



The Ellerbe Creek Journal

News from the Watershed
Winter 2007

Published by the Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association (ECWA)
www.ellerbecreek.org

Edited by Diana Davis
diana@ellerbecreek.org

ECWA's Annual Meeting – Big Turnout

Larry Brockman

On October 22 ECWA held its annual meeting at the Broad Street Café with well over 30 people attending – by far our biggest membership meeting ever. It was wonderful to have so many people, both old and new ECWA members, come and show their commitment and interest in preserving and enhancing our local environment.

Special thanks to attendees for your insightful and inspiring comments. Members showed great interest in the following:

- Trails – including a system that would connect downtown to Falls Lake
- Involving young people
- Tracking and Preserving Wildlife (see the article entitled Sightings in the Watershed)
- Increasing ties to neighborhood associations
- Water conservation including rain barrels and rain gardens
- Freedom for dogs (watch for an article in our spring newsletter about this)

Anyone interested in becoming more involved by serving on a committee or joining the board, please contact Diana Tetens (698-8161) or Larry Brockman (286-3150).

Board meetings are open to you, the membership, and are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 at Larry Brockman's house 1407 Pennsylvania Ave.

Coca-Cola of Durham Supports ECWA

Diana Davis



The Coca-Cola Bottler's Foundation, a charity funded by the Coca-Cola Bottlers Association recently chose the Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association to be the recipient of a donation to aid us in continuing to restore wetlands and protect the environment in the Ellerbe Creek Watershed. The third generation owner of Durham Coca-Cola, Hager Rand, follows the proud 100-year tradition of his father and his grandfather by supporting environmental organizations, education, the arts, and social services.

People's Alliance Donates Funds to Keep Creek Clean

Larry Brockman

Ellerbe creek does not meet federal water quality standards due to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria. According to a city storm water official, dog waste is "certainly a contributor" to the problem. The Durham People's Alliance has graciously donated \$300 to ECWA to purchase biodegradable bags (i.e., Mutt-mitts) for dog owners to use in picking up after their dogs. The Mutt-mitt dispensers are currently located along the W. Ellerbe Creek trail that goes through ECWA's 17 Acre Nature Preserve.

ECWA Recommended for Grant by Durham Open Space and Trails

Carl Stearns

The Durham Open Space and Trails (DOST) Commission is recommending funding a Matching Grants requests submitted by ECWA for general improvements at our three urban nature preserves. DOST will make their recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on January 8th, 2007. Upon their approval, ECWA will begin building new trails, and installing Mutt-Mitt dispensers, interpretive displays, tree and plant ID tags, native plants & shrubs, and boundary markers. Our preserves total over 103 acres, and these are not small tasks, so if you'd like to help with graphic design, trail building, native landscaping, boundary clearing & marking or other tasks please contact carl@ellerbecreek.org.



BREAKING NEWS

Board of Commissioners approve ECWA Matching Grants Request
(see web site for details www.ellerbecreek.org)



ECWA Calendar

Feb. 10	Pearl Mill Workday
Feb. 13	Board Meeting
Feb. 24	Bird Walk
March 13	Board Meeting
April 10	Board Meeting

Table of Contents

ECWA's Annual Meeting	1	Volunteer Opportunities	5
Coca-Cola Donation	2	End of an Era	6
People's Alliance Donation	2	Welcome New Board Members	6
ECWA Recommended for Grant by DOST	2	Winter Wildlife	6
Winter Plant Highlight	3	Dog Attack at Pearl Mill	7
17-Acre Bird Walk	3	News from Pearl Mill	8
Glennstone Gazebo	4	ECWA Business Sponsors	8
Glennstone Trails	4	Membership 2006	9
Sightings in the Watershed	4	Stewardship at 17-Acre Woods	9
Board Reorganization	5		

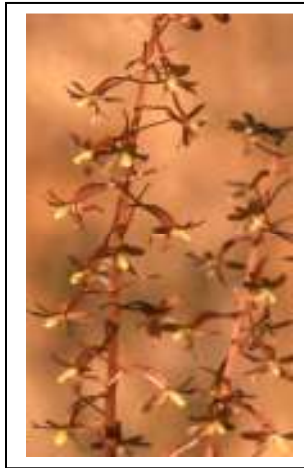
Winter Plant Highlight The Cranefly Orchid (*Tipularia discolor*)

Diana Davis

As fall progresses and the trees shed their leaves the careful observer might spot an unusual plant on the forest floor. It appears to be a single leaf, green on one side but a dark purple-red on the other, sometimes there is just one, other times there is a cluster of them. In summer the leaves aren't there anymore but strange and exotic flowers appear in the same spot. What kind of a plant is this? It's one of our native orchids, the Cranefly orchid.

The Cranefly orchid prefers shaded woodland and sends up its leaf during the fall when there is little competition for light. All winter and into spring it photosynthesizes and stores energy in an underground corm (a structure similar to a bulb). Then, in July and August when many pollinators are active, it sends up a stalk with multiple small, delicate flowers.

So next time you're out walking in the watershed, look down, maybe you'll spot some of these strange leaves sticking up out of the forest floor. Remember the spot and check back next summer for a pleasant surprise.



Color images can be seen on the web version of the newsletter available at www.ellerbecreek.org

17-Acre Wood Bird Walk Scheduled

Larry Brockman

Mark your calendar! On Saturday, February 24th, (8:30 am – 10 am) Dan Kaplan, local bird enthusiast and expert will lead us on a bird walk through the 17-Acre Nature Preserve. We will also check out the beaver dam building activity along the creek, and show folks where the beaver sleep, dine, and play right along the West Ellerbe Creek Trail. We will have donuts, bagels, juice and coffee. Kids are encouraged to join us. Meet at the kiosk at the corner of Albany and Perennial Drive, just along the W. Ellerbe Trail and downstream from Indian Trail Park. RSVPs are appreciated, but not necessary. Contact Larry Brockman at larry@ellerbecreek.org.

Ellerbe Creek Journal
Winter 2007

Updates from Glennstone

Glennstone Stormwater Wetland Gets New Gazebo

Larry Brockman

Keeping with his commitment and vision to ensure the most prominent stormwater detention pond/wetland in the Glennstone neighborhood is an asset rather than eye-sore to the Glennstone community, Craig Morrison, President of Cimarron Homes, recently completed construction of a gazebo overlooking the wetland. In the summer, Cimarron Homes invested in planting native grasses, flowers, trees and shrubs in and around the wetland and installed a watering system to ensure survival of the plants. ECWA will be working with Cimarron Homes on an interpretive display and signs for the gazebo and wetland area.



Glennstone Nature Trails in Great Shape

Larry Brockman

Thanks to a couple of groups of very hard working and energetic students from Jordan High School and a Duke Presbyterian Campus Ministry group, the 83-Acre Glennstone Nature Preserve Trails are clear and walkable (trail maps are available on our website at www.ellerbecreek.org). On Saturday September 23, over 25 volunteers, including Glennstonians, "Reliable" Rick Zechman and Ken "Lawnmower Man" Privette, cleared nearly all of the existing trails. During the summer months a lot of weeds and shrubs had grown on the trail and made it difficult to hike. Now that they are open up, we encourage people to get out on the trails over the winter months and become familiar with the Preserve. We will be working on additional trails and signage over the next year. If you have questions or suggestions about the trails or want to help maintain the Preserve, feel free to contact Rick Zechman (Rickezechman@yahoo.com) or Larry Brockman, (larry@ellerbecreek.org).

Sightings in the watershed

Diana Davis

At the annual meeting it was mentioned that people would like to know what species have been spotted in the watershed and the seasonal frequency of local birds. Some of that information is already available on the ECWA website at www.ellerbecreek.org. On the left hand side under the heading Ellerbe Creek there is a link to Critter Surveys where there are lists of birds, fish and dragonflies and damselflies seen in the watershed. Other lists will be coming over the next few months including plants, herps (amphibians and reptiles), butterflies and moths, beetles, stormwater invertebrates (insects, crawfish, snails etc) and other invertebrates. What has not yet been compiled is a list of mammal species in the watershed. Have mammal sightings, or sightings not included on the on-line lists? Email Diana@ellerbecreek.org.

Seasonal bird frequency. Creating a seasonal bird frequency list takes years of reports from active birders. There is a seasonal bird frequency list for the triangle area available on the Chapel Hill Bird Club web site at <http://chbc.carolinanature.com>. Scroll down until you find the checklist, it covers Durham, Orange and Wake counties and has frequencies by the week.

Volunteer Opportunities and Board Restructuring

Diana Davis

Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association was formed in 1999 as a small neighborhood group interested in preserving local green space. Since then ECWA has grown to include over 100 acres of property throughout the watershed, networks of trails, and an increasing involvement in local environmental issues. Like all expanding organizations we have been experiencing growing pains; the size of our organization and goals have exceeded the abilities of our existing organizational structure and now it's time to change.

