Dear Friends - I had a goal...

After just a couple of months in the Executive Director position, I knew that I needed a big goal to jump start the growth in our environmental education programs. So after a review of our programs, our marketing, and our staff, I decided that we could double the number of people that we were serving. So the goal to connect with 10,000 participants began!

Now that the year is over and the whirlwind of programs has settled, I’m so excited to say that we exceeded that goal and served 11,340 participants this year! To find out how we did it, check out the Soaring to 10,000 article on the next page.

Many of the things that we have set in motion will continue to help us grow long into the future. This growth would not have been possible without your support! I hope that you will join us as we continue to grow and soar in the coming year. Thank you!

Stacy Carr-Poole  
Executive Director
Message from the President

P. Alston Waring wrote, “Honey Hollow’s concern for its natural resources had its roots in the gradual worry of the nation over the growing loss of our great natural inheritance of soils... and the growing degradation of our environment.” He was the voice of six farmers that brought innovative farming techniques to the watershed and started a conservation movement.

Honey Hollow became a National Historic Landmark as the first place where water, wildlife and soil conservation practices were applied watershed-wide. It was driven by local citizens, not government departments. Today, that is what fuels the Board of Directors, volunteers and members.

The last few years have been a turning point for us. A revitalized Board, new Executive Director and increasing membership have put us back on the path that originally brought BCAS and the Honey Hollow Watershed Association together. We have recommitted ourselves to the preservation of the area through conservation advocacy and innovative new programs.

Most importantly, BCAS passionately teaches future generations about nature and the amazing world around us. Thousands of children come through and leave with a new understanding and respect of nature. We hope they will carry that respect forward into a world that seems so intent on destroying itself in the guise of progress.

Please accept my heartfelt thanks to all who have supported our important environmental efforts.

Bob Hennessy
President of the Board of Directors
World famous ornithologist David Sibley visited BCAS! Thanks to our good friends at Farley’s Bookshop and Doylestown Bookshop, David Sibley gave an evening lecture, and two morning bird walks at BCAS. 100 people
Since our founding in 1969, Bucks County Audubon Society at Honey Hollow has focused on providing environmental education programs for all ages and creating connections between people, the natural world and the rich history of the Bucks County area. For the past several years we have served about 5,000 people annually, but we knew that we could do more! So for 2016-2017, we set the bar high with the goal of doubling our reach to 10,000!

While this was a big goal, we knew that we could do it by providing more programs and by focusing more time on getting people out to our programs. Here are some of the great programs and events that happened this year:

- Revitalized Summer Camp! After a break for several years, camp came back in August 2016. 15 children The close of the year brought two more weeks of camp in June 2017. 20 children
- Because camp is so much fun, for the school year we offered a School Holiday Camp program! We offered 11 day long camps on holidays, such as Presidents Day and spring break. 80 children
- Outreach to children in low-income areas saw a big increase this year with our new Head Start Science Enrichment program and our new STEM in the Watershed program (details on pg. 5-6). 800+ students each served four times
- The fun isn’t only for kids, our Nurture Your Inner Naturalist speaker series brought people out for engaging speakers and hands-on activities. Thanks to our partner Delaware Valley University, we were able to host these in the beautiful Life Science Building Auditorium. Our most popular speaker was Scott Widensaul and his talk about Project Snowstorm and Snowy Owls! 200 people
- Creation of the Nature Lovers Book Club in January provided another opportunity for adults to connect with nature! 80 people
- Winter brought an exhibit of award winning photography from National Audubon Society as part of our Winter Birding Bonanza! 200 people

We also hosted more weekend programs for families, attended community events, and shared our expertise at things like the #girlSTEM Conference hosted by the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. So many opportunities to connect with people in our area and help connect them to the environment!

We exceed our goal! In 2016-2017, we served 11,340 people!
It’s just the start of great things to come!
STEM education is becoming recognized as a vital part of a student’s education. However, many schools and teachers do not have the resources and expertise to teach STEM education in a hands-on, inquiry based way. So schools must supplement their lessons with outside resources and enrichment, such as program with BCAS. Unfortunately, some schools do not have the finances to provide these supplemental programs.

To help us reach schools in areas of need with STEM education, we create our STEM in the Watershed program. The program provides a four-part science unit for 3rd and 4th grade students. For the 2016-2017 school year, we partnered with the Bristol Borough and Bristol Area School Districts to provide this program to all of the 3rd and 4th grade students at Snyder-Girotti and Mill Creek Elementary Schools. In all we provided three in-class lessons and a field trip experience to Honey Hollow for 22 classrooms of students, about 660 children. This program was made possible by a generous grant from the VWR Foundation.

STEM means:
Science  
Technology  
Engineering  
Math
BCAS partnered with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit to create an outreach program for children in the Head Start classrooms in the county. Thanks to a grant from Foundations Community Partnership, we were able to serve eight classrooms of pre-school children, about 160 children! They participated in a four-part program called Bird Explorer. Each week for four weeks, BCAS naturalists visited their classrooms with natural artifacts, hands-on activities, and interactive games and crafts.

School Holiday Camp Success

Getting children away from screens and back into nature is vital to their development. Research shows that children who are outside more have better behavior, physical and mental development, and have a deeper connection with nature. We are always looking for new opportunities to provide children with the benefits of nature.

There are days throughout the school year where children have the day off, yet parents have work. To fill the parent’s need of having something to do with their children, we created a School Holiday Camp! Participants learned about environmental topics such as watersheds, aquaponics, adaptations and had a great time in nature!
Volunteers are one of Bucks County Audubon Society’s greatest resources. They help with the day-to-day operation of the Visitors Center and help maintain the property and buildings so visitors can enjoy our natural world and wildlife during walks and educational programs. They are vital to the success of special events, such as the Annual Art of the Barn, Earth Day Festival, Haunted Trails, and the Raptor Run 5K.

In addition to our events, volunteers have been working in our organic garden, Healing Garden and Pollinator Garden (see below).

A PLACE OF HEALING

Improving health via nature includes a demand for Horticultural Therapy for children and adults with special needs. This is an audience that is underserved and looking for opportunities that make nature accessible for everyone.

For the past several years, BCAS has been working with Peaceful Living to bring adults with autism and special needs into nature. This work sparked the idea of creating a special place in nature for these visitors. So with the support of Foundations Community Partnership, BCAS is creating a Healing Garden!

THANK YOU EAGLE SCOUTS!

We were fortunate to be the recipients of two Eagle Scout projects. Jake Armagast built the bridge (see below) and Chad Lewis replaced our deteriorating trail markers.

This year, over 150 people gave 2,370 hours of service to support BCAS!

Thank you Master Gardeners: Heidi Shiver, Gail Greer, Helen Tai, Ann Kiefer, MaryAnn Ferraro, and Wanda Andrews for creating our new Pollinator Garden!
People have always known, but often forgotten, that nature has healing powers! Today people are rediscovering that time in nature can improve your physical and mental health.
Special Events

One way that Bucks County Audubon Society supports our mission is by hosting special events! For the past 17 years, the special events at BCAS has included the Art of the Barn Tour and Art Show. While this is a wonderful event, we wanted to add a new event this year that might attract a different audience and also get more people to visit our beautiful property. On June 7th, we hosted our first Raptor Run: Cross Country 5K and Family Fun Run!

Art of the Barn Tour

Over 300 participants joined us for a cool and damp weekend in October for the 17th annual Art of the Barn. The tour features six beautiful barns, including a wonderful barn to house conversion, an English ground barn, two barns with silos, a Pennsylvania Standard Barn, and a classic bank barn. In addition to the lovely barns, ten talented local artists showed their work at the event.

Special Thanks to our 2016 Art of the Barn Sponsors:

Wehrung’s Lumber & Home Center
Bucks County Herald
Eiseman Roofing
Heritage Conservancy
Sheila Buerkle MBA, Addison Wolfe Real Estate
Astro-Dynamics
Gray Contracting Services
Jarrett Vaughan Builders Inc.
Modern Vintage Today
Wild Birds Unlimited
What is better than a run through fields, forests, and along the picturesque Honey Hollow Creek? Our first Raptor Run provided runners with a challenging trail run and an opportunity to enjoy fresh air and beautiful scenic vistas. About 50 runners participated in our first race and many others came out to cheer them on. The race was followed by an after-party complete with hotdogs and marshmallows roasted over the bonfire.

**Financials**

Thanks to two significant gifts in the previous fiscal year, we were able to put extra resources towards the growth of staff and programming this year. This was instrumental in helping us to reach our goal of doubling the number of people we served with our programs.
Thank you to those individuals, foundations and businesses that supported us this year!

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