

Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks

Mission: To support and enhance the programs and recreational offerings of Maryland's Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks through charitable contributions and in-kind donations.

MARCH 2021 E-NEWSLETTER (MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL).

SPRING 2021 PRESIDENTS LETTER

ARTICLE: AVIARY AT STATE PARK (FIRST PART OF FEATURE)

Spring 2021 letter from Rick Canter, President of the Board of Directors

**Dear fellow members of the Friends of
Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks,**

It is my privilege to reach out to you in our second-ever monthly newsletter.

These are very exciting times for the Friends, seasonally and over the broader horizon.

Park resources are opening up for the season. Seasonal staff is being hired to assist visitors, and the Friends have a lot going on as well.

(President's letter continues on next page)

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(President's letter continued from Page 2).

Over the winter, the Friends re-vamped our Board, and now have an additional 7 volunteer Directors-At-Large to assist our 4 Officers. This is a major administrative boost that is pushing us to the next level and a reflection of that boost is our ability to reach you with this newsletter.

We also harbor hope of improving our website, www.cunninghamgambrill.org with updated graphics and functionality later this season. We hope you will like the new look and feel when the time comes.

While we missed out on a Maple Syrup Festival at the lake for the second March in a row, we have hosted the Virtual Maple Syrup Festival on our website. Through the end of March, please check out the cool “Maple Monday” videos <http://www.cunninghamgambrill.org/Events.html> provided by the park staff (good at-home learning material for young and old alike). You can purchase maple syrup, maple products and other bling at: <http://www.cunninghamgambrill.org/OnlineStore.html>



Rick Canter
Board President
Friends of Cunningham Falls
and Gambrill State Parks

(President's letter continued from Page 3).

I hope to have some exciting announcements for the April newsletter. While it is premature to discuss potential post-pandemic events and activities, I hope you will keep abreast of our activities as we field events when it is safe and proper to do so. You can check out the newsletter, our Facebook page or the website for our updates.

If you are interested in volunteer activities in the park, please contact Ranger Claudia Padilla at Claudia.padilla@maryland.gov

We continue to work hard to serve the public and park staff. We fund and assist at the park Aviary, provide support for the Catoctin Furnace historic sites and additional financial assistance for park needs at the park manager's request. We remain all-volunteer, ensuring your money goes back into the parks you cherish.

Thank you for reading and for being a loyal Friends member.

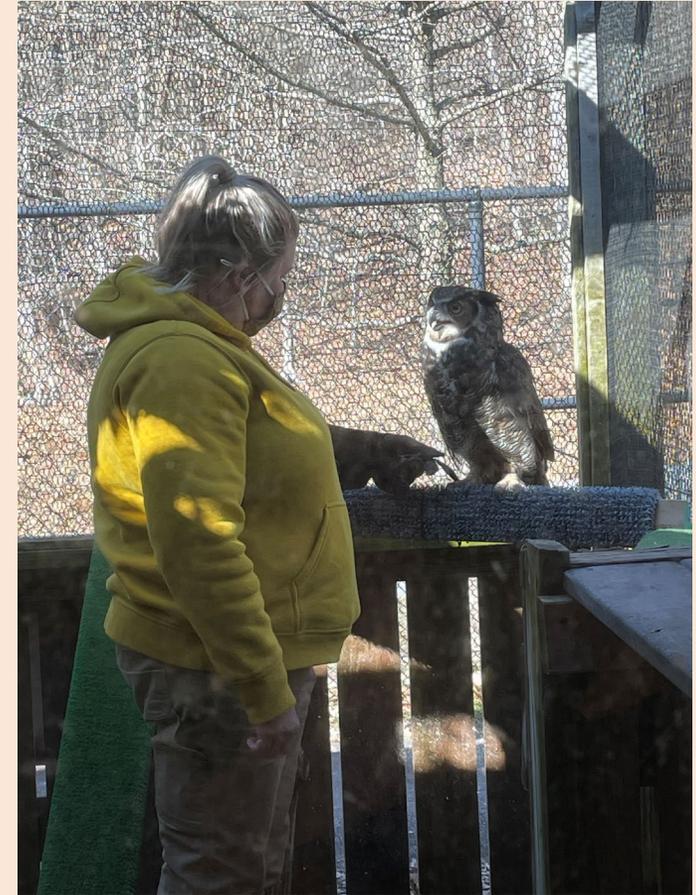
Rick Canter

President, Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks

Aviary Article (Part 1 of 2) – by Zoë Brittain.

Nestled beside the Visitor Center in the Manor Area of Cunningham Falls State Park, there is a treasured resource for some of the park’s most extraordinary residents. The Aviary is home to twelve birds of prey, three snakes, four aquatic turtles, and four terrestrial turtles, each of whom cannot be returned to the wild because of either injury or human handling.

“Rosie is what you call a misprint,” says Ranger Cricket Smith. Ranger Smith is the park naturalist whose primary responsibility is the Aviary and one branch of the Maryland State Park Service’s educational program, Scales and Tales. Rosie is a strikingly beautiful barred owl and one of the Aviary’s newer additions. Rosie was taken from her nest as a hatchling, presumably to be kept as a novel pet. As a consequence, Rosie became “irreversibly habituated to humans,” and never learned the skills needed to survive in the wild.



Ranger Smith with Rosie at the Aviary Mews (outdoor-indoor bird pens).

Ranger Smith brings Rosie out of her mews to train for her new role as part of the Scales and Tales program, which teaches people about environmental stewardship and conservation. Rosie is now learning to get comfortable perching on the ranger's gloved hand and tolerate the public's admiration. With a cascade of hoots, caws, and wing flaps, Rosie communicates her discomfort with the situation. "We support all her needs," says Ranger Smith, "but she'll have a better time once she can join the program and not just be in her mews all day."

To help Rosie and the other birds acclimate to the sound of human voices, Ranger Smith and some of the Aviary's volunteers take turns reading to the birds. On any given day, Rosie and her companions may learn about the geology of Maryland or a great Carhartt sale.

Like Rosie, each animal at the Aviary has its unique story of how it came to be there and how they have been impacted by humans. By paying attention to their stories, we can learn how to better protect wildlife so they can remain wild.

Stay tuned for the next newsletter to meet more of the Aviary's inhabitants and learn how you can help them live their best lives possible.

All photographs © 2021 Zoë Brittain.



Cunningham Falls State Park
information:

([Park Web Page](#))

Gambrill State Park
information:

([Park Web Page](#))

Maple Syrup Festival:

(cunninghamgambrill.org)

PARK UPDATES

- Campgrounds (Gambrill State Park Rock Run, Cunningham Falls State Park Manor Area, and William Houck Area A and B loops)
OPEN: APRIL 2nd, visit: parkreservations.maryland.gov
- Additional William Houck Area campsites will be available to reserve further in the season
- Park gates open at 10 am, now thru MARCH 31
Park gates open at 8 am: APRIL 1 (Closed at Sunset)
- Earth Day Trash Sweep is scheduled for 4/22. Any interested volunteers can contact Ranger Padilla or Assistant Park Manager Hulse via email: Claudia.Padilla@maryland.gov or Jeremy.Hulse@maryland.gov
- Hunting Creek Lake swimming OPEN: May 29 - Boat/kayak/canoe rental
OPEN: MAY 29 (tentative – look for updates in next issue if changed).
- Recruitment for seasonal positions are underway at the park. Positions such as camp office/contact employees and lifeguards are still available. Apply at jobapscloud.com/MD/
- Manor Area Aviary OPEN: in 2021, depending on COVID-19 restrictions
- Many seasonal employees will begin working on April 1st. Staff will focus on park operations and maintenance in preparation for the 2021 summer season.