Over the next year we will be working to restructure the way our board functions, from a small group of individuals who are all involved in every aspect of the organization, to a network of committees that specialize in topics such as land acquisition, water quality, fundraising, outreach and others. These committees will consist of one or more board members and volunteers from the ECWA community. **If you've always wanted to do more to help ECWA but didn't want to commit to being a board member - now is your chance!** Different committees will meet at different rates, some as few as a couple of times a year, others more often. Pick your level of commitment and join up. Watch for calls for committee members over the coming year and volunteer!

Call for volunteers

We need volunteers to help with the following:

Newsletter distribution. Our newsletter comes out three times a year in January, April and September and we need volunteers to help with folding, stamping and door-to-door delivery of the newsletter. Contact Larry@ellerbecreek.org.

We need someone to help **maintain the wetlands garden** at Indian Trail Park. This task includes weeding and removing invasive exotics in spring and fall and marking in the winter so the site doesn't get mowed. We will train you. For more information contact Margot@ellerbecreek.org.

Plans are in the works for a bridge to span the creek in the 17-acre Woods Preserve. To accomplish this we need donated **engineering services**. If you can donate your services, or know of someone who might, please contact Carl@ellerbecreek.org.

We're looking for volunteers to assist with a wide range of **Fundraising** tasks. Don't like asking for money? No problem! You can help plan an event, organize an outing or initiate a project based on your skills and interests. For more information contact DianaT@ellerbecreek.org or call 698-8161.

Compiled by Diana Davis

End of an Era

Kim Curtis and Larry Brockman

Candace Turney has served as ECWA's treasurer extraordinaire for 4 years and is now passing the baton. It won't be easy to catch since Candace not only performed the tasks a treasurer customarily does but also did ECWA's payroll and taxes as well. Candace brought professionalism and a real business sense to ECWA. A huge thank you, Candace, for many years of work and fellowship.

Jane Finch has also stepped down from the board after serving for 7 years. Jane supported ECWA in a variety of ways, including acting as membership coordinator, organized volunteer workdays, worked as lead for Upper Neuse Watershed issues and took on the role of board secretary. Her positive attitude and good nature will be missed.

Winter Wildlife

Diana Davis

You don't expect amphibians to be active during winter but several are actively breeding during the winter months. On warm winter nights Spring Peepers (*Hyla crucifer*) and upland chorus frogs (*Pseudacris triseriata*) will start calling for mates. They breed in wooded ponds, swamps and ditches. Listen around the creek or near your backyard pond on warm winter nights for these frogs.

Salamanders are also active in winter. The adults can often be found under logs, rocks or boards where the ground is damp. In winter some species move toward water to breed, often areas of temporary, seasonal standing water. These mostly nocturnal amphibians are

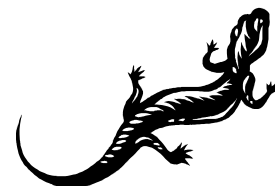
Welcome New Board Members

Joanne Abel

Joanne walks the North/South Greenway that passes through the Pearl Mill Nature Preserve daily. The preserve's creation sparked her interest in joining the ECWA board. She has lived in Durham since 1974, working first as librarian for the bookmobile and then as reference librarian until her retirement from the Durham County Library; now she works part time with G. Crabtree Home Building and is working on her Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at Duke. She has served on several boards, most recently on boards of the Durham Crisis Response Center and Ladyslipper Music. She is a docent with Preservation Durham's walking tours of downtown Durham. She is an avid flat-water kayaker, gardener, and naturalist. Joanne sees her involvement with ECWA as a way of combining community building and her love of nature.

Margot Ward

Margot Ward lives north of Ellerbe Creek and the Indian Trail Park and works at the Whole Foods Market in Cary as an Associate Store Team Leader. She and her partner recently moved from the Northgate Park branch of Ellerbe Creek to the Indian Park branch and enjoy the small wild places left in the city. An alumna of St. Andrews College in Laurinburg, North Carolina, and a near native of North Carolina, she has a lifelong interest in exploring and preserving urban woodlands and waters. She is currently maintaining a wetland garden at Indian Trail Park.



Dog Attack at Pearl Mill

Mary Anne McDonald and Diana Davis

On the afternoon of November 25th on the greenway near Markham Ave and Duke St. a large, off-leash dog attacked an elderly gentleman walking his poodles. This dog had been spotted with several others being run in an open field behind the Duke Diet and Fitness Center. Several pedestrians witnessed the incident and came to the aid of the man and his dogs; even so, the man and one of his poodles were bitten by this dog. One of the men who had been running the dogs retrieved his dog and fled the scene before police arrived.

To complicate matters the 911 dispatcher seemed to be unable to accept the greenway as a location. Apparently the 911 system requires either a street address or an intersection. It took over half an hour for police and EMTs to arrive.

What can you do?

There were essentially two problems that occurred. One was that the dogs were running off-leash and the other was that the 911 system does not have the ability to dispatch to greenways.

Durham county law prohibits dogs to be unrestrained while off the property of their owner, even outside the city limits. The law specifically indicates that voice command is not an adequate restraint. Dogs previously determined to be dangerous or the subject of previous complaints of being at-large must be confined at all times, even on their owners' property.

But what can you do? The first thing to do is to set a good example and ALWAYS have your dog on a leash. An unleashed dog can quickly get into trouble, eating something you'd rather not have then consume, running up to another dog who is not friendly or dashing away after a rabbit or deer and becoming lost. It's also considerate to others; not everyone is comfortable around dogs.

If you see an unrestrained, or at-large, dog in Durham County call animal control at 919-560-0630 or 919-560-0631. On the weekends call the county sheriff or 911 and ask them to contact an animal control officer. The animal control officers in Durham County are responsive and caring individuals. They are, however, understaffed and underfunded. You can help by contacting the Durham County Board of Commissioners and letting them know you care and would like to see Animal Control better funded (see www.durhamcountync.gov and follow the links under Your Elected Officials for contact information).

The second problem is with the 911 system. Again what you can do is contact the county government and request that the greenway system be added to the 911 system (see www.durhamcountync.gov and follow the links under Your Elected Officials for contact information) In the meantime **if you do have an incident on a greenway** - walk or send someone to the nearest street, give the 911 system an intersection or street number and meet the police or EMTs there.

News From Pearl Mill Preserve

Joanne Abel and Kim Curtis

In October, volunteers worked on a new kiosk at Pearl Mill Preserve. Master carpenter Rob Walpole completed the installation on a subsequent workday, putting on its candy apple red tin roof and Plexiglas panels with help from Carl Stearns and his daughter, Raquel.

Work on "the Olive Grove" continues. During two workdays we made substantial progress hacking our way north. Thanks to Barbara Haight of People's Alliance for organizing PA's environmental group, "Durham's Patch," to come out for the workday. Barbara worked with PA member Rick Hanford and Cynthia Kulstad on the south end of the preserve cutting gargantuan olive bushes, freeing some lovely arrowwood vibernums (used by native Americans for making arrows). PA members Nicole Rowan and Sara Terry, Colonial Village resident Karen Russell, Nicholas School student Chris Clatterbuck, and Kim Curtis worked on pulling and cutting the many returning, smaller olive shoots in the middle of the preserve, while Alex and Irene Passmoore, Trinity Park residents, did a great job cutting and clearing olive and some mimosa from the sandy bank at water's edge. A final push came when PA member Hicham Qasmi showed up and took out several box elders adjacent to the new Kiosk, a place everyone should watch in the coming year as we help transform it from a tangle of invasives to a rich and showy wetland garden.

Our work continues in the new year with a Feb. 10th Saturday workday planned. Look for the notice on the listserv. We hope to see you there!

ECWA Business Sponsors

Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association is now proud to offer Business Sponsorships! If you would like to support Ellerbe Creek and see your business listed in our newsletter please contact Diana Tetens at dianat@ellerbecreek.org or 919-698-8161.



**Wholesale Bakery Serving the
Triangle & Triad
Retail Coffee Shop & Takeout
In the heart of downtown Durham!
136 East Chapel Hill St.
Durham, NC 27701
(919) 286-0303
www.ninthstbakery.com**

Jane B. Finch, LCSW, Psychotherapist
James W. Finch, MD, Addiction
Medicine Specialist
910 Broad Street
Durham NC 27705
919-416-4800
www.janebfinch.com

American Labor
1308 Broad St.
Durham, NC 27705
Instrument line for medical devices
www.americanlabor.org

Thanks to our 2006 Members – you make it happen!

