



Musconetcong River News

Fall 2009

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Asbury, New Jersey

2009 MWA Commemorative Ornament Features “American Beauty”

By *Adrienne Kaczynski*

The American Rubyspot is without a doubt one of the most beautiful insects in the watershed. Anglers, paddlers and river lovers have had the pleasure of catching brief glimpses of them while enjoying many activities in and around the Musconetcong River. This delicate photograph by Allen Barlow, a local naturalist, was chosen to be featured on the 2009 Musconetcong Watershed Association Commemorative Ornament.

The tenth in the ornament series, “American Beauty” is a detailed, vibrant photograph of the American rubyspot, a large damselfly found near clear, swift-running rocky streams and rivers that are surrounded by forest or meadow. The rubyspot is referred to as a “group one” aquatic insect; group one meaning that to survive, it cannot tolerate any pollution. The Musconetcong River Valley is home to a large number of these beautiful insects, a tell tale sign that our watershed continues to maintain the delicate balance that nature needs to support a rich and diverse ecosystem.

The damselfly in the photograph for this year’s ornament wasn’t just a chance sighting for photographer Allen Barlow. He was photographing these amazing insects for the New Jersey Odonata Survey, a volunteer effort dedicated to documenting and expanding the knowledge base of dragon and damselflies in the state, and it was while working on the survey that he captured the breathtaking photo. Allen is also the author of the soon to be published “Field Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies of New Jersey”. “Writing the field guide was a wonderful experience for me” says Allen, who believes that “helping even in the tiniest way to expand our knowledge of aquatic invertebrates and their ecological importance is the success of a lifetime”.

Allen is currently self-employed as a contractor/consultant. After many years with Elsevier Science Publishers, in 1999 he left publishing to pursue a more rewarding career focusing on the preservation of freshwater organisms and their habitat. Luckily his wife agreed it was time for a change and he is much happier for it. “I think a job should be about more than just the paycheck, although that’s nice too”, he went on to explain, “we all have the opportunity to make things a little better on our watch.”



“American Beauty” artwork on front side; signature and date on reverse. Actual size 3.5”

Allen has worked on a variety of projects for the NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Program and the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey. When asked what was best about his current job, he replied “I spend a lot of my time with wet or muddy feet, for which I consider myself fortunate! I am also delighted by the thrill of discovery and the chance to make new observations that challenge current conventional wisdom. While taking great pleasure in having my “comfort zone” of knowledge completely un-done

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“American Beauty”

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by field observations, it keeps me honest and humble to be reminded that I really don't know everything.”

Allen currently lives in Budd Lake with his wife Nancy and son Scott, as well as two parrots and a mischievous ferret.

Introduced in 2000, the MWA Commemorative Ornament is a custom

made, white porcelain disc, with original artwork on one side, highlighting a scenic or historic site on the Musconetcong River as interpreted by an artist living on or near the river. The title of the artwork and the featured artist's signature appear on the reverse.

These high quality ornaments have become instant collectibles over the years and make excellent gifts. They can be hung, framed or displayed. The 2009 ornament “American Beauty”

sells for \$23, including shipping and handling. All sales of the ornament benefit MWA.

Ornaments can be ordered online at www.musconetcong.org or by mail using the enclosed order form. A limited number of ornaments from the past years (2000-2008) can also be ordered. All ornament photos can be viewed at www.musconetcong.org. Please call (908) 537-7060 with any questions or email adrienne@musconetcong.org ☺

River Resource Center - 6 Months Later

By Kim Hood

It's hard to believe that it has already been over six months that the MWA has been “living” in their new home. Settling in is still an exciting work in

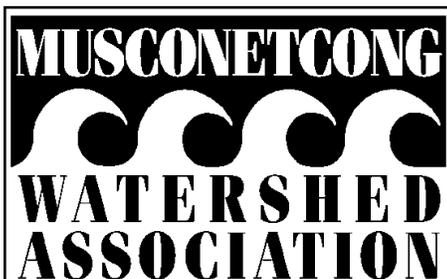
progress as we figure out how the space works best, and gradually sort through and consolidate the boxes and boxes of files that trustees and staff have collected over the past seventeen years. As we started using the space we've encountered a few kinks and glitches that are being worked out, thanks to the terrific continued support of our construction manager, Cliff Tanzler, and our contractors.

We've been extremely gratified by the great interest in the green aspects of the building and the hugely positive response we've received from the local community and visitors.

