



WHY SO MANY DEER?
OVERPOPULATION
IN BUCKS COUNTY



PUBLIC ENEMY #2
MEET THE
EMERALD ASH BORER



**FARMING IN BUCKS
COUNTY**
TOM HALDEMAN



LTBC IN 2023
HELP US CONSERVE
THE LAND WE LOVE

CONSERVATOR

Spring Has Sprung in Bucks Co.

What a wonderful way of saying spring is here, but the expression "spring has sprung" is more than a popular way of saying the season has arrived. It is a way of expressing the excitement and joy associated with the transition from winter to spring when the weather warms up, the days get longer, and plants begin to bloom.



The expression is used to suggest that the arrival of spring brings with it a sense of renewal, rejuvenation, and new beginnings. It is a way of celebrating the change of seasons and the arrival of a new phase in the natural life cycle. This is certainly true in Bucks County where trees and flowers are starting to bloom with the milder weather. Animals that hibernated during the winter are emerging and migratory birds are returning to their breeding grounds. The magic of springtime is upon us in Bucks County.

[Springtime is one of the four seasons in temperate and polar regions](#)

Bucks County: A Wee History

Did you know there is a Bucks County in England? Bucks County Pennsylvania is named after the county of Buckinghamshire in southeast England. William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, was from Buckinghamshire and named several places in the state after locations in his home country including our beloved Bucks County. Buckinghamshire is also known as "Bucks" county.

The name "Buckinghamshire" is believed to come from the Old English "Bucca's home" or "Bucca's land," which referred to an Anglo-Saxon landowner named Bucca who lived in the area during the 6th century. The name evolved over time to become Buckinghamshire.

Bucks County, PA was founded in 1682 as one of the three original counties established by William Penn. The county originally encompassed a significantly larger area than it does today and was gradually divided into smaller counties as the population grew and new settlements were established.

New Board Members

The Land Trust of Bucks County is pleased to announce the election of two new members to its Board of Directors. The newly elected members are Joseph B. Shelanski and Jacob Crooke.

As a small nonprofit, the Land Trust of Bucks County relies heavily on volunteers to make our work possible. Our most dedicated volunteers are our board members - talented people who care about the mission of this organization. Joe and Jacob bring years of experience to the board with diverse expertise and knowledge which will benefit the entire organization.

Joe holds a Ph.D. in Physiology and Biophysics from Temple University and is CEO and Director of Translational Research at Product Investigations Inc. His experience includes diverse leadership roles ranging from developing a system wide mentoring program for a regional non-profit to environmental project management. Joe is an ardent proponent of ecosystem, land and historical preservation. Joe and his wife Sharon spend as much time as possible on their preserved circa 1745 farm in Haycock Township.

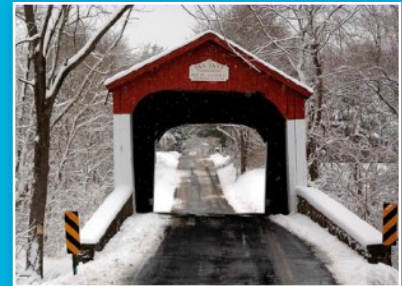
A native Pennamite, and member of a multi-generation Pennsylvania farming family, Jacob Crooke is a graduate of Penn State's Agricultural Systems Management program and has been running large farming operations for over 15 years. He is the owner/operator of Crooke Farms: a 600 acre commercial cash crop farming operation and the sales representative for Pioneer Seed in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. Jacob is an advocate for Pennsylvania agriculture and environmental stewardship. He lives with his wife and children on their farm in Bedminster Township.

Did you Know?

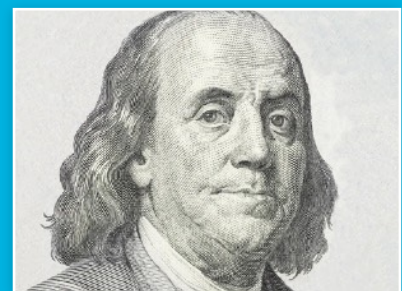
Click and Learn



Did George Washington really have wooden teeth?



Were our bridges covered to provide a place to sneak a kiss or to extend the service life?



Was our fellow Pennsylvanian Benjamin Franklin really a vegetarian?

