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# Climbers Run / SRREC



The Conservancy welcomes you to the Susquehanna Riverlands Research & Education Center (SRREC) and Climbers Run Nature Preserve. The Conservancy's SRREC and Preserve offer visitors a unique experience within the Susquehanna Riverlands, a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Conservation Landscape. We are excited to work with our many donors; state, county, and local municipal leaders; businesses and foundations; volunteers and the community to educate all ages about the natural environment through our activities, events and programs.

## Partners

The Conservancy thanks our private and public funders and partners for their continued support of the SRREC and Preserve improvements and programming support. Together we are actively modeling our mission, "*Because clean air, fresh water and wildplaces are vital to every generation*". Teaching all generations to value nature through hands-on experiences and active stewardship protects our diminishing natural resources.

*Did you know? Only 16% of land in Lancaster County remains forested, just a vestige of what used to be here. Help us save the County's natural lands!*

**Our education partners include:** NorthBay Education, Scouts, Donegal Trout Unlimited, Lancaster County Conservation District, Lancaster County Park, PA Master Naturalist, Franklin & Marshall College, Millersville University and other conservation organizations.

## History

The old stone farmhouse and bank barn were built in the 1860's. The Snyder family donated the farm to the Boys and Girls Club of Lancaster in the early 1960's, calling the property Camp Snyder. The Boys and Girls Club used Camp Snyder as a youth summer camp. For several years the camp was left unoccupied. In 2012, the Conservancy purchased the 75.95 acre property and received an adjacent 6.877 acre tract donated by the Schneider family and Mount Airy Lumber, to the preserve bringing the total acreage to 82.827. Thanks to our many wonderful partners, the Conservancy was able to acquire the Boys and Girls Club property, renaming it Climbers Run Nature Preserve. A \$640,800 Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) grant was received. The match was satisfied by a 40 acre land gift donated by Andy Appel, now designated Appel Preserve.

The Conservancy renamed the preserve “Climbers Run” to recognize the native brook trout stream on the preserve. Climbers Run is the location of the Conservancy’s new **Susquehanna Riverlands Research and Education Center (SRREC)**. The center continues to undergo renovations to accommodate research and educational opportunities and conduct workshops, environmental events and programming for public benefit as a result of support from private donors, foundations and, grants.

## What to See and Do

This preserve is a great place to walk, hike or simply observe wildlife. This preserve hosts diverse habitats including a pond, wetland, forest, meadows, and native brook trout stream that support a healthy ecological landscape. There is an array of spots along the stream offering opportunities to reflect in nature and provide an outdoor classroom experience.

**Please Note:** The pond and stream are designated as “**Catch and Release Only, Artificial Lure & Barbless Hook**”. Please remember to wear your fishing license as per the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Rules and Regulations.

**Please Note:** Visitors may be asked to refrain from visiting the preserve during Summer Camp activities June through October between 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. A schedule of open/closed dates and times will be posted.

## Planning Your Hike

The property contains two miles of hiking trails. There are three main trails:

Climbers Run Trail (blue trail): Start the trail at the upper or lower parking area and cruise the loop to see the various types of habitat Climbers Run has to offer. Crossing the stream may mean getting your feet wet –except for the dry season (July and August)–so come prepared.

Climbers Hollow Trail (white trail): This trail to the east provides a scenic view of cascading waterfalls tumbling over rock through forested terrain.

Camp Trail (yellow trail): Visitors leave from the Center and follow the pathway to the pond and over the existing old footbridge to the meadow area by the lower cabins. From the meadow there are two ways to access the Climbers Run Trail (blue trail). Enjoy a picnic lunch by the stream.

There are several old logging roads or trails not included on the map that are under review for improvements.

## BioBlitz Events

In September 2014, the Conservancy organized its first 24-hour [BioBlitz](#) with Millersville University to document plant and animal species observed on the Climbers Run Nature Preserve. Scientists, Master Naturalists, teachers, students, and local community members participated in this unique public event that raised awareness of local biodiversity. In May 2015 a second BioBlitz received resounding support and once again illustrated the richness of the site's plant and animal life. Over 780 species were documented during the two events. Learn more about a BioBlitz at <http://www.natureatlas.org/climbers/>.

