



**Briar
Bush**
NATURE CENTER

Become a Member and Receive:

- 20% discount on programs
- Early registration for summer camps
- Invitations to members-only events
- Facility rentals for your celebrations
- 10% discount in the Nature Shop
- Discounted/free admission to select nature centers across the nation
- And more!



Newsletter and Calendar

www.briarbush.org

215-887-6603

January – April 2025

Nature Center Hours

Business Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Dede Long Nature Museum:

Open Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Griscom Bird Observatory:

Open Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Pond:

Open Daily: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Trails:

Open Daily: Dawn to Dusk

Facility and trail access is subject to change due to severe weather or to accommodate privately scheduled programs/events. Call before your visit for the most up-to-date BBNC hours.

Admission:

- Briar Bush Members: Free
- Abington Residents: Free
- Others: Donations accepted

Admission fees are subject to change.

**Calendar of Events
begins on page 4.**

The Dede Long Nature Museum, Griscom Bird Observatory, and pond will be closed on New Year's Day and Easter Sunday. Trails will be OPEN dawn to dusk.

www.briarbush.org

Helping Baby Animals

By Briar Bush Animal Curator, Katie Fisk

“I found a baby bunny, can you take it?”

This is a common phone call we receive as temperatures start to warm and green leaves emerge from their winter buds. Concerned residents will see a baby animal in their yard, seemingly abandoned, and want to help. Even though Briar Bush is not a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and we are unable to accept injured and orphaned wild animals, we are still here to answer your questions. Plus, the great news is that in most cases, intervention is not necessary! Learning a little bit more about the childhood of wild animals can help us know when an animal needs help and when it is just going through growing pains.

Rabbits



Rabbits are known for their prolific breeding habits: have a litter of bunnies, get them weaned, then have another. This means that rabbits reach independence at a very young age and small size. A rabbit the size of your palm, or 2/3 the length of a dollar bill, is already completely independent! But what if you find a nest of bunnies without a parent

around? Mother rabbits will leave their babies hidden and warm in their nest, usually a depression of grasses and fur on the ground, while they are out eating. This way the mother is not drawing attention to her helpless babies. She will return twice a day to nurse the babies, usually at dawn and dusk.

Birds

We've all seen those scraggly, awkward, baby birds in spring, calling for their parents and generally looking all-around confused. They flap and flutter, and don't get very far. It is certainly a logical conclusion that this bird may need help. Human babies and toddlers don't...



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Briar Bush News and Information

immediately walk perfectly, and running takes even more practice; birds need practice in order to become masters of the air. In the meantime, they stay close to the ground and wait for their dutiful parents to come and feed them. If you watch a baby bird, you shouldn't have to wait more than 30 minutes to see a parent bring it food. What if a featherless baby bird falls out of a nest? If you can find the nest, place it back in. It is a myth that the parents will abandon it because of human scent.

Squirrels

Baby squirrels are like the ultimate spoiled children when they are being weaned. They are used to being waited on hand and foot, safe in a nest, fed warm milk whenever they are hungry, and then they are cast out into the cold, scary world to figure things out on their own. The surprising behavior that results is these youngsters seem to have no fear of humans whatsoever, approaching them and sometimes even climbing right up pants legs! It's like the young squirrel is saying, "You gotta help me! Mom cut me off and I'm hungry!" This phase is short-lived, however, and the squirrel quickly moves on to raiding bird feeders.



So, what are some signs that an animal truly needs help?

If you see any of these signs, reach out to a licensed rehabilitator like Philadelphia Metro Wildlife Clinic, AARK, or the Schuylkill Center Wildlife Clinic:

- The animal is bleeding
- The animal has flies on it
- A baby bird without all of its feathers and you don't know where the nest is
- An adult animal that lets you approach close enough to touch it (but please do not touch!)

Knowing more about the development stages of animals helps us know when we should intervene and when we should not. It can be the difference between getting an animal in need help and committing an unintentional kidnapping. And even though Briar Bush is not a licensed rehabilitator, we will always be here to answer your questions!

Feather Our Nest 2024 - Golden Together!

On September 27, 2024, the Friends of Briar Bush (FOBB) hosted the Feather Our Nest Gala and Auction (FON), **Golden Together**, a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the FOBB.



The evening shimmered with golden-themed décor, culinary delights, engaging games, and exciting auctions. Guests joined in commemorating half a century of connecting people with nature, sharing cherished memories with Briar Bush staff, and looking ahead to the next 50 years of our mission.



Thank you to everyone who made **Golden Together** an unforgettable celebration of Briar Bush's past, present, and future! With your generous support, FON 2024 raised over **\$42,000!** These funds directly contribute to keeping Briar Bush Nature Center a beloved destination to explore, learn, and grow together with nature for generations to come.

Many thanks to all of our FON 2024 sponsors for making the event a shining success! View the complete list of FON 2024 Sponsors and photos from the event at: www.briarbush.org/fon2024-event.



Special thanks to the Friends of Briar Bush Board Members for their unwavering dedication to FON and the FOBB mission.

