

# The Current



News from the Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation

Summer 2026

## SPRING EVENTS KEPT US BUSY

### FLYFISHING WORKSHOP MARCH 21ST

Mother Nature gave us a beautiful spring day for the second annual Forks of Coal “fly fishing for beginners” workshop. The instructors were Kevin Hill and Diana Green, long-time fly fishers very familiar with our local waters and years of experience to share.

A very enthusiastic group of aspiring fly fishers learned a lot about the techniques, gear and strategies of the sport. The workshop also covered where to fish and some of the history of this sport that goes back about 2,000 years. Students learned hands-on about the basics of knot tying and the different types casting from two experienced teachers.



After the morning classroom presentation the class moved outdoors for some casting practice in the parking lot.

**YOUR DONATIONS HELP US GET THINGS DONE.  
PLEASE JOIN US TODAY.**

*Thank you!*

### WINGS OF WONDER APRIL 25TH

We celebrated Earth Day with friends Wendy and Ron Perrone of Three Rivers Avian Center who returned to the center for an entertaining and educational presentation with their “Avian Ambassadors.” A large, enthusiastic crowd was in attendance to see Regis the Bald Eagle, Myrtle the Raven, Dawn the Barn Owl, Gimli the American Kestrel and Sylvan, the Broad Winged Hawk.



In addition to telling the story of each bird and its role as an “avian education ambassador,” the Perrones shared a message of how we all can do something to protect our wild bird neighbors and preserve their habitat. Of special concern is the danger of lead shot that can poison many kinds of birds and the risk of injury when birds get tangled up in discarded human trash such as fishing line and fence materials.

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING?**

### **COMING EVENTS:**

**JUNE 13:** Lincoln County Library hosts a Plant ID Hike

**JUNE 16:** Lincoln County Library and Zoology Zone Reptiles presentation

**JUNE 20:** CLOSED for West Virginia Day

**JUNE 27:** Doug Wood and Diane Anestis teach a "Useful Native Plant ID Class/Hike"

**AUGUST 29:** Paws on the Trails Fundraiser from 11:00 – 4:00 (watch for details on our Facebook page and website)

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### **2026 BRICK INSTALLATION**

The 2025-2026 commemorative bricks have been ordered and are scheduled for production on June 23rd. If you ordered a brick this past year, it should be part of this order and we expect to have them installed by mid-July.

Thanks to all who have supported the Foundation this year by sponsoring a brick. We appreciate your patience and look forward to getting them placed soon. after delivery.



## **ADOPT-A-TREE CAMPAIGN**

*Rooted in Conservation: Campaign Takes Root at Forks of Coal*

On Saturday, April 18th, the Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation launched its first-ever endowment fundraiser — and the community showed up to plant their legacy. Children and adults of all ages gathered at the Claudia L. Workman Wildlife Education Center to participate in the Rooted in Conservation Adopt-A-Tree Campaign, putting down roots — literally — in support of this beloved natural area.

From seedlings planted by little hands to family legacy trees and memorial tributes, the event marked a meaningful milestone for the Foundation's Roots Run Deep endowment campaign. Every tree adopted represents not just a gift to the land, but a lasting connection between our community and the conservation work that will endure for generations to come.

### **YOU CAN STILL ADOPT A TREE!**

It's not too late to be part of it. Trees are still available to adopt, including **White Oak, American Chestnut, Pine, and Chinkapin Oak** — each a native treasure that can be planted on the Wildlife Education Center property or at your own home or office. There's no better way to grow your commitment to conservation while adding beauty to the spaces where you live and work.

To adopt your tree, visit the Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation on Facebook.

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### **BRICK SALES CONTINUE!**

*Buy a Brick - Build a Legacy - Give a Gift*

For more information or to purchase a brick, visit our website at [www.forkscoalfoundation.org](http://www.forkscoalfoundation.org) or e-mail us at [forkscoalfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:forkscoalfoundation@gmail.com) with any questions.

## THE COAL RIVER BRIDGES OF LINCOLN AND KANAWHA COUNTIES

*Thanks to our local historian/barber Jim Ryan of Alum Creek for sharing some newspaper clippings with the story.*

People often ask about the history of the twin suspension pedestrian bridges at the Forks of the Coal Rivers. They are now unsafe and foot traffic is prohibited, but at one time they were an essential part of local life.

According to an article by the late Adrian Gwinn, published in the *Charleston Daily Mail* in June 1964, the bridges which link Kanawha and Lincoln Counties were built in 1920 by Kanawha County. They are nearly identical in height and almost the same length. They were built for public pedestrian and animal traffic and in 1964 were still being maintained by the "State Road Commission." According to the article, the bridges were built by the Oregonia Bridge Co. of Lebanon, Ohio, and completed in November 1920.

Gwinn interviewed a local woman, Mrs. Zinnia Hill, who had walked the bridges every day since they were built. Mrs. Hill recalled that men on horseback "often crossed over" and that herds of cattle and sheep were even driven across. There was a school located on what is now the Forks of Coal State Natural Area property and students used the bridges to walk to class. Mrs. Hill crossed the bridge many times carrying her groceries from Guy Adkins' store in the community known as the Forks of Coal. She described crossing the bridge when it was covered with snow and ice and being afraid of falling into the river. She said that before that, people used a bridge made of two planks over Little Coal River, and before that people crossed by boat.

Access to the original Kanawha County Girl Scout camp, Camp Roof Rock, was by boat upstream of the Forks. When the camp was temporarily leased each year for a church group, the campers had to cross by boat or by wading the river.

Over time the bridges started falling apart due to lack of maintenance. There are no plans to repair them.

## THANKS TO ALL WHO SHARE AND SUPPORT OUR MISSION

With sincere gratitude we thank the generous friends and neighbors who have recently made donations and purchased bricks.

WV Trophy Hunters Association  
Kimberly and David McCluskey  
Peyton and Anna Forbes in memory  
of Charlie Jones  
Jack E. Edwards  
Kathy and Kevin Hill  
John Sibold  
Sydni Rose Ruth Patterson  
Tricia Kingery  
Boone Career and Technical Center students  
James Clendenen  
Linda Reehling/The Reehling Family  
Tena and Bill Webb  
John Walls  
Tony and Frances Green  
WV Division of Natural Resources  
Visitors to the center  
Kroger Community Shoppers  
John and Marian Jordan  
Frank and Linda Coulter  
Lori Adler  
Steve and Paula Legge  
Terry and Mary Herald  
Katrina Jernell  
Joshua Higginbotham  
TC Energy Friends (Benevity)



*Historic bridge over Little Coal River 2017*

# PLEASE JOIN US AND SUPPORT THE FORKS OF COAL FOUNDATION TODAY!

The Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation was formed in 2016 to work with the West Virginia DNR to create a wildlife education center, educational programs and conservation area on the 102 acres at the Forks of Coal. The Foundation and the DNR are working together in the development of the center and nature oriented activities and programs which will benefit our local Coal River and Kanawha Valley communities.

Please join us! To learn more, go to Facebook or our website at [www.forksofcoalfoundation.org](http://www.forksofcoalfoundation.org).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number/E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Number City State Zip Code

Amount of Gift \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Please make check payable to: Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation  
P.O. Box 5556, Charleston, WV 25361 or visit our website.  
website and click the "Donate" button.

*The Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

**Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation**  
**Post Office Box 5556**  
**Charleston, West Virginia 25361**  
**[www.forksofcoalfoundation.org](http://www.forksofcoalfoundation.org)**



**Enjoy the cool at the  
Forks of Coal this summer!**