Recently, we were excited to learn that our architectural firm, Re:Vision Architecture of Philadelphia, PA, was honored for their work on the River Resource Center by the Pennsylvania Society of American Registered Architects. Re:Vision was awarded the Design of Excellence award, the highest level award given by the Society.

In addition, the River Resource Center project has been selected as a Green Building of America Award winner, and will be featured in the upcoming publication of Real Estate & Construction Review - Northeast Green Success Stories Edition. The publication will come out sometime in 2010, and is utilized by state, county and city economic development groups and other organizations responsible for the area's sustainability movement.

As of this writing, the U.S. Green Building Council is reviewing our application for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. We have been through the first round of review and our professional team is now working on putting together requested additional documentation. We are optimistic on having a final determination very soon. ☺



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908-537-7060

www.musconetcong.org

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Stay Tuned For Our Winter Dragonfly Programs

For Adults we will be offering an interesting look at these amazing insects from different perspectives:

- A program created for Anglers
- A program created for River Watchers
- A two part introduction program for MWA members, which will include a field trip in the spring

Please visit our website for updates and registration information



For our younger audience we will be hosting dragonfly related art and craft projects

Young Eyes on the River

“High school students rarely get a chance to experience what it’s like to work in their field before college. This can prevent them from making good course choices in college” according to Nancy Lawler, the MWA River Watcher coordinator. Nancy thinks that the MWA might be able to help change that for local students who are passionate about the environment through a new mentoring program she is piloting this year. This summer Nancy was approached by two students, one from Warren Hills High School and one from Voorhees High School, who wanted to get involved in MWA projects. Since the MWA is involved in studying sections of the river that are influenced by dams, Nancy thought that it might be interesting for the students to do their own investigation around the dam at Asbury. And so began the new MWA mentoring program!

The students have identified two sites, one upstream of the dam and one just downstream, for further study. This year, the students are learning various techniques used to characterize stream sites, as well as how to collect and record chemical, physical and biological data. As part of the program, they will learn to analyze the data, and come up with a conclusion and a recommendation for further study for students who may participate in the program next year. ☺



Nancy addresses the finer points of dragonfly identification.

Invasive Plants Threaten Local Ecosystems

By Bill Leavens

MWA is in the dam removal business for good reason. Dams create an artificial pond that radically changes the local ecosystem up river from the dam structure. Where there is supposed to be a river bank with mature plants that support a local animal population, there is a large body of water with a slow moving current. That new environment invites a different species of vegetation to take root.

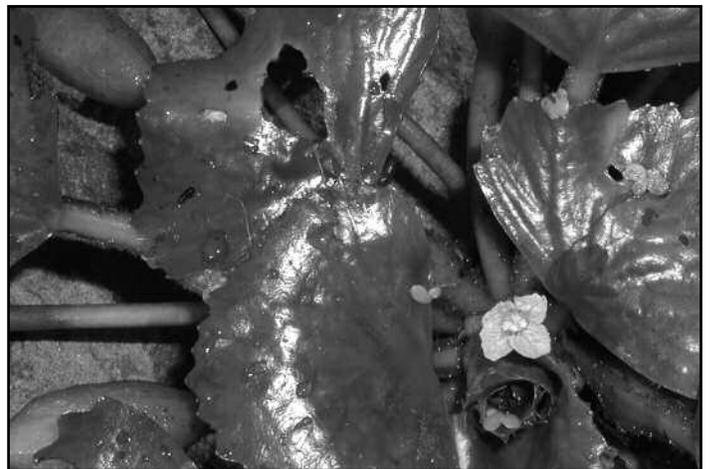
Perhaps the most threatening new species in the Musconetcong River valley is the water chestnut that has taken root in Lake Musconetcong. Its floating leaves form a rosette of triangular, sharp toothed leaves up to 1 1/2 inches long with stems up to 6 inches long. These leaves have prominent veins and short, stiff hairs below. The plant has small white, four-petaled flowers located in the center of the leaf mass. While the water chestnut does not grow in moving water there is a concern that seeds moving downstream could establish colonies in slack water areas caused by other dams on the Musconetcong River.

Water chestnut has virtually exploded on Lake Musconetcong since it was first identified there three years ago. Water chestnuts create a dense mat of vegetation that crowd out other plant species. The plant provides little nutritional value for wildlife that depend on native vegetation. Water chestnut degrades waterways for wildlife and significantly hinders recreational uses of the lake. Lake Musconetcong serves as an especially inviting habitat for the water chestnut because of a rich nutrient load provided by the residential areas locally and

upstream in Lake Hopatcong.

Executive Director Beth Styler Barry has had extensive and personal contact with the plant. She spent a Saturday in September pulling out plants and hauling them into a kayak with lake residents and other volunteers. Hand harvesting is necessary in shallow coves where the weed harvester cannot be used.

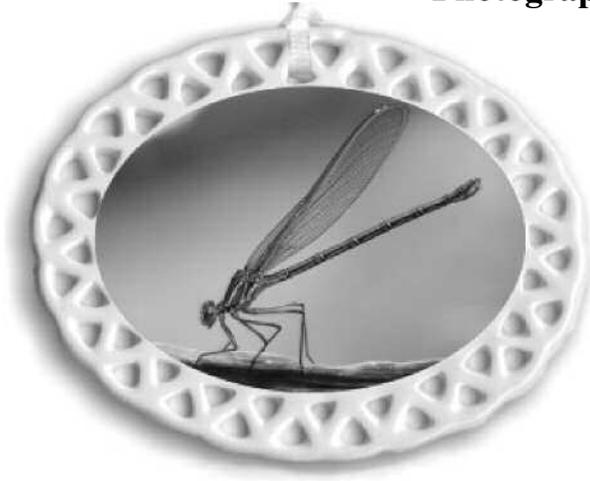
MWA is a member of the Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team which is raising public awareness of this and other plants that menace the region. Please visit www.cjisst.org for more information. ☺



At the September 19th Lake Musconetcong “Volunteer Day”, sponsored by New Jersey Parks and Forestry, volunteers floated in canoes and kayaks to hand harvest the water chestnut pictured above.

Musconetcong Watershed Association 2009 Commemorative Ornament

**“American Beauty”
Photograph by Allen Barlow**



Shown: artwork on front side; signature and date on reverse side, Actual size 3.5”

The Musconetcong Watershed Association 2009 Commemorative Ornament, tenth in a series, features an original photograph by Budd Lake, New Jersey photographer and naturalist Allen Barlow. The vibrant image is entitled “American Beauty”. Its subject, the American Rubyspot, is a beautiful large damselfly, found in abundance in and around the Musconetcong River Valley. This delicate photograph is mounted on a custom-made, white porcelain disc with a satin ribbon hang-tag and has the artist’s signature and date on the reverse side. As a fundraiser for MWA, a non-profit organization founded in 1991, the annual ornament celebrates the beauty of the 42 mile long Musconetcong River, now a designated part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System.

Ornaments are available by mail and online by credit card. Please send this order form to the address below with a check or money order (make payable to MWA) for \$23 which includes shipping and handling per ornament. To order online, please visit www.musconetcong.org. There are limited quantities of past MWA Commemorative Ornaments still available for sale. To view photographs of the past and present ornaments visit www.musconetcong.org. Please call with any questions (908) 537-7060 or email adrienne@musconetcong.org.

Name: _____ Total # of ornaments ordered _____

Address: _____ Total amount enclosed (\$23 per) _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____

Series Ornaments Available

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ 2009 “American Beauty” | ___ 2004 “Finesville Bridge” |
| ___ 2008 “Canoeing under the Imlaydale Bridge” | ___ 2003 “Hackettstown Union Cemetery” |
| ___ 2007 “Beattystown Great Blue Heron” | ___ 2002 “Changewater Railroad Bridge” |
| ___ 2006 “Fishing on the Musky” | ___ 2001 “Morning on the Musconetcong” |
| ___ 2005 “Bloomsbury Bridge” | ___ 2000 “The Asbury Mill” |

Mail to: MWA P.O. Box 113, Asbury, New Jersey 08802

River Watchers Go Buggy

By Nancy Lawler

River Watchers had the opportunity to get additional training at “Brush Up On Your Bugs Day” at Warren County Community College on October 3rd. Professor Ralston Bartholomew of the College and I ran a mini-course designed to help River Watcher volunteers get more comfortable identifying the aquatic insects that are the foundation of our river’s ecosystem. After a presentation on the basics, participants were armed with magnifying glasses and a microscope, and let loose on live bug samples that Rally and I had collected from the stream that morning. By the end of the session, River Watchers could identify stoneflies, mayflies and caddisflies in a snap.

