

Citizen Science Program: A New Programming Success

by Erin Johnson, Program Development Manager



Participants in *Native Plants, Native Habitat, and Backyard Ecology*

The Schuylkill Center is extremely well-equipped to offer citizen science educational programs and opportunities for engagement at The Center, in surrounding neighborhoods, and in the region. With the complexity of environmental issues facing our region—air quality, river and watershed health, transportation and energy challenges, coexistence with wildlife—there are many ways that we can all continue to learn about new topics and ways to engage and solve important problems in our region.

This fall, The Schuylkill Center began a series of Citizen Science programs designed to bring experts in the field of environmental science to discuss timely issues including: native plants and backyard ecology, invasive species, water quality and the Schuylkill River watershed, bird migration in our region, soil quality and food quality, and the preservation of land. Each of our speakers was extremely engaging and informative, making important research findings accessible to the public while sharing approaches to affecting change in our communities.

Steve Saffier of *Pennsylvania Audubon Society*, Sarah Low of *Fairmount Park Commission*, Susan Gill of *The Stroud Water Research Center*, Bob Mulvihill of *Powdermill Nature Preserve*, Mary Seaton-Carboy of *GreensGrow Farms* and David Harper of *Land in Common* all contributed their knowledge and expertise to the series.

In addition, groups such as: *Wyncote Audubon* and *Valley Forge Audubon*, the *Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers*, members of the *Delaware Valley Ornithology Society*, *The Nature Conservancy*, *Philadelphia Water Department*, and The Schuylkill Center's *Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic* and *Land Restoration Department* all had a presence in the audience or during pre-program

‘poster sessions.’ Whole Foods of North Wales sponsored the series by providing delectable treats.

In February 2008, we will offer our spring installment of the Citizen Science Program series offering new topics and a range of interesting and knowledgeable speakers.

Thank you to all who attended the programs this fall. We look forward to seeing you and many new faces at Schuylkill Center events throughout the year and at our spring Citizen Science Program!