## Flora

This Preserve is dominated by tree species such as oaks, hickory, dogwood, ash, tulip poplar, some hemlock and white pine, and sycamores. Below the canopy you can find various shrub species such as smooth hydrangea, spicebush, mountain laurel, and rosebay rhododendron. An abundance of ferns, violets, mayapple, Solomon's seal, and other wildflowers can also be found. Woodland edges and dry to wet meadows showcase skunk cabbage, turk's cap lily, swamp milkweed, asters, goldenrods and native grasses throughout the season. The Conservancy is actively managing invasive species including garlic mustard, tree of heaven, exotic honeysuckles, multiflora rose, and Norway maple that are competing with desirable native vegetation.



### Seasonal Information

**Spring:** Native woodland wildflowers including trout lily, spring beauty, false hellebore, and trees / shrubs like swamp azalea, dogwoods, redbuds, and more.

**Summer:** Joe pye weed, phlox, cardinal flower, and elderberry highlight this season.

**Autumn:** Colorful fall foliage of native deciduous trees like oaks, black gum, shrubs including winterberry, shrub dogwoods, and herbaceous plants including asters and goldenrods.

## Fauna

Over 90 bird species have been observed at Climbers Run including ruby-throated hummingbirds, northern cardinals, turkey vultures, bluebirds, wood ducks, pileated woodpeckers, downy woodpeckers, and Carolina wrens. Twenty-four species of amphibians and reptiles including numerous frogs, toads, and snakes have been documented. There is a diverse population of native plants that provide essential nectar and pollen sources for pollinators like bees, butterflies, and moths. The Preserve is a critical habitat to thousands of species of plants that support fungi and aquatic species such as fish and macroinvertebrates like stoneflies and water pennies.

## Watershed Facts



Nestled in the deep ravines of the River Hills, Climbers Run cascades through pristine forests to lowlands and meanders to the Pequea Creek. A stroll along the rushing water tempts the senses of visitors, evoking a feeling of Lancaster County long before development

and deforestation. Climbers Run holds a rare treasure, wild brook trout – found only where forested buffers provide clean, cold water essential to this species survival. This stream flows into the Pequea Creek which eventually flows into the Susquehanna River. In addition, a pond fed by natural springs is located near the historic house.

More than 50% of Conservancy preserves reside in the Susquehanna Riverlands tallying more than 2,700 acres of natural lands, many protecting streams and creeks that feed the Susquehanna River and eventually the Chesapeake Bay. Projected population growth and pressure from proposed pipelines and other infrastructure within the county will mean further impact to air, water, and land resources. The Conservancy is working with the Water Quality Volunteer Coalition (WQVC), a watershed education program sponsored by the Lancaster County Conservation District, to monitor water quality.

## About the Susquehanna Riverlands Research & Education Center (SRREC)

The historic barn was in adequate condition to be converted into an environmental education center that the Conservancy named the Susquehanna Riverlands Research and Education Center (SRREC). The SRREC is located within the Susquehanna Riverlands, a DCNR conservation landscape. The property is located within walking distance of a middle school and is less than 30 minutes from Lancaster City, offering numerous opportunities in nature for all ages especially youth.

In 2010 the Conservancy completed an extensive environmental education needs assessment in Lancaster County. This effort uncovered a void in environmental education for all age groups. As a result of these findings the Conservancy has been working to increase nature awareness and build a stronger environmental connection through outreach activities within schools, outdoor classroom initiatives, and hands-on environmental education programming at the SRREC and throughout the region on other Conservancy preserves.

The SRREC at Climbers Run is a unique opportunity for the Conservancy to offer programming within the Susquehanna Riverlands. The Conservancy actively engages with environmental education and research partners including NorthBay, Scouts, Lancaster County Parks, the Lancaster County Conservation District, North Museum, and local colleges and universities to support education and research programming and outreach at the center and on this preserve.



We work with our partners in support of education programs and field trips with school districts and urban youth programs like Horizons, Milagro House,

The Mix at Arbor Place, Lancaster Rec, and others by investing in the lives of our children.

Check out our education highlights [here](#).

If you are a school, church or other conservation group interested in a **Field Trip** from September through June please contact our NorthBay Education partner Daniel Burke at 443-674-9025 or via email [bburke@northbayadventure.org](mailto:bburke@northbayadventure.org) to arrange a visit to the SRREC and Preserve. For all other inquiries related to education and research programs please contact Lydia Martin, Director of Education, [lmartin@lancasterconservancy.org](mailto:lmartin@lancasterconservancy.org).

## Land Management

Climbers Run Nature Preserve showcases working models of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as a rain garden, established meadows and a wildlife habitat and stream restoration project which reduces the flow of polluted runoff into the Chesapeake Bay. These types of BMPs offer visitors opportunities to learn about functioning models that improve water quality and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

In 2014 the Conservancy partnered with Donegal Trout Unlimited for a restoration project along Climbers Run. Thanks to the generous support of Conservancy donors and Donegal Trout Unlimited, over \$130,000 was raised for a wildlife habitat and stream restoration project. In the fall 2014, the Conservancy organized volunteer work days to tag critical habitat such as existing vernal pools, wetland communities, and native plants for preservation. After a slow start due to weather, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service started the project on February 3, 2015. Over 16 acres received invasive species management and 2,400 feet of stream underwent restoration. Volunteers removed invasive species and helped with trash cleanups. By March 18, nearly the majority of the heavy equipment work was complete. Ongoing organized volunteer activities continue to manage the buffer and monitor the restoration project.



The restoration project offers visitors a chance to observe native plant regeneration, study stream structures that protect and provide important fish habitat, and join efforts to maintain a healthy riparian buffer and forested landscape. Annual stewardship activities include trail work, invasive management, building renovations and general building maintenance, etc.

The Conservancy will continue to work with the neighboring landowners to protect the existing forested lands adjacent to our Climbers Run, Trout Run and Steinman Run preserves that are located in a designated Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Area within the Susquehanna Riverlands.

Motor vehicles are prohibited off of roads on Climbers Run Nature Preserve. Violators are aggressively prosecuted. Please review [Rules and Regulations](#) posted at the preserve.

**Of Special Note:** The SRREC at Climbers Run Nature Preserve is proud to be certified as a **Penn State Pollinator Friendly Garden**. During your visit observe the Conservancy's efforts to use local native plants in projects including the rain garden, meadows, and the wildlife habitat and stream restoration project to support pollinator diversity and abundance. Certify your garden or landscape via the Penn State College of Agriculture Sciences, Center for Pollinator Research at <http://ento.psu.edu/pollinators/public-outreach/cert>. Let's join together to support a more Pollinator friendly landscape.

### **Climbers Run/SRREC Work Dates**

Please check our upcoming events on the website for scheduled Climbers Run work dates. Volunteer activities include picking up trash, trail maintenance, managing invasive species especially along the Climbers Run riparian buffer, special projects, and occasionally working in the SRREC for indoor activities such as cleaning, painting, and organizing.

### **Hunting Regulations**

Climbers Run is not open for hunting. It is unlawful to discharge a rifle or single projectile firearm at this preserve. Violators will be charged as defiant trespassers. PA. C.S. 18 SS 3503(b)

### **Directions**

226 Frogtown Road, Pequea, PA, Martic Township

From Lancaster, take S Prince Street PA-272 S/US-222 S/. Turn slight right onto PA-324 S. Turn left at the traffic light for New Danville PA-324 S/PA-741 E. At the next light, continue straight on PA-324 S. At Marticville, turn left onto Frogtown Road and the Climbers Run preserve entrance will be on your right.

For more information about the Susquehanna Riverlands Research & Education Center and the Climbers Run Nature Preserve please contact Lydia Martin, Director of Education, [lmartin@lancasterconservancy.org](mailto:lmartin@lancasterconservancy.org), 717-392-7891 Ext. 215.

[Climbers Run](#)

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