Sounds interesting and fun? You can become a River Watcher for our 2010 season by contacting me at the River Resource Center at 908-537-7060 or email me at nancy@musconetcong.org by January 15. ☺



Professor Ralston Bartholomew, left and MWA Volunteer River Watcher Scott Guillemain identify samples during the October “Brush Up on Your Bugs Class”. MWA has a long-standing partnership with Professor Bartholomew and the Warren County Community College.

SAVE THESE DATES!

Saturday, November 28 -

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon(ish) Annual Hike at Point Mountain

Each year MWA members and others set aside the Saturday after Thanksgiving to burn off those extra calories by hiking the trail at the Point Mountain Reserve. We look forward to having an expert along to speak to us about the special features of the 700-acre Point Mountain Reservation. MWA members are free, nonmembers are asked to donate \$3. Bring a snack, water and binoculars if you’d like. All are welcome, novice and expert alike. Call (908) 537-7060 or e-mail beth@musconetcong.org for details, directions or to register.

Saturday, December 5 -

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon(ish) Hike at Allamuchy Pond Trail

Join MWA as we explore this new trail in the Allamuchy Mountain State Park that leads around Allamuchy Pond. The majority of the 9,000-plus acres of the park were part of the Rutherford and Stuyvesant estates, and this hike offers an opportunity to view the old Rutherford Mansion, better known as Villa Madonna. This site with its natural and historic beauty, diverse natural ecosystems and habitats, along with its convenient location, is fast being recognized as an important educational center for the entire region. The starting point for this hike is located about three miles north of Hackettstown, off CR 517, adjacent to the entrance and exit off I80 at Exit 19. MWA members are free, nonmembers are asked to donate \$3. Bring a snack, water and binoculars if you’d like. All are welcome, novice and expert alike. Call (908) 537-7060 or e-mail beth@musconetcong.org for details or to register. For directions to the Allamuchy Hike, please go to Google Maps and type “Villa Madonna, NJ” in the destination box.

Sunday, December 13 -

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Annual Members Holiday Party

Members are cordially invited to attend the Musconetcong Watershed Association Annual Holiday Party. We will be guests of MWA Trustee Erik Henriksen; an invitation with details about this annual event will arrive in the mail. Meet new friends and enjoy a relaxed visit with old acquaintances. Complementary wine, beer and finger foods will be served. Please R.S.V.P. by December 7. Call (908) 537-7060 or e-mail adrienne@musconetcong.org. Not a member? What a great time to join! Please use the membership form on the back of the newsletter or join on-line at www.musconetcong.org.

Note: If you are not receiving e-mail reminders for these events it means that we do not have a current e-mail address. If you’d like to receive reminders and occasional “Musky News Briefs” please contact beth@musconetcong.org.

- ◆ 2009 MWA Commemorative Ornament Features “American Beauty”
- ◆ River Resource Center - 6 Months Later
- ◆ Young Eyes On The River
- ◆ Invasive Plants Threaten Local Ecosystems
- ◆ River Watchers Go Buggy

What's Inside:

Musconetcong River News



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The Musconetcong Watershed Association

The Musconetcong River Valley is rich in scenery, history, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. The river rises up in Lake Hopatcong - New Jersey's largest spring-fed lake - and is shadowed by 1,000-foot Highland ridges and slices through a deep, limestone river valley, flowing swiftly to the Delaware River. Along the way the "Musky" passes by state and county parks, bustling towns, vital industries, historic villages, and some of the most productive farmland in the state.

The Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) is a non-profit organization formed in 1991 to protect and enhance the Musconetcong River and its related resources through advocacy and environmental education programs, scientific research and river restoration projects. The MWA scope spans the 158 square-mile Musconetcong River Watershed, and includes portions of four counties, and all or portions of 25 municipalities. The Musconetcong River became part of the National Wild and Scenic River System in 2006.

MWA members are part of a network of individuals, families and organizations who care about the Musconetcong River and its watershed. They are kept informed about issues concerning the river and its related resources by receiving quarterly issues of the *Musconetcong River News*.

MWA Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the Musconetcong Watershed Association in which I will receive membership benefits and publications. I have enclosed a check payable to **MWA** for the membership category listed below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustainer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Steward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Supporter | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Champion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000+ Life Member | |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mail to:

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PO Box 113, Asbury, NJ 08802