Bucks 100 Road Rally

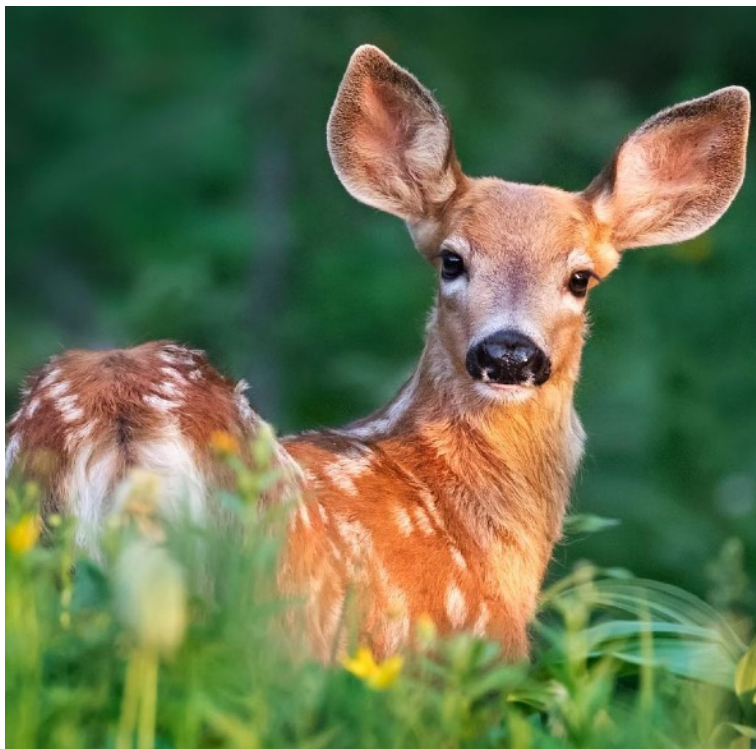
The annual LTBC road rally–The Bucks 100–will be held this year on Sunday, October 1st 2023. This is a family friendly event, also open to car clubs, where we set off for a few hours and explore the byways of scenic Bucks County while answering trivia questions.

The rally culminates at a preserved farm where prizes are awarded and we share refreshments.

Details will follow as they become available. Stay tuned.

Why So Many Deer?

There are a lot of deer in Bucks County and according to the Penn State Department of Agriculture the overpopulation of deer is a problem: "White-tailed deer directly affect many aspects of our lives.



Hunters, farmers, foresters, motorists, gardeners, and homeowners are all impacted by deer abundance levels. This may be through car deer collisions, disease transmission, loss of desirable landscaping, crop damage, or over-browsed woodlands."

Have you wondered why there are so many of these even-toed ungulates in our county? Research tells us it is a statewide problem and due to a combination of factors.

Pennsylvania, with its mix of forests, farmland, and suburban areas provides an ideal habitat for deer. State forests provide cover and food, while farmland and suburban areas offer open fields and gardens where deer can feed.

The natural predators of deer, such as wolves, cougars, and mountain lions were largely eliminated from Pennsylvania in the 1800s. Without the regulation provided by these predators, an ecological phenomenon known as trophic cascade, the deer population has grown unchecked.

[Trophic cascades help control the ecosystem](#)

Although hunting is allowed in Pennsylvania, hunting regulations in some areas have become more restrictive which has reduced the number of deer that are harvested. It is also anticipated that there will be fewer hunters and an increasing lack of access to private land in the future.

[Recreational deer hunting may be in decline](#)

Finally, mild winters with less snow are making it easier for deer to find food and survive the winter.

Overall these factors contribute to the overpopulation of deer and its associated impact on both the environment and human society. Be it the ecological impact, economic consequences, or the health and safety risk to both humans and other animals, deer abundance is now an important issue that must be addressed not only in Bucks County, but statewide.

[Bambi, meet Bullwinkle](#)

Public Enemy No. 2

Continuing our series on invasive species we turn our attention to a particularly harmful insect: the Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis* or EAB). Most of our ash trees (*Fraxinus americana*) are dead or dying due to this destructive invasive beetle which is native to Asia and was accidentally



introduced to North America in the late 1990s. It is considered the most destructive invasive forest species ever introduced to North America.

The Problem with EAB

EAB has four life stages: adult, egg, larva and pupa. Adults are approximately 1/2" long with an iridescent green body and wings. Adults leave a D-shaped exit hole in the bark of the trees they infest when they emerge in spring. They are most commonly seen in late June and July.



The eggs left behind by adults become the larvae that burrow into the bark of ash trees. They feed on the bark and in the process destroy the xylem tubes, the thin pipe-like tissues that transport water and nutrients (sap flow). The disruption of the plant's ability to transport sap ultimately results in the death of the tree. EAB has already killed tens of millions of ash trees in North America and continues to spread rapidly. This pest poses a significant threat to the survival of all species of ash in the region.

Can Anything Be Done?

Preventative measures are important to slow the spread of the EAB and to protect remaining ash trees. There are several ways to protect your trees. Here are a few options:



Insecticides: Insecticides can be used to protect individual trees from the EAB. These treatments are typically applied to the trunk or lower branches of the tree and can provide protection for an extended period, typically 1-3 years. **It is important to hire a licensed professional to apply insecticides, as they can be harmful if not used correctly.**

[EAB and pesticide treatment - what are my options?](#)

Biological Controls: These involve introducing natural enemies of the EAB, such as parasitoid wasps, to reduce the population of the pest. This method is still in development, but it shows promise in reducing EAB populations.

Tree Removal: Removing infested trees can help slow the spread of EAB to healthy trees. It is important to properly dispose of the infested wood to prevent the spread of the pest.



Early Detection and Rapid Response: Monitoring trees for signs of EAB infestation and reporting any suspected sightings to local authorities can help control the spread. Early detection and rapid response can increase the chances of successfully treating and saving infested trees.

It is important to note that prevention is key in protecting ash trees from EAB. Avoiding the transport of firewood from infested areas and planting diverse tree species can help prevent the spread of EAB and protect our remaining ash population.

While no ash species is completely immune to EAB, some individual trees have shown resistance. The most commonly planted species of ash in North America is the white ash which is highly susceptible. However, researchers have identified individual white ash trees that appear to be resistant. In addition, some species of ash, such as the green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) have shown resistance to EAB.

Efforts are underway to breed and select for EAB-resistant ash trees and there is ongoing research to identify the genetic markers and traits associated with resistance. Even resistant trees can be susceptible to EAB if the infestation pressure is high enough, so control measures may still be necessary.

[Will the Ash Tree survive? Are there resistant species?](#)

Farming in Bucks County

Tom Haldeman is a 5th generation Pennsylvania farmer. A dairy farmer for most of his life, he has recently transitioned his farm to raising replacement heifers and steers, as well as growing cash crops.



it out there. The wife said after we came back from Arizona how much more beautiful it was around here."

So, you've been farming here all your life?

"Yes."

Where is your farm located?

"I farm in Bedminster Township and Plumstead Township."

How would you describe the type of farming that you do?

"I raise 26 heifers and steers, I grow 90 acres of corn, 90 acres of soybeans and about 90 acres of hay, plus about 30 more acres of pasture."

How did you get started in farming?

"I started because my father did it."

What type of operation was it back when your father started?

"It was a dairy farm and he was milking 100 cows"

Did he start the farm originally or was it in the family?

"The Danboro farm has been in the family for five generations."

What do you enjoy most about farming in Bucks County?

"I just enjoy farming. I mean we always liked the scenery. Scenery is good. Yeah, we went out to Arizona but we didn't like

What changes have you observed farming in Bucks County over the course of your career?

"Probably the distrust for the chemicals we use. The new landowners that come in are a little more hesitant. The landowners want you to farm the way they want you to farm and not the way you think it should be farmed."

In the past there were not many questions asked about what you were doing?

"Now there's more. Well seems to be more control from the landowners about what you do on the land."

How has that affected your operation?

"Everybody's been pretty good except one guy won't let me spray the hay so it's all weeds most of the time. He's the only one, that's only six acres".

What are some of the challenges that farmers face in Bucks County?

"Availability of land."

What challenges will the next generation of farmer in Bucks County face?

"Unless the farm can be passed down from generation to generation, they're not going to be able to afford it. Unless they have money."

How has farmland preservation in Bucks County affected your operation?

"It kept us in business."

When was your farm preserved?

"Danboro was 1995 and the other one, Bedminster, was 1996. The other one (Bedminster) would have been developed if we hadn't bought it for farming."

It was in the works?

"Well, he (the seller) would have. He was leaning both ways, but we were able to use our land preservation money to buy that farm. He put it in land preservation before I bought it so he made out pretty good."

Would you recommend to a landowner of an unpreserved parcel to consider preservation?

"We need to do anything that we can to preserve. We ought to preserve. I got one lady down the street that has got 25 acres and she wants to preserve it. They (the town) say it's too small of a parcel. But it juts up against another six acres (of farmland) and against the development. There's another 30 acres of farmland next to it that's pretty well preserved. She doesn't want more homes down near her property."

So, even though it's a small parcel it's important to your operation?

"It is because I've been doing that for 35 years down there."

LTBC in 2023

It is the nature of who we are and what we do that requires we ask for financial assistance. We are a small non-profit organization made up of one part-time employee and a volunteer working board of directors. There are no heavy-hitters here. No mega-donors and cocktail parties where we gather to feel good about ourselves. Our fundraisers net \$600 and we trudge through hundreds of preserved properties and thousands of acres each year to pay for the good work we do. Now in our 26th year, the Land Trust of Bucks County continues to monitor and help preserve some of the most beautiful farmland and open space in Bucks County.



In the April meeting of our board of directors, a review of our 2023 membership renewals confirmed a trend we have been watching for several years: we are losing members each year. Simply put, we are not bringing in new members to replace those we lose through attrition.

If we are to continue our important work it is a trend we must reverse.

2023 Membership Drive

You can become a member of the Land Trust of Bucks County by contributing any amount. When you visit our donate page you will see recommended membership levels, but in fact any amount will allow you to join the organization. There are benefits to becoming a member, this newsletter for example, but the real benefit is what your money supports. It does not pay for a fancy building or a bloated staff. We have neither. Your membership dollars go directly to preserving and protecting the land we love. From the continued monitoring of preserved farms to the preservation of new properties, you will help us fight development pressure and increase our conservation efforts.

It Takes a County

We have said this before, but our towns and our way of life will be defined by what we do now, and we cannot rely solely on government funds. Become a member. Donate. Your help builds the foundation of support that enables the Land Trust of Bucks County to continue and expand its conservation efforts. Please visit our website and give what you can.

LAND TRUST
of Bucks County

*Give to the
land you love*

[Visit the Land Trust of
Bucks County website by
clicking here](#)