Tamara Abashian
 Joanne Abel & Rama Mills
 Mark Ambrose
 Barbara Beaman
 David Beckett
 Andrew & Caelia Bingham
 Nancy Blood & Catherine Chandler
 Fred Broadwell
 Larry & Beth Brockman
 Erin Brown
 Priscilla Burcham
 Candace Carraway
 Steve & Edie Cohn
 Kim Curtis & Rom Coles
 Will Coward
 Kathleen Duval & Marty Smith
 Dale Evarts & Elizabeth Blair
 John Farnum
 Sarah Fish
 Heather & Ben Fisher
 Kathy Frye
 Beth Gadkowski
 Wendi & Timothy Gale
 Alison & Brian Gatherum
 Ben Gilbert
 Zenaida Guerra
 Nancy Hamilton
 Bob Healy
 David Heist
 Marilyn & Michael Helms
 Daphne Hill
 Steve Hiltner
 John Hinkle & Lisa Shulte

Jim & Candy Howard
 Mary Howie
 Elizabeth Howie
 Frank Hyman
 Brian Johnson
 Mark Johnson & Mary Roberson
 Jason Jones
 Terry Jones
 Daniel Kaplan & Marian Abernathy
 Ned & Betsy Kennington
 George & Terri Koch
 Darlene Kucken
 Cynthia Kulstad
 Rob Kustra
 Heather Smith Linton
 Michael Lowry
 Paul Luebke & Carol Gallione
 Mary Jane Mago
 Gordon Mantler & Christina
 Headrick
 Fritz Mayer & Mary Kay Delaney
 Donna McCarraher & Patricia
 Harding
 Leslie McClellan
 Mary Anne McDonald
 Sean McKnight
 Joel & Victoria Meyer
 Tim & Kim Miller
 Lisa Moreau & Kevin Young
 Ginny & Frank Neelon
 Leann Nelson & Glenn Martin
 Barbara Newborg
 Billy B. Olive

Karen Otsea & Joseph Neff
 Coin Page
 Richard Palmer
 Jonathan Pattishall
 Deborah Pearce
 Bill Pope
 Kevin Quinlan
 Ann Marie Rasmussen
 Bud & Lisa Reiter-Lavery
 Andy Riddle
 Mary Ann Rood
 Karen Russell
 Theodore Salazar & Melissa Smith
 Elizabeth (Libby) Searles-Bohs
 Mike & Cheryl Shiflett
 Anne Slifkin & Michael Freemark
 Robert & Melissa Smart
 Kathleen Snyder
 Carl Stearns & Jazmin Varela
 John Stellwagen & Diana Davis
 Alan & Erika Stone
 Susan Trabka
 Tony & Sandy Tschopp
 Candace Turney & Mike Killam
 Retta Walpole
 Rob Walpole
 Margot Ward & April Walton
 Lisa Warner & Chris Rusconi
 David Wofford & Annie Kao
 Mike & Sarah Woodard
 Rick & Kathryn Zechman



Stewardship at 17 Acre Woods

Kim Curtis


Several surprises await you as you walk along the nature trails in 17 Acre Woods. As winter approaches, things are laid bare, parsed down; a quiet moves in. Now the beavers are back so you may hear a soft rush of water around their newly built dam. And on most Fridays you will find Cynthia Kulstad, ECWA's part time preserve manager, steadily at work. Underneath the tangle of exotics is a wealth of native species – arrowwood vibernum, button bush, hearts a bustin'. Occasionally she unearths other kinds of bones as well. A great cache of steel I-beams was a recent find. Veterans of the trail will be amazed at the re-appearance of the wetland, and the astute of eye will be able to identify traces of Steve Hiltner's "nursery". Stop by on a Friday, clippers in hand or not. You will be amply rewarded.

THREE WAYS TO SUPPORT ECWA

1. **Online:** Go to www.ellerbecreek.org, click on the Network for Good logo, and follow the instructions.
2. **Regular mail:** fill out the form below and mail it in.
3. **Volunteer:** email our Volunteer Coordinator at larry@ellerbecreek.org, or call us at 286-3150.

ELLERBE CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION		MEMBERSHIP FORM	
Name	_____		
Address	_____		
Telephone	_____	E-mail	_____
Select Your Membership Level	Regular Membership Levels <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 – Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 – Family Advanced Membership Levels Help Support Much Needed Staff Positions and Programs! <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 250 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____		
Please check your area(s) of interest:	<input type="checkbox"/> Land preservation <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising / Grant Research <input type="checkbox"/> Networking / Membership <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Building <input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Stormwater Runoff Reduction and Utilization <input type="checkbox"/> Wetland Garden / Habitat Restoration / Plant Rescue <input type="checkbox"/> Streamwatch (monitoring water quality & aquatic life) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Please send this completed form and your membership check to:		Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association P.O. Box 2679 Durham, NC 27705-2679	

ECWA Office Phone Number: 919-698-8161. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Section at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.

	Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association P.O. Box 2679 Durham, NC 27705-2679
<div style="border: 1px dashed black; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto; height: 80%;"></div>	