Briar Bush News and Information

Welcome New Board Members



Jacqui Flynn



Jacqui grew up down the street from Briar Bush Nature Center (BBNC) and started as an animal husbandry volunteer in 2001. From 2002 to 2005, she served as a part-time Center Aide under former Briar Bush Executive Director Dede Long. During her tenure, she learned about nonprofit organizational structure, fundraising, and event planning while supporting the Feather Our Nest Gala.

Today, Jacqui brings 18 years of high-performance fundraising experience to the BBNC Board of Directors, having raised over \$50 million throughout her career for a range of nonprofit organizations. Currently, she holds an executive role with HopePHL, a nonprofit that helps families and youth experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia. Through her consulting work, she has helped nonprofit organizations identify plans and set achievable goals for sustainable growth with an asset-based, solutions

-oriented approach. Jacqui is excited to return and support Briar Bush's mission—an organization that has been fundamental to her success in life and work.

Outside of work, she enjoys exploring local hiking spots and looks for any opportunity to be outdoors in the fresh air.

Leah Golubchick



Leah lives in Glenside and loves exploring the natural world with her daughter and husband. She is a Youth Education Initiatives Coordinator for the Brooklyn Public Library and was an educator for the American Museum of Natural History for over a decade. Leah is passionate about science, empowering youth to protect our planet, and building a community of learning. She has previously served on the board of directors for Emergent Horizons and currently serves as Board President for the New York City Museum Educators Roundtable. Leah enjoys growing pollinators and vegetables in her backyard garden.

Matthew Stepp



Based in Abington, Matthew oversees all internal operations, strategy, and programs at PennFuture—a statewide, member-supported environmental advocacy non-profit. He manages the organization's senior leadership team as well as advises the president and CEO on all matters, including fundraising, public policy, advocacy, external communications, and partnerships. Prior to this executive role, Matthew was PennFuture's Director of Policy.

Prior to joining PennFuture, Matthew served as the director of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation's Center for Clean Energy Innovation (CCEI) in Washington, D.C., where he managed high-profile energy and climate policy initiatives at the state, national, and international level. He has testified before Congress and his work has appeared in numerous national and state media outlets.

Matthew was also a Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Fellow at the National Academies of Science, where he worked with the Transportation Research Board to analyze light duty vehicle energy reduction policy strategies. He also served as fellow at the Breakthrough Institute, where he focused on clean energy innovation policy opportunities, and participated in the inaugural Millennial Trains Project.

Matthew holds a B.Sc. in Meteorology from Millersville University as well as a M.Sc. in Science, Technology, and Public Policy from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is a professional member of the American Meteorological Society.

Matthew was born and raised in Philadelphia and is an avid reader, weekend DIY warrior, amateur genealogist, and baseball geek. His favorite band is Pearl Jam.

Programs for Children

Most programs require registration for participants ages 2+. Children under 2 years of age are free of charge.

Please review all program information at the time of registration.

To register, visit www.briarbush.org. Questions or need help registering? Call 215-887-6603.

Magic Mornings

For 2-5-year-olds with Adult

Hey, toddlers! Bring your favorite adult to Briar Bush for walks, animal encounters, activities, and more! Each week features a new theme, which repeats throughout the week. (Register for one day per week.)

Day: Most Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

(Visit our website for the full schedule.)

Time: 10:30am - 11:30am

Cost per Participant/Session: \$12.50 | Abington Resident: \$11.25 | Briar Bush Member: \$10.00

Add'l. Child (Same Household): \$7.50 | Abington Resident: \$6.75 | Briar Bush Member: \$6.00



Nature Pioneers

For 4-6-year-olds

Children are invited to join us on their own for age-appropriate activities, walks, animal encounters, and more! Each week features a new theme.

Day: Most Thursdays

(Visit our website for the full schedule.)

Time: 1:00pm-2:30pm

Cost per Participant: \$15.00 | Abington Resident: \$13.50 | Briar Bush Member: \$12.00



School's Out, Get Outside!

For Grades K-5

When school is not in session, students can spend a day with Briar Bush exploring the outdoors, meeting animals, making crafts, playing in nature, and more.

Day: Select Holidays and In-Service Days

(Visit our website for the full schedule.)

Time:

- Half-Day Session: 1:00pm-3:30pm
- Full-Day Session: 8:30am-3:30pm
- After-Care Session: 3:30pm-5:30pm

Cost per Participant:

- Half-Day Session: \$30.00 | Abington Resident: \$27.00 | Briar Bush Member: \$24.00
- Full-Day Session: \$75.00 | Abington Resident: \$67.50 | Briar Bush Member: \$60.00
- After-Care Session: \$12.00



Programs for Families

Most programs require registration for participants ages 2+. Children under 2 years of age are free of charge.

Please review all program information at the time of registration.

To register, visit www.briarbush.org. Questions or need help registering? Call 215-887-6603.

WinterFest - Winter Survival

Join us at Briar Bush to celebrate the magic of winter! Enjoy guided hikes, animal encounters, games, crafts, and more. No registration required—just dress for the weather and join the fun!

