

Silver Spring Township Parks and Recreation SUCCESS STORY

By: Silver Spring Township

In Flight at the Preserve

SUMMARY

To provide an opportunity to community members to discover a variety of bird species by utilizing the Vincent DiFilippo Nature Preserve and the newly acquired equipment. Guidebooks and binoculars were used on guided nature walks through the preserve to teach participants about backyard birds, waterfowl and birds of prey. Participants learned how to identify birds by watching their behavior and physical features and then referencing the guidebooks.



CHALLENGE

Silver Spring Township has been growing rapidly over the last several years, with this increase in population though, residents are still looking for open park space and places to go to recreate as close to home as possible. This program was necessary for the community to fulfill the need of inviting people outdoors and providing the tools for them to learn more about birds that are all around them. Housing developments are quickly being built and open space is a concern as well as a need for residents. A lot of new residents don't know that this open space is right in the township and near many neighborhoods, so this program also encouraged participants to enjoy the parks and public lands more frequently.

FUNDING

Grant Award: \$1,500

Total Project Cost: \$3,005.42





SOLUTION

The program promoted outside recreation and bird watching at the Vincent DiFilippo Nature Preserve. This nature preserve also provides an opportunity for visitors to be in a quiet place that is among busy streets and neighborhoods. The program provided them with a reason to visit the preserve and educated community members on the natural world around them. Participants were able to use the funded equipment to research the birds that they saw and heard. The guided walks gave all a better appreciation for the open space in the township as well as how to identify a variety of birds.

RESULTS

The program was successful in reaching the goal of providing a free birding program to the community at open park space in the township. Jane Earle, a retired DEP biologist was the head leader at the guided walks. She says *“Looking for birds, one of the larger showier inhabitants of the area, helps to make people more aware of the other inhabitants of the area. Looking for what the birds are eating, how they fly, and where they build their nests serves as an introduction to ecology and awareness of your surroundings that hopefