



Welcome, Educators!

We're excited to introduce Governor Josh Shapiro's nominee for Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, and pleased to share news of watershed grants, free seedlings, workshops, environmental literacy online tools, Pennsylvania Native Species Day 2023, and more. Read on!

— Bert Myers, Director, Environmental Education and Information Center, DEP

News

Richard Negrin Nominated Secretary of Environmental Protection

Governor Shapiro has nominated Richard Negrin to serve as Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection. He serves as DEP Acting Secretary until a state legislative confirmation hearing in the spring.

Mr. Negrin most recently served as Vice President of Regulatory Policy and Strategy and Head of External Affairs at Commonwealth Edison, the largest electric utility in Illinois. There he led development of clean energy regulatory policies and strategies to increase the use of renewable energy, spur the adoption of electric vehicles, and increase energy efficiency.

Prior to ComEd, Mr. Negrin served as Deputy Mayor of Administration and Coordination and Managing Director of the City of Philadelphia. He served as Vice-Chair of the independent Philadelphia Board of Ethics and as Vice President and Associate General Counsel of ARAMARK Corporation. Mr. Negrin was a litigator with the global law firm of Morgan Lewis, and he served as a prosecutor in the Major Trials Unit of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office.

Mr. Negrin has served on the Board of Directors for a number of community organizations, including Congreso de Latinos Unidos, and is a former President of the Hispanic Bar Association of Pennsylvania.

Grants

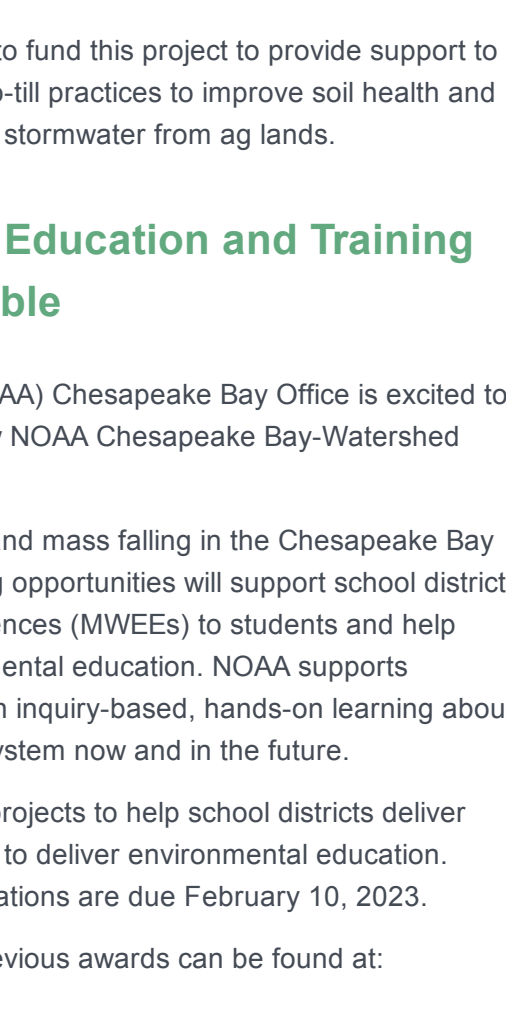
DEP Environmental Education Grants

The 2023 Environmental Education Grant round closed on December 9. We received applications to fund 152 projects addressing Environmental Justice, water quality, and climate change, including some projects that address more than one of these priority topics. We anticipate announcing funding awards in the spring. Thank you to all who applied!

2022 Environmental Ed Grant Shout-Outs

Allegheny College: Educational interface for new permaculture food forest

With their DEP Environmental Education Grant, Allegheny College's Sustainable Design Team is constructing a non-formal educational interface for their new permaculture food forest. The forest will offer an environmental education space that fosters community development and addresses climate change by promoting local food systems in the Meadville area, including Environmental Justice areas.



The food forest will increase awareness of more sustainable food production and consumption habits. It will help promote engagement and action on campus and beyond, as students move on from their undergraduate experience; throughout the neighborhoods adjacent to campus; and throughout the Meadville area as young students grow and carry lessons of sustainable food production with them throughout their lives.

Juniata County Conservation District: Outdoor classroom on climate-resilient landscapes

In collaboration with Juniata High School, the Juniata County Conservation District is using its DEP Environmental Education Grant to build a new outdoor classroom for students to establish and study a climate-resilient and connective landscape for pollinators.

Students will identify ecosystem response to human disturbances, develop prevention strategies and remediation efforts to human disturbances, and apply biological keystone standards through hands-on application.



The project will foster a direct relationship between students and the environment to positively influence environmental stewardship and advocacy.

Pike County Conservation District: Leaf Pack Network workshop

The Pike County Conservation District used a DEP Environmental Education Grant to hold its first Leaf Pack Network workshop at Promised Land State Park, along the East Branch of the Wallenpaupack Creek in fall 2022.



In collaboration with the Stroud Water Research Center, the District enabled the public to study stream quality, discuss the effects of non-point source pollution, and get hands-on macroinvertebrate experience. Attendees included a number of members of a local community association. Many community groups can make changes to reduce local non-point source pollutants, for example, by reducing application of salts, fertilizers, etc. The District hopes to continue to do these programs for community associations and Pike County residents into the future.

2022 Growing Greener Grants to Educators

Penn State University and Stroud Water Research Center have received [Growing Greener Water Protection Grants](#) to fund their water quality improvement projects.

- **The Penn State University - Pennsylvania Sea Grant Program** received \$589,886 to complete the final design, permitting, and construction activities to restore a severely degraded section of Cascade Creek in Erie. This heavily urbanized watershed drains to Presque Isle Bay, formerly designated as an EPA Area of Concern.
- **Stroud Water Research Center** received \$386,118 to fund this project to provide support to Berks County farmers' adoption of cover crop and no-till practices to improve soil health and productivity while reducing erosion, nutrient loss and stormwater from ag lands.

2023 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education and Training Grants Available

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Chesapeake Bay Office is excited to announce the availability of approximately \$900,000 in new NOAA Chesapeake Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) grants.

Pennsylvania school districts with more than 25% of their land mass falling in the Chesapeake Bay watershed are eligible. Projects supported by these funding opportunities will support school districts efforts to deliver meaningful watershed educational experiences (MWEEs) to students and help school districts increase their capacity to facilitate environmental education. NOAA supports environmental education because students who take part in inquiry-based, hands-on learning about their environment are better equipped to care for our ecosystem now and in the future.

School District MWEE Programming: Funding will support projects to help school districts deliver MWEEs to students or to increase school districts' capacity to deliver environmental education. Funding is anticipated to support 9-14 new projects. Applications are due February 10, 2023. More information about the NOAA B-WET program and previous awards can be found at:

- [Chesapeake B-WET program](#)
- [Recently funded education partnerships](#)

Contact [Elise Trelogan](#) with any questions or to discuss project ideas.

Biodiversity

Pennsylvania Native Species Day 2023: Mark your calendars and plan to join in

The Pennsylvania Governor's Invasive Species Council recently announced the 2023 Pennsylvania Native Species Day will be Thursday, May 18, 2023.

Schools, organizations, local governments, and businesses are all welcome to join in with activities celebrating Pennsylvania's native plants, animals, and insects and highlighting the need to protect our biodiversity from the proliferation of invasive species.

A one hour informational meeting will be offered on Thursday, February 9, at 12:00 pm to all interested in participating. For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Native Species Day web page](#) or contact Deb Klenotic, council communications chair, at dklenotic@pa.gov or (717) 649-9136.

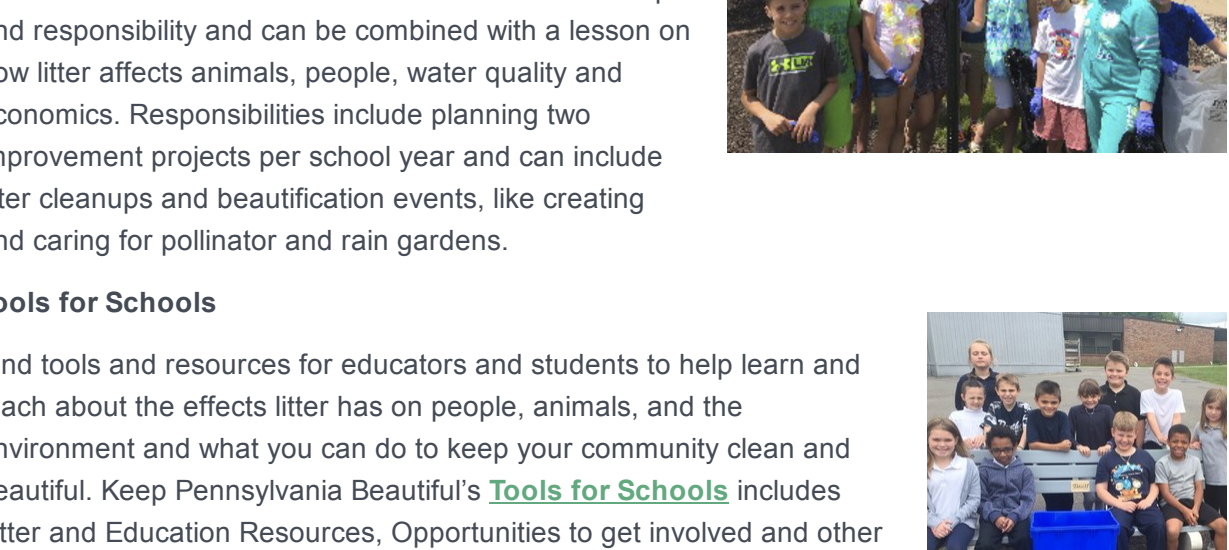
Environmental Literacy

State Education Standards Update

The newly adopted Pennsylvania Integrated Standards for Science, Technology & Engineering, and Environmental Literacy and Sustainability (STEELS) and Pennsylvania Technology and Engineering Standards were developed jointly to ensure consistency, coherence, and a cohesive K-12 integrated approach to science education in the Commonwealth. *The Pennsylvania Bulletin* published the new standards on July 16, 2022, and they go into implementation on July 1, 2025.

The [Pennsylvania Department of Education STEELS Hub](#) provides educators with resources to implement and support the new standards. An implementation plan, developed by the Department of Education, aims to ensure that all students have access to an education that prepares them to succeed and become life-long learners.

Pennsylvania Gateway to Green: Online Hub on Environmental Literacy



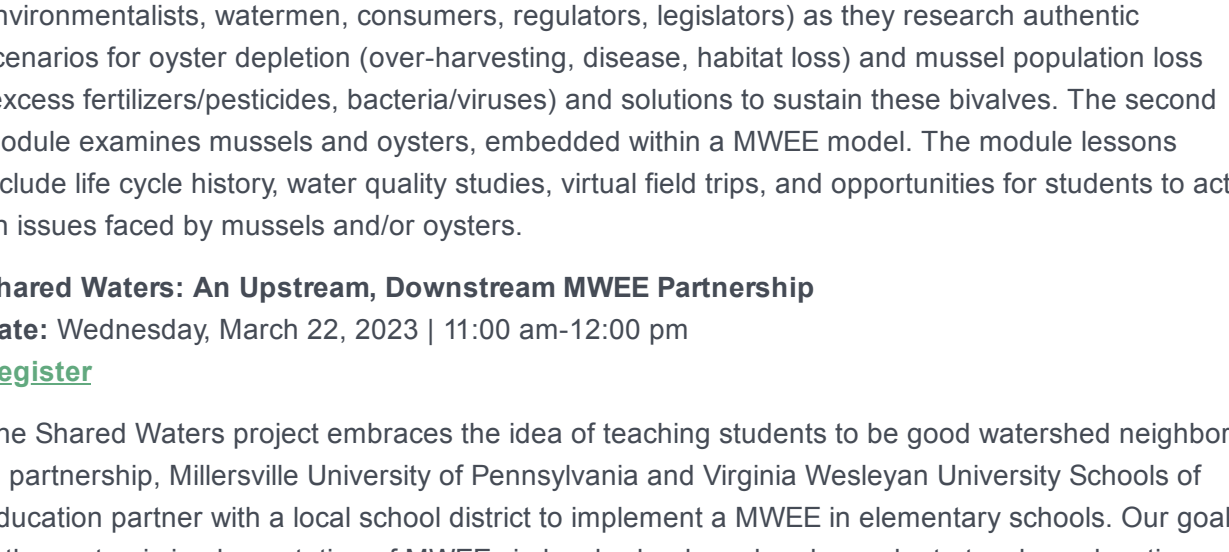
Pennsylvania Gateway to Green is a new online hub for Pennsylvania educators (formal and nonformal) to access environmental education resources from government agencies, non-profits, and other partners to improve environmental literacy among Pennsylvania residents.

Instead of searching for individual agency or organization websites, educators can use Gateway to Green to find:

- Links to state and federal agencies and other environmental education resources, information on what organizations that provide environmental education resources, information on what environmental literacy means in Pennsylvania, and resources for creating environmental literacy plans.
- Ways to identify and reach environmental justice communities.
- Highlights of issues and education resources about Pennsylvania watersheds.
- Programs and resources about careers in environmental-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Gateway to Green is supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and other organizations.

Environmental Justice



DEP Environmental Justice Internship

The DEP Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) has an opening for an intern in its Southeast Regional Office. High school, college, and graduate students are invited to apply. The internship position is posted on the Commonwealth's employment website at [employment.pa.gov](#). Find more news from OEJ online in the [January issue of EJ News: Your Environment, Your Voice](#).

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Launches New National Office on Environmental Justice And Civil Rights

In September of 2022, EPA announced that it established a new national office focused on advancing environmental and civil rights. There are more than 200 staff in EPA headquarters and across 10 regions dedicated to solving environmental challenges in communities that have been underserved far too long. The office aims to better infuse EPA's equity, civil rights, and environmental principles and priorities into the agency's practices, policies, and programs. For more information, please visit the new [Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights website](#).

Forestry

Falcon 48/AE: Saying goodbye to a legend

Last year brought changes to the [peregrine falcon nest site on top of the Rachel Carson State Office Building](#) (RCSOB). The dominant female, banded 48/AE, injured a wing defending the nest during the fledgling period in the spring. In addition, in late May, 48/AE suffered burns to her feet due to the high temperature on the roof of the Harrisburg Transportation Center. She was rescued and taken to Red Creek Wildlife Center in Schuylkill County. While rehabilitating and slowly making progress there, the 13-year-old falcon died of natural causes in late November. Many longtime falcon followers were greatly saddened by this news.

Falcon 48/AE was banded on May 21, 2009, on the Pennsylvania-New Jersey Turnpike Bridge. In 2012, at the age of 3, falcon 48/AE began her tenure as the dominant female at the RCSOB nest, pairing with the then dominant male, W/V. During 10 years at the nest, she laid 41 eggs, of which 37 hatched and 35 fledged, helping to grow the population of peregrine falcons in Pennsylvania and the region.

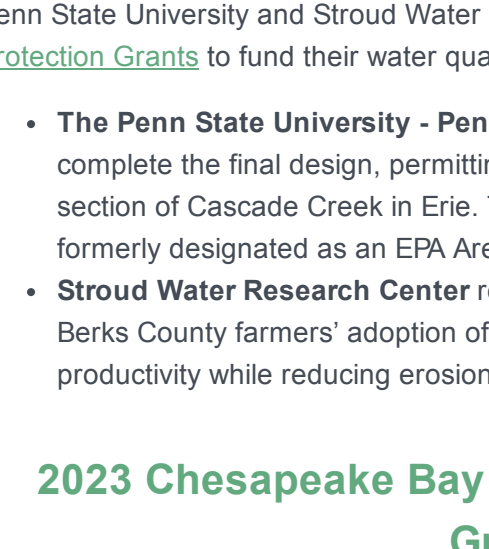
Within two days of 48/AE's departure from the nest at RCSOB, a new dominant female, banded 09/BS, claimed the site. Exhibiting typical behavior, she chased the young fledglings from the site. Because they were banded, they may be identified at a later date if they survived.

Shortly after 48/AE passed, Red Creek Wildlife Center suffered a catastrophic fire, including loss of the building and some animals. Having worked with founder Peggy Hentz for many years, the DEP Environmental Education and Information Center recognizes that this is an enormous loss within the Pennsylvania wildlife community. Wildlife centers across the state have donated supplies to allow them to continue to care for the remaining animals. Follow Red Creek's work at [redcreekwildlife.com](#) and [facebook.com/redcreekwildlife](#).

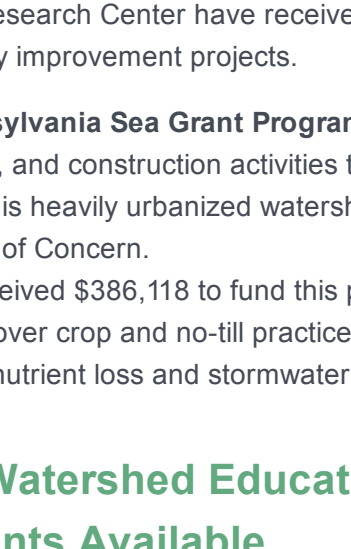
Formal and non-formal educators, keep your eyes open for another professional development opportunity about Pennsylvania's raptors, including the Peregrine falcon, from the DEP Environmental Education and Information Center, Hawk Mountain, and Shavers Creek Environmental Center, coming in June.

Radon

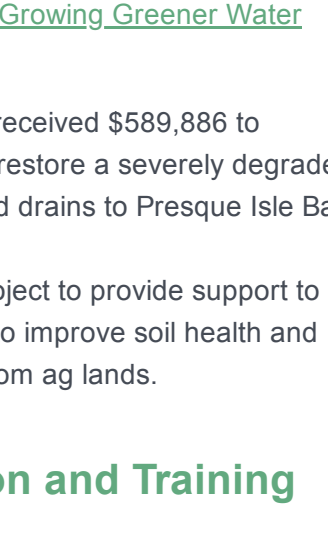
2023 Pennsylvania Student Radon Poster Contest winners announced



First Place: Jazmin Gagney



Second Place: Joslynn Yuresko



Third Place: Grace Owens

The Department of Environmental Protection is pleased to announce the winners of the 2023 Pennsylvania Student Radon Poster Contest.

The contest is designed to help kids learn about radon and radon testing, which in turn helps educate parents to test their homes for this radioactive gas. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer.

Students from 10 schools submitted artwork. Entries were judged for their scientific accuracy, visual communication skill, and originality.

The First Place winner is Jazmin Gagney, a ninth grader at Monroe Career and Technical Institute in Monroe County. Her poster will be entered into a national student radon poster contest. The Second Place winner is Joslynn Yuresko, a ninth grader student at Monroe Career and Technical Institute. The Third Place winner is Grace Owens, a seventh grader at Western Wayne Middle School in Wayne County.

Congratulations to the winning artists! Learn more about the annual contest at [dep.pa.gov/radonschoolpostercontest](#), or contact Jamie Ruminski at jruminski@pa.gov.

DEP gave a shoutout to the student winners in its [January 9 announcement of Radon Action Month](#).

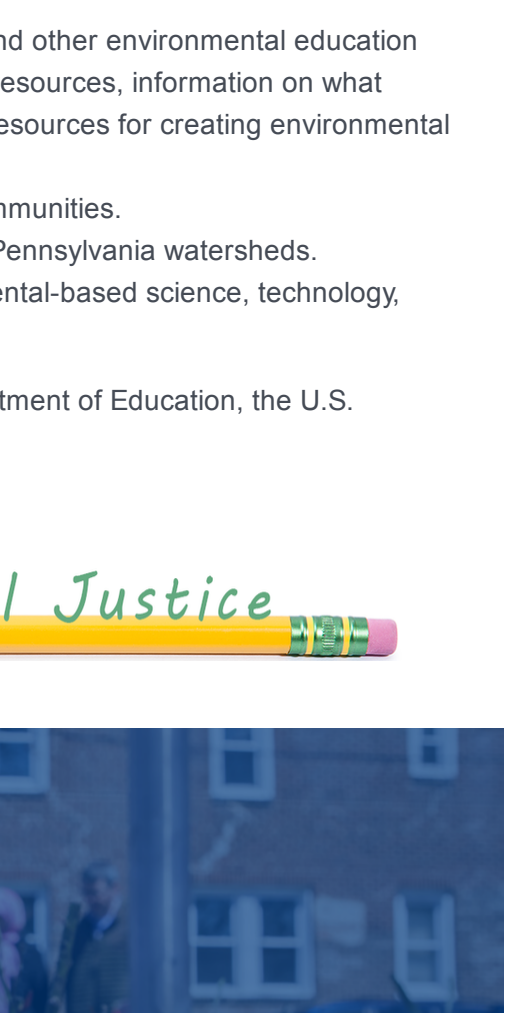
Waste

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Programs

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is proud to offer programs, tools and resources that encourage students to take an active role in protecting and improving our environment through litter awareness and community stewardship. Please click on the hyperlinks below to learn more or visit [keepkabeautiful.org](#) for a complete list of programs, grants and awards.

Litter Hawk Youth Award Program

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is announcing the **2023 Litter Hawk Youth Award Program**, a recognition program for students in kindergarten through 6th grade to share how they keep Pennsylvania beautiful through art, words, or video. In response to Pennsylvania's new anti-littering education campaign, PA Fights Dirty: Every Litter Bit Matters, the theme is: Show Us How Every Litter Bit Matters to You. Two entries will be awarded in each grade level. First place will receive a \$50 gift card. First runner-up will receive \$25 gift card. All participants will be recognized with certificates. **The deadline to participate is January 31.** Winners will be announced in April in time for your Earth Day celebrations.



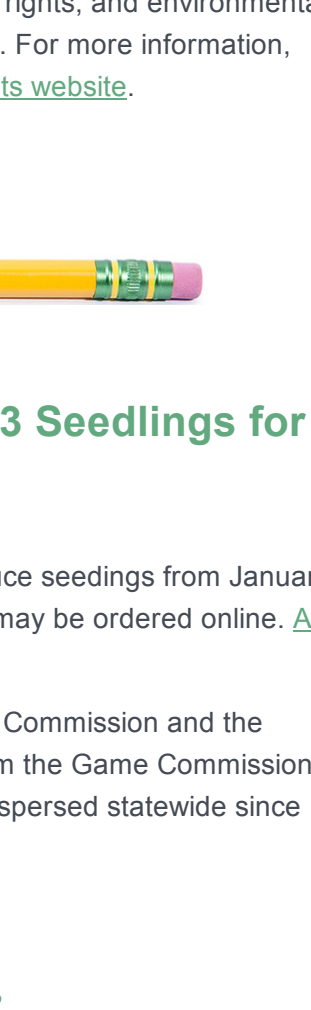
Litter Free School Zone

Schools in Pennsylvania can keep their school grounds litter free with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's **Litter Free School Zone Program**. The program encourages hands-on activities to teach environmental stewardship and responsibility and can be combined with a lesson on how litter affects animals, people, water quality and economics. Responsibilities include planning two improvement projects per school year and can include litter cleanups and beautification events, like creating and caring for pollinator and rain gardens.



Tools for Schools

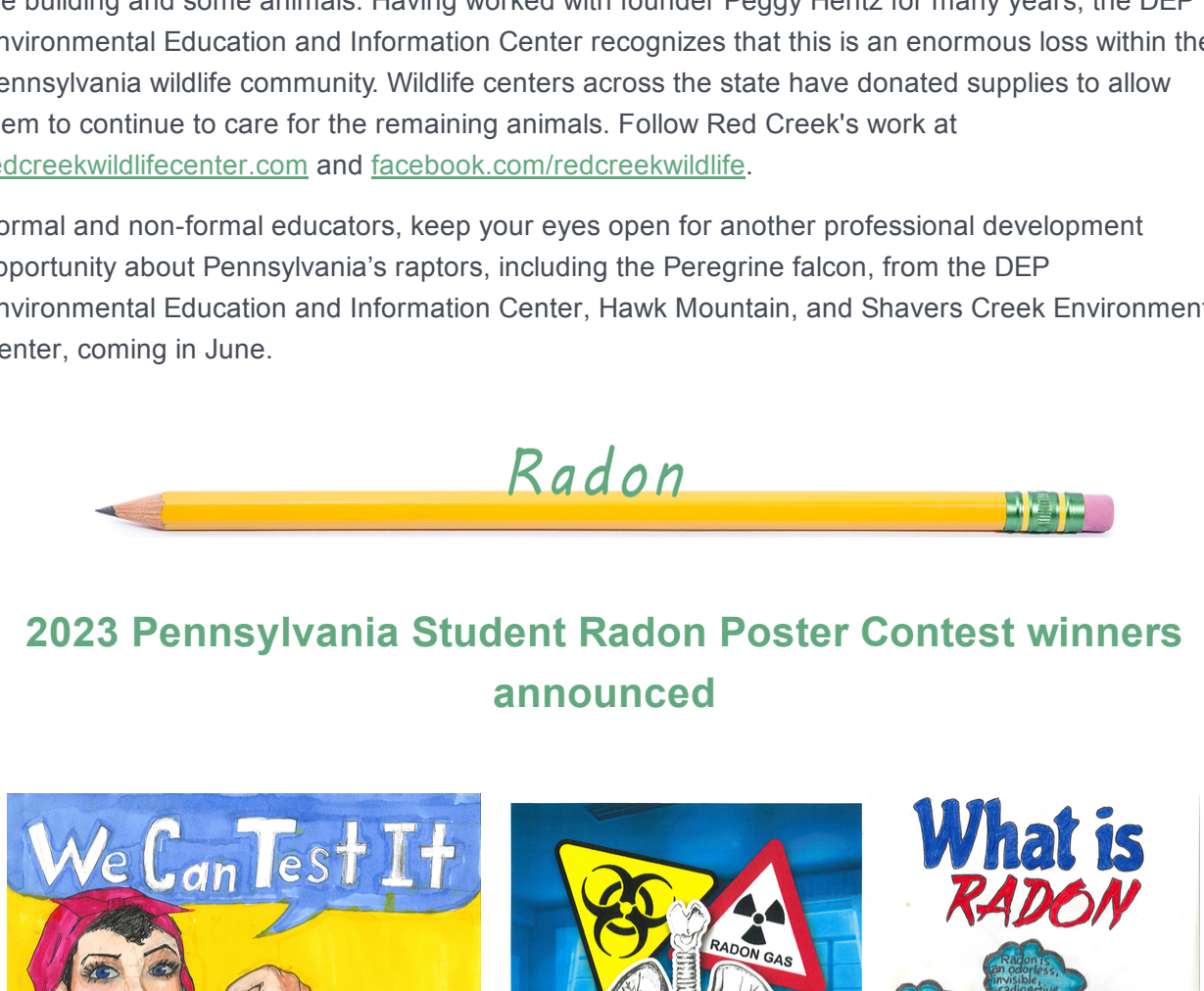
Find tools and resources for educators and students to help learn and teach about the effects litter has on people, animals, and the environment and what you can do to keep your community clean and beautiful. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's **Tools for Schools** includes Litter and Education Resources, Opportunities to get involved and other resources.



Water

New Pennsylvania Digital Water Atlas

The DEP Water Use and Planning Program recently published an interactive Digital Water Atlas as part of the 2022 State Water Plan. The [Digital Water Atlas storymap](#) presents the landscape of Pennsylvania's extensive water and land resources and how they are managed. It is intended to help Pennsylvania leaders, educators, and residents understand where their water comes from and how it is affected by natural events and human activity, which is the first important step towards water planning.



Professional Development

NOAA Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) Webinars

Examining the Role Bivalves Play in Sustaining Local Watershed Ecosystems

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 | 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

[Register](#)

Learn two modules that engage secondary students in the impact and importance of bivalves in their ecosystems. One module is a role play unit that places students in stakeholder roles (e.g., scientists, environmentalists, watermen, consumers, regulators, legislators) as they research authentic scenarios for oyster depletion (over-harvesting, disease, habitat loss) and mussel population loss (excess fertilizers/pesticides, bacteria/viruses) and solutions to sustain these bivalves. The second module examines mussels and oysters, embedded within a MWEE model. The module lessons include life cycle history, water quality studies, virtual field trips, and opportunities for students to act on issues faced by mussels and/or oysters.

Shared Waters: An Upstream, Downstream MWEE Partnership

Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 | 11:00 am-12:00 pm

[Register](#)

The Shared Waters project embraces the idea of teaching students to be good watershed neighbors. In partnership, Millersville University of Pennsylvania and Virginia Wesleyan University Schools of Education partner with a local school district to implement a MWEE in elementary schools. Our goal is the systemic implementation of MWEEs in local schools and undergraduate teacher education.

Flying WILD Educator Workshop with a MWEE Flair

Date: Saturday, March 18, | 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Location: In person at Millersville University, Watershed Education & Training Institute at Creek Lodge, 198 Creek Dr., Millersville, PA 17551

Act 48: 4.5 hrs.

[Register](#)

Join DCNR State Parks at Millersville University. Flying Wild is an education guide focused on birds, providing participants with innovative and ready-to-use activities for the classroom and outdoors. The curriculum works to develop awareness concerning bird biology, conservation, and natural history. Dr. Nanette Marcum-Dietrich of Millersville University will also introduce the MWEE framework in early childhood education. Attendees receive the *Flying WILD: An Educator's Guide to Celebrating Birds* curriculum. This workshop is focused on upper elementary and middle school teachers. For more information, email nanette.marcum-dietrich@millersville.edu.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Market Street Harrisburg, PA 17101



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