

PRESERVING WOODWILD

A CALL FOR
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Woodwild Park Association | Fall, 2015

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Woodwild Park Association
Metuchen, NJ



Dear Friends:

We invite you to join us in our effort to preserve two Metuchen gems—a Victorian-era landmark and a patch of preserved woods, all part of the nearly four acre Woodwild Park. Owned and managed by the non-profit Woodwild Park Association, the park provides valuably needed open space for the public, a habitat for many plants and animals, and protection for several historic features including the iconic cast-iron horse watering trough.

The friends and neighbors who comprise the Association urgently need your financial support in order to restore the horse trough, preserve the main park entrance on Middlesex Avenue, and maintain the park grounds.



“Open space and passive and active recreation are essential to public health.”

– Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2003



Woodwild is enjoyed by children of all ages including:

- **explorers** discovering the great outdoors – sometimes all-by-themselves for the first time;
- **seekers of bugs** and worms, especially under stones and inside decaying trees;
- **photographers** building or honing their craft;
- **listeners** who adore the rat-a-tat-tat of a woodpecker, the wind-up of hundreds of cicadas, and the rustle of leaves as chipmunks scatter;
- **dogs** walking their people; and
- **high schoolers** getting the feel of a real cross country run before the season starts.

A RICH HISTORY



The Route 27 entrance to the park is framed by four mid-19th century stone pillars.

The historic stone pillars along Route 27 originally ornamented the mid-1800s estate of Thomas W. Strong. In the late 19th century, Strong sold the property to Charles Corbin, who later deeded it to the Woodwild Park Association for the general benefit of the public.

The historic horse trough, which was actually a water fountain, was purchased and installed by

the Woodwild Park Association in 1900 as a public service in collaboration with Middlesex Water Company and the Metuchen Savings Bank (then known as the Metuchen Building and Loan).

At a time when well water was the norm in our area, Middlesex Water offered to supply free running water to public drinking fountains as a means of generating



The iconic "horse trough" is the only remaining water fountain out of three that were built throughout the town. Before the age of the automobile, it was a landmark where travelers along Middlesex Avenue could stop and refresh their horses, dogs and themselves.

interest in their service. After the municipality declined the offer, the Woodwild Park Association agreed to take on the project and held a series of fundraisers before purchasing the cast-iron structure for \$351.21. The Metuchen Building and Loan donated a triangle of land to the association so the fountain could be placed on a major thoroughfare where it would be most useful, rather

than in the park itself, out of sight of travelers.

The fountain was repaired in the 1980s at a cost of about \$8,000 and is in dire need of a full restoration today. Without immediate attention, it is in danger of literally rusting away.

How many
species of
plants and
animals call
Woodwild
Park home?



Clockwise from top left: Female Eastern Pondhawk dragonfly; Raccoon mother and cub; male Scarlet Tanager in breeding plumage; female Downy Woodpecker. Wildlife photography © ML Strahlendorff



77 species of
birds

100 species of
plants

22 species of
**butterflies
& moths**

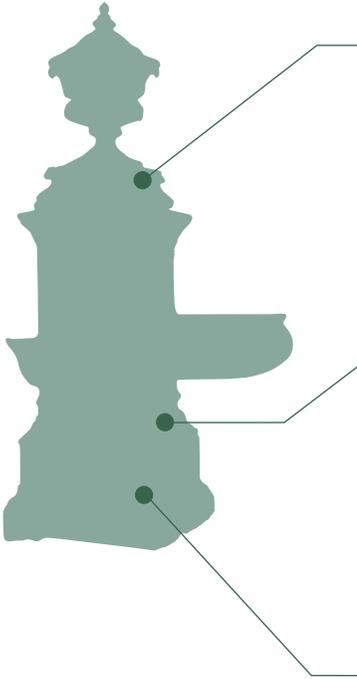
16 species of
**insects
& spiders**

9 species of
mammals



PROJECT NEED

The park infrastructure is in dire need of repair. The rate of deterioration is accelerating, necessitating immediate action to avoid losing any of the park's important features, especially the horse trough that is loved by the entire community.





A recent evaluation of the horse trough by a specialist in cast iron restoration shows substantial corrosion since it was last restored in 1980. Unless corrective action is taken soon, the trough will be damaged beyond repair.

The eroding driveway that serves as the entrance to the park from Route 27 is undermining the foundations of the stone columns and needs to be addressed. In addition, the sidewalks along Route 27 are uneven and need to be repaired.



CAMPAIGN GOALS

The Woodwild Park Association, a membership organization, has solely relied on members' dues to pay all costs including annual insurance fees and maintenance.

We now ask for your help in this one-time special appeal to raise **\$65,000:**

- **\$45,000** to restore and preserve the **horse watering trough**
- **\$12,500** for **masonry work**, including stabilizing the stone pillars and their foundations, repaving the driveway (to better support the pillars), and repairing the sidewalks
- **\$7,500** for **woodland maintenance** and storm clean-up

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

All donors will be listed on the Woodwild Park Association's website, www.woodwildpark.org, and donations at the level of \$1,000 and above on plaques tastefully incorporated into the park's landscape.

Donor Levels:

Patron of the Park	\$25,000 and above
Pillar of the Woodwild Community	\$10,000 to \$24,999
Corbin Circle	\$5,000 to \$9,999
Wildlife Benefactor	\$1,000 to \$4,999
Park Advocate	\$500 to \$999
Sanctuary Supporter	\$100 to \$499
Friend of Woodwild	up to \$99



“**...a beautiful place to play.** And I learned about country things...acorns, all the pretty wildflowers, mountain laurel and so forth.”

Ruth Eby, oral history, recorded 1977
Metuchen-Edison Historical Society



The Woodwild Park Association is a Public Charity as defined by Section 509(a)(2) and is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Association is a membership organization; all dues and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

For further information, visit our website, www.woodwildpark.org, or contact us at:

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