



### President's Message

As you read this, it is the middle of the Holiday crush. I hope you are standing up to the strain. But I have something that will help. When the stress is too much just head on over to our IWLAR Chapter and take in some nature. That will cool your frustration and get you back on an even footing. Whether you go for a hike, do some fishing or hit the ranges, there is nothing like a jolt of nature to make you feel better!

Construction is complete on the project to reduce the sediment inflow to the lake. There are still tasks to be accomplished. The first is planting. As a part of the construction contract, trees and shrubs will be planted in the construction area. I think we have the paperwork with the County Planning office straightened out so we will be able to schedule the planting soon. After the planting we will need a workday at the lake to clean up, plant willow live stakes, and install a barrier fence over the culverts. Watch your google group mail for an announcement when we schedule.

This workday may be the last chance to get in your volunteer hours for 2024. As you know it is renewal time. Remember no second notice for renewals will be sent. You need to find that envelope from September and get the paperwork in before the end of the year. After December 31 it will cost you an extra \$35 for the late fee. Get those renewals in TODAY!

An organization that IWLAR partners with on their fly fishing program is holding a fundraiser. It is sweepstakes where you purchase a ticket (or many tickets) for a chance at a nice prize. If you would like to support Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited, check out their sweepstakes raffle at

<https://senecavalleytu.org/sweepstakes/> "Who knows? You might give yourself a nice Christmas gift!

Our December General Membership Meeting is on December 6. Please join us in person or via Zoom.

Get out and enjoy IWLAR!

Tight Lines  
Noel Gollehon

It's Renewal Time! Renewals were mailed on September 16. Your mailed dues and reported volunteer hours (or \$75 in lieu of those hours) must be postmarked by 12/31/2024 in order to avoid the late fee. If you didn't receive your renewal envelope or have any questions, contact Judy Danish

### December Speaker Focus

Brendan Lewis is a senior at Walter Johnson High School in Bethesda. Since an early age, he has been interested in local creeks and the fish and organisms living there. This interest grew to building freshwater fish tanks, digging a koi pond in his backyard and learning all about the fish he kept. Currently, Brendan is applying to colleges where he can continue learning about waterways and fish while protecting the Chesapeake Watershed, plus hopefully fitting in a bit of ice hockey if he's lucky.



Brendan will discuss his experiences gained from attending Maryland's Natural Resources Career Camp (NRCC) as a Montgomery County representative. He'll highlight what he learned and applied and how it will help shape his career interests in environmental science and ecology.

### 2024 Turkey Shoot

It's Back!! The 2024 TurkeyShoot is Sunday, December 8, from 1:00 - 4:00 PM at the shotgun range! Cook a hot dog and roast marshmallows over a fire, sip a hot chocolate, and enjoy good times while competing for prizes!

Ammunition will be provided for all participants, 12- and 20-gauge shotguns will also be available or bring your own lucky 12 or 20-gauge shotgun. The grand prize winner will be announced at 3:30 PM. The lucky winner must be present to claim the top prize. Members and their guests are all welcome! (Note, for those unfamiliar with this annual event, it doesn't involve shooting real turkeys!)

## Recap of Youth Conservation Fall Hike

The Jr. Youth Conservation hosted a fall hike and marshmallow roast Sunday, November 10th. On a beautiful fall day, a group of 25 adults and children, with the help of Andrew Cooke, our Chapter's very own entomologist, discovered an exciting world living under rocks and logs. Both male and female Redback salamanders were found hanging out together under a log. A dead-wood borer caterpillar was discovered, which would have eventually metamorphosed into a moth. Several large black Bess beetles were found along with lots of isopods: *Armadillidium vulgare*, commonly known as the "pill-bug" and the Red Centipede, a small millipede, were among the favorite finds. One of the most exciting discoveries was a giant striped yellow and brown Queen European hornet which is common in North America. There was a healthy population of grubs and several types of spiders. Using a microscope with a viewing screen, we were able to zoom in and closely examine the hornet, and everyone loved seeing the fangs on the red centipede! Aquatically, we captured and observed a male and female Black Nose Dace, Caddisfly nymph and a Mayfly nymph.

Andrew brought his Spotted Salamanders and several terrariums set up with a variety of species (called a genius) that are thriving in mutual ecosystems. Several of the guests demonstrated bravery and curiosity as they held a Madagascar Hissing Cockroach, that Andrew brought to share. As a bonus, two gray herons landed at the lake.



*Andrew Cooke displays various critters*

The goal of the event is to introduce young minds to the wonderful world of entomology. We want them to explore nature and learn why a large variety of species help make a healthy environment. Due to a lack of rain, we were not able to have our annual campfire, but everyone still enjoyed hot cider and cooked marshmallows over a hot grill.

Thank you to the following IKES for their help in making this a successful event: Carrie Palsson, Andrew Cooke, Jay Copsey, Joel Kieper, Marion Lindenbaum, Tom Vegella and Lisa Sutter.

## 2025 Range Officer Training Class Schedule

Range Officer Training Classes will be held to train new Range Officers and recertify existing RO's due for recertification in 2025. The class dates are:

**Sunday, March 16**

**Saturday, May 31**

**Saturday, August 16**

**Saturday, October 25**

For *new* Range Officers, class prerequisites are that you must be Range Approved for at least six months; have a completed Range Officer Certification Card signed by three Duty Range Officers while using the pistol range on separate occasions before the class; and successfully complete a test on the Range Rules prior to the class (the test is administered two weeks in advance of each class for attendees). Upon class completion, new Range Officer candidates must also successfully serve as the Duty Range Officer during the live fire portion of a Range Orientation Practical Training Class for new members held each month. Range Officer credentials (a Range Officer Range Card and Pistol Range Coded Chapter Access Card) are then issued.

*Existing* Range Officers require recertification every 5 years, which consists of completing the RO Training Class and the pre-course Range Rules test. RO's requiring recertification in 2025 will be contacted in December for their class date preference.

Range Officer qualified members are granted the privilege of using the rifle and pistol ranges (see the Range Rules for specific times) when a Duty Range Officer is not present on weekends. With the privilege of greater range access comes a responsibility - you must serve as a Duty Range Officer for a three or four-hour weekend shift approximately twice each year.

For more information or to register for a class, contact Duval Crist.

~ Duval Crist, Range Coordinator ~

## December Road Clean up moved back a week

Normally, the Chapter's bimonthly road clean up is held the Sunday after the GMM, but in December it will be the Sunday before. So, *here's your opportunity to work off that Thanksgiving Turkey by helping with Road Clean up on Sunday December 1.* The Chapter provides gloves, grabbers and road vests. Good for 2 volunteer hours even if it takes less time.

## New Members Recently Inducted

Charlie Cherven & Ado Novaes-Card	Derwood
Robert Hammerman	Germantown
Joe Kildea	Bethesda
Dean Mladenovic	Bethesda

A warm welcome to all!

### **Wood Duck Conservation in January**

With January just around the corner, it's time to once again prepare the Chapter's wood duck nest boxes for the spring nesting season. This is a great opportunity to get a jump on your volunteer hours for 2025, contribute to a worthwhile conservation activity, and work alongside some great people in the process. This year's work days will include January 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, and February 2nd. Each Sunday, volunteers will go out in the field to repair and replace boxes, check the predator guards, cut away brush and, most importantly, record nesting success from last spring. And as you can imagine, it takes many hands to get the job done so please consider joining us for one or more work days. This is also a great opportunity for middle school and high school students to earn Student Service Learning (SSL) hours!

If you are not familiar with the program, the Chapter's Wood Duck Conservation effort has helped maintain nesting boxes and monitor wood duck populations since the 1950's. IWLAR maintains about 75 wood duck nesting boxes in Montgomery County, mostly in McKee Beshers Wildlife Management Area west of Poolesville. Winter is the best time to prepare them for the birds' arrival in late February/early March.

### **Wood Duck Conservation (Continued)**

A few days before each wood duck work day, details about the next work day's meeting location, etc., will be announced via the IWLAR Google Group. Assignment of specific tasks will happen that Sunday morning, on-site. In general, we meet at the designated location at 10:00 a.m. and work is usually done by 1:00 p.m. The boxes are in wooded swamps and that requires wading in shallow water so chest waders or hip boots are ideal. For those who do not have their own, the Chapter has loaner pairs available. All tools and repair materials are supplied; you just bring the warm, willing body.

Keep an eye out for the weekly announcements in January on the IWLAR Google Group and sign up when you can. To sign up for any of the work days contact Joe Walther. Hope to see you out there!

### **Ike's Want Ads**

**To place a non-commercial ad**, write to the Chapter's PO Box 2255, Germantown, MD, 20875, or contact Todd Anderson. Ads must be submitted by the third Friday of the month.