

NATURE

PENNSYLVANIA

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Cove Mountain © George C. Gress

Cove Mountain Preserve: Five Reasons to Visit

There are many reasons to love Cove Mountain, our newest preserve in Marysville, Pa. We offer five excuses to dust off those hiking boots and set out for this 353-acre property, located just minutes from our state capital.

#1 Connecting the Kittatinny

Cove Mountain represents the first Conservancy nature preserve in central Pennsylvania along the Kittatinny Ridge, one of the most important wildlife corridors in the northeastern United States.

#2 Birding Bonanza The Kittatinny's 185 miles of forested ridgetop is located along the Atlantic Flyway, making this one of the most important feeding and resting spots in North America for migrating raptors and songbirds, and a prime destination for bird watchers.

#3 Spectacular Scenery Cove Mountain takes center stage where the Susquehanna River flows through five mountain ridges. The area, known as the Susquehanna Water Gaps, was recognized as a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service in 2009.

#4 Saving Species The threatened Allegheny woodrat, once common across Pennsylvania, has declined throughout much of the state. Protecting Cove Mountain from future development secures prime habitat for this priority species.

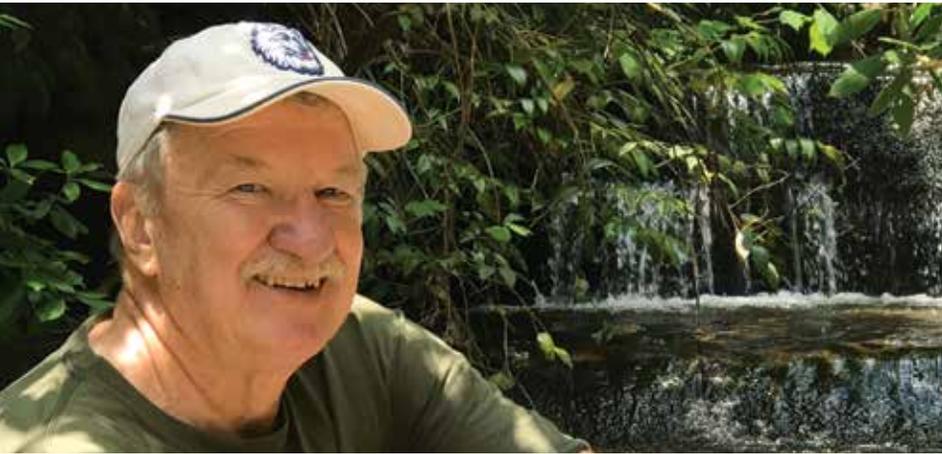
#5 Paw Paws Cove Mountain is home to numerous trees yielding paw paws, a super-sweet Pennsylvania delicacy which has earned the distinction of being the largest edible native fruit in the United States.



Bill Kunze © Perri Strawn

Director's Note From Bill Kunze

Opening a new preserve that will protect nature forever brings an incredible sense of accomplishment because supporters, staff and partners have come together around a common goal that will stand the test of time. These are the places that collectively represent some of our nation's most unique and valuable ecological resources. Later this month, we open Cove Mountain to the public as our newest preserve in Pennsylvania. Join us at a celebration there on September 23. **Learn more at nature.org/covemountain.**



© Bill DeWalt

Meet the Board: Bill DeWalt

The Nature Conservancy welcomes Bill DeWalt, of Fox Chapel, Pa. as the Pennsylvania Chapter's new Board Chair. Now retired, Bill most recently served as Director of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History and holds a PhD in cultural anthropology from the University of Pittsburgh, where he also was Distinguished Service Professor of Public and International Affairs.

TNC: How did you first connect with The Nature Conservancy?

Bill DeWalt: Early in my anthropology career, I evaluated peoples' interactions with the natural world in Latin America. While doing a documentary on deforestation, I interviewed a prominent biologist who said that the easiest way to preserve a tree is to contribute to the Conservancy's efforts to buy the land on which that tree grows. It made sense then and still does now.

TNC: What are your goals as board chair?

Bill DeWalt: I want to mobilize the West Virginia and Pennsylvania chapters to work on issues of mutual importance like energy development, timber management and protecting the Ohio River Basin. I will do everything I can to help people understand the great work the Conservancy has pursued in Pennsylvania for decades.

TNC: What role do you see The Nature Conservancy playing in Pennsylvania?

Bill DeWalt: We should be the leading conservation organization in the Commonwealth just as we are worldwide. For example, conserving the Kittatinny Ridge builds on the Conservancy's strengths. Science led to identifying it as a priority. In response, we're working with private landowners to encourage best timber, farming and other land use practices, acquiring land and conservation easements, and collaborating with other organizations to ensure that the Ridge remains an intact wildlife corridor in the face of climate change.

TNC: Where is your favorite place to escape to nature?

Bill DeWalt: My backyard—literally and figuratively. Nature is where we all live and breathe every day. It's up to every one of us to take care of this unique planet so we can enjoy it and pass it on to future generations to enjoy.

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Pennsylvania Hemlocks

The Nature Conservancy and partners completed a three-year project to treat vulnerable hemlock trees in Philadelphia's Wissahickon Valley Park and at the Conservancy's Woodbourne Forest Preserve in Montrose. The treatment, developed in partnership with the United States Forest Service at Allegheny National Forest, prevents infestation by the insidious hemlock woolly adelgid—an Asian insect that poses a significant threat to the long-term survival of Pennsylvania's state tree.

"We successfully treated at least 250 trees in three locations at Wissahickon," says Tom Dougherty, a technician with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. "We are grateful to the Conservancy for setting an initiative in motion that will lead to the hemlocks getting healthier and happier."



Treating Hemlock © Mark Steiner/TNC

Moving forward, partners will monitor hemlocks in both locations, to ensure treatments are effective, while exploring options for long-term conservation. The thick foliage of slow-growing Eastern hemlocks—which can live for 800 years or more—serves as important shelter to birds and other animals.