

Woodcrest Villa Nature Trail & Arboretum

<http://rhodyman.net/WCV>

December 2023 Newsletter

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Woodcrest Villa Arboretum is Dedicated To Those Recognized with Trees

Fall Foliage Was Spectacular At Woodcrest Villa



Red Maples showed their peak fall color around Eagle Wing

Photo by Deb Lebo from Rubia on November 14, 2023

This fall there was fabulous fall color on our campus. A main contributor to fall color at Woodcrest Villa is the Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), a native tree. The most vibrant fall foliage occurs if these three weather conditions prevail:

1. The end of the summer is dry.
2. Autumn days are sunny.
3. Autumn nights are cool, ideally in the 40's (F) and not below freezing.

Red Maple trees make more anthocyanin, the chemical that makes leaves red, during these conditions. However, if days in September and early October are often overcast, and nights are mild, the color appears duller. If there's an early frost, the show is over early. However, the show will resume in the spring when the bright red flowers appear before the green leaves open.

After Labor Day, shortening days and colder nights trigger the trees to prepare for winter. Photosynthesis shuts down, and the green chlorophyll fades from the leaves, allowing other colors to emerge. Some of those reds, yellows, and oranges have been there all along, masked by the green chlorophyll.

Some Red Maples changed earlier than others. The timing is a trait of various cultivars, but some trees might change color early to rid themselves of bugs. Some insects identify green leaves as food and abandon trees that turn red.

The seeds and flower buds are eaten by many species of birds. In spring, caterpillars and other insects which feed on red maples are a source of food for birds, especially young birds still in the nest and being fed by their parents.

Thanks for Donations

Thanks to those that donated for the Trail Crew to buy supplies for the Nature Trail & Arboretum such as saw blades for trimming, mulch for the trail, and service for the tractor.

Make donations out to:

Mennonite Home Communities

with the note:

WCV Nature Trail & Arboretum

Send all donations to:

David Suh, Treasurer
WCV Nature Trail & Arboretum
2001 Harrisburg Pike, PH 202
Lancaster, PA 17601

New Trail Provides Easy Access to Nature Trail & Arboretum

A new access trail to the Nature Trail and Arboretum has been completed. It may be accessed from “Lew’s Shed” which is to the right of the bus garage. Signs mark the entrance



to the new trail. The new trail has a very slight slope and is the easiest place to access the arboretum and nature trail.



Trail Crew Monitors Water Quality In Swarr Run Creek

Members of the Trail Crew have been monitoring the physical characteristics of Swarr Run such as pH, temperature, and oxygen levels. In the upper-right photo, members of the Lancaster County Conservation District trained trail crew members, including Jim McCoy (right), to identify and count macroinvertebrates to assess both water quality and habitat quality. The process involves collecting a sample of stream life in a fine screen. John Lebo (bottom-left) is stirring sediment into the screen. Then the macroinvertebrates present are identified and counted. In the bottom-right photo, Bruce Metzler (left) and John Carpenter (right) are identifying and counting the macroinvertebrates.



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