thank you for the experiences and opportunities that come with being part of this organization.

Shelly Tichy



Westmoreland Conservancy Reserves are privately owned lands that are open to the public for permitted use. Dogs are to be on-leash.
NO motorized vehicles aside from mobility aids.

PLEASE observe **Leave No Trace** sensibilities and **take out anything you take in**.
Do **NOT** leave trash at the reserves. <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>



Westmoreland Conservancy Online:

Website: <http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org> Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/WestmorelandConservancy> Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/westmoreland_conservancy/



Donations

Donations and support are ALWAYS welcome, however we recommend June 1st annually, since that is the beginning of our fiscal year. Your donations help to support our projects and events. They help us achieve our goals and continue to grow, making nature available to EVERYONE!

Student (under 18):	\$10
News Recipient.....	\$25
Conservation Ally.....	\$50
Steward Supporter.....	\$100
Resource Partner.....	\$500



Your commitment to making an annual donation helps us plan our operating budget, knowing what amount we can expect to receive every year. Any tax-deductible donation of \$25 or more qualifies for free membership. You can renew your annual donation through the site or support us with a new donation. Any donation can be easily managed through our website: <http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org/donate> or mailed directly to Westmoreland Conservancy, 1 Priority Lane, Unit 446, Murrysville, PA 15668.



Westmoreland Conservancy and You. Making the BIG PLANS.

WE LOVE LAND. Land gifts are awesome! We hope that you will talk with us before making such a gift. It's a big step, and we want to make certain that everyone understands one another's expectations. There is no more land being made, so let's work together to protect what we can!

We appreciate all the support you've given Westmoreland Conservancy through the years. There is always an open invitation to attend the monthly meetings and learn more about the "what, why and how" of this organization. Are you interested in helping? Contact us! We always have room for helpful hands to maintain trails. Does your business support community service days? We're happy to provide hours and projects.

As for donations of something other than your time, we have a whole list of those "needed things". As always, your support is vital.

Ultimately, any means you choose to support Westmoreland Conservancy is appreciated. Your time, your expertise, your generosity ALL help keep this organization growing. Because of your support, people can find a place to enjoy nature close to home. And we are grateful.

Looking at the Night Sky: Star Parties

We love sitting around the campfire and looking at the night sky.... Especially when we can do it with friends at the Morosini Reserve around a campfire at parking lot #1. Bring your own chairs or blanket and be sure to have tick repellent. You are welcome to bring your own telescopes and we invite local astronomy groups to join us.



These Star Parties are **weather-dependent**.

Cloudy, rainy evenings are obviously not great conditions for observing the night sky. Unfortunately, EVERY scheduled Star Party was rained out from our 2023 calendar, so it is with great optimism that we put out this list of gatherings:

8:30 PM May 25 (Saturday): Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower

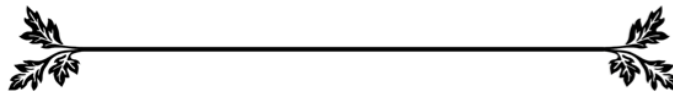
8:30 PM July 5 (Friday): New Moon, a great time to view stars, planets and galaxies.

8:30 PM July 27(Saturday): Pre-peak Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower.

8:30 PM August 10(Saturday): Pre-peak Perseids Meteor Shower

8:30PM September 8 (Sunday): Saturn at Opposition. Saturn closest to Earth and illuminated by the sun. Should make for great viewing all night.

September 18 (Wednesday) No campfire. Supermoon and Partial Lunar Eclipse



2022-23 Officers

Shelly Tichy – President
Rob Malley – Vice President
Bob Sloboda – Secretary/Stwd Coord.
Chip Brown– Treasurer/Stwd Coord.



2022-23 Board of Governors

Alan Halperin - Board
Rob Bowman - Board
Lindsey Praksti – Board

Westmoreland Conservancy
1 Priority Lane, Unit 446
Murrysville, PA 15668
contact@westmorelandconservancy.org



Our Vision

To preserve natural, rural, and historic landscapes for Nature's benefit and the enrichment of future generations.

Our Mission

Westmoreland Conservancy preserves, enhances, and connects land, habitat, and green space through acquisition, stewardship, and cooperation with local communities and other organizations.

Schedule of Events

****Watch our Facebook page or sign up for email reminders for work days!**** Please wear sturdy shoes, leg protection and weather-appropriate attire. Scheduled Events may be canceled in the event of Unsuitable Weather.

04/08 Solar Eclipse Viewing Party 2PM at Morosini Parking Lot #1

04/20 Earth Day at PSR, 9AM Diana Mar Lane

04/24: Annual Members Meeting & Elections 7PM Delmont Public Library

05/19 Birdwatching, 8AM **or** 5PM Morosini Farm Road, UPT Lot

05/22: Monthly Meeting, 7PM Delmont Public Library

06/01: Enchanted Forest, 11AM – 1PM Morosini Farm Road, UPT Lot

06/20: Summer Solstice Walk, 8:30PM Morosini Farm Road, UPT Lot

06/26: Monthly Meeting, 7PM Delmont Public Library

07/12: Perseids Star Party, 8PM Morosini Farm Road Lot #1

07/27: Enchanted Evening/Firefly Walk, 8:30PM Morosini Farm Road, UPT Lot