Date: Sunday, January 26, 2025

Time: 1:00pm-4:00pm

Cost: FREE

Sponsored by: PNJA Home Improvement and General Contractors



Cave Exploration - Campfire Program

Did you know that Briar Bush has an indoor cave? Join us on a tour of the cave and create your own cave drawings to take home! Then, enjoy s'mores around the campfire. *Campfire is weather dependent.*

Date: Friday, February 7, 2025

Time: 7:00pm-8:00pm

Cost: \$12.00 | Abington Resident: \$10.80 | Briar Bush Member: \$9.60



Family Nature Night - In the Sky

Bring the whole family for a fun night complete with live animal encounters and interactive stations relating to the theme of the night - all at your own pace. Family Nature Nights are geared toward children with sensory processing disorders and are now featuring a forest sensory experience! *The program will take place indoors and outdoors, rain or shine. Light snacks will be provided.*

Date: Friday, March 14, 2025

Time: 6:00pm-7:30pm

Cost: FREE

Sponsored by: Child Development Foundation



EarthFest - Nature Superheroes

Be a hero for the planet! Join us for our annual Earth Day celebration filled with eco-adventures, nature activities, and fun for all ages. Don't forget your superhero costume—it's time to save the Earth in style! No registration required.

Date: Sunday, April 27, 2025

Time: 1:00pm-4:00pm

Cost: FREE

Sponsored by: Simply Cabinetry



Programs for Adults

Most programs require registration.

Please review all program information at the time of registration.

To register, visit www.briarbush.org. Questions or need help registering? Call 215-887-6603.

Tree Health and Maintenance

Join us in a discussion and short interpretive walk on the benefits of native trees and how they influence the ecosystem around them. Learn about invasive insect pests and diseases that affect native trees, and gather some tips for maintaining your own trees at home.

Date: Friday, January 24, 2025

Time: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Cost per Participant: \$10.00 | Abington Resident: \$9.00 | Briar Bush Member: \$8.00



Stormwater Management at Home

Climate predictions for our region include greater overall precipitation and intense storms, resulting in flooding and other environmental issues. Put simply, it's going to get wetter. Join Director Mark Fallon in a discussion and short interpretive walk on how these changes will affect your property and how to manage stormwater at home.

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Time: 7:00pm-8:00pm

Cost per Participant: \$10.00 | Abington Resident: \$9.00 | Briar Bush Member: \$8.00



What is a Weed?

When an unexpected plant pops up in your garden, how do you know if it's a weed or not? A plant that one person calls a weed another person actually encourages in their garden! Learn to identify some of the most common "weeds" found in our area and why you may want to reconsider yanking (or protecting!) them. We'll also take a short hike on the trails to find some of the featured species.

Date: Saturday, March 22, 2025

Time: 10:30am-11:30am

Cost per Participant: \$10.00 | Abington Resident: \$9.00 | Briar Bush Member: \$8.00



Mt. Cuba Center's Wildflower Weekend

Travel in the Briar Bush van to spend the day at the Mt. Cuba Center, an incredible garden showcase of native plants located just outside of Wilmington, Delaware. Experience a magnificent display of native spring blooms at the peak of their glory and enjoy live music, gardening activities, and more.

Date: Saturday, April 19, 2025

Time: 8:45am-3:30pm

Cost (includes admission): \$50.00 | Abington Resident: \$45.00 | Briar Bush Member: \$40.00

Notes: Bring your camera, binoculars, and lunch (or buy food at the Center). The program involves a long walk on uneven trails and runs in light rain—dress for the weather.



Summer Camp 2025

Registration is required for Summer Camp Programs. To register, visit www.briarbush.org. Please review all program information at the time of registration. Questions or request a brochure? Contact Melissa Eldridge, Director of Programs, at melissa@briarbush.org or call (215) 887-6603.



Play! Learn! Discover!

Summer is a time when learning and play go hand-in-hand. Briar Bush Summer Camps give your child the opportunity to experience the wonders of nature through scientific discovery, interpretive hikes, animal encounters, games, crafts, nature play, and more!

Seedlings Half-Day Camps for Ages 4-6

AM & PM session options each week!

Saplings Full-Day Camps for Ages 6-7

All day fun at Briar Bush!

Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 8-9

Regional field trips each week!

Full-Day Travel Camps for Ages 10-12

Regional field trips each week!

Overnight Camp for Ages 11-15

Tent camping at Hickory Run State Park!

Summer Camp Aide Program for Ages 13+

Have fun while building leadership skills and earning service hours!



Scan the QR Code or visit www.briarbush.org for more information including:

- * Summer Camp 2025 Brochure
- * Summer Camp Financial Aid
- * General Summer Camp FAQs
- * Summer Camp Handbook
- * Sign Up for our Email List
- * Details about Each Camp Group





1212 Edge Hill Road
Abington, PA 19001

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No. 719
FT Washington, PA

Electronic Service Requested

Briar Bush

NATURE CENTER

Wanted: Volunteers

- Board Members
- Hike Guides
- Building/Grounds Maintenance
- Community Events



Get involved and join a dynamic team!

Interested?

For more information
email volunteer@briarbush.org or
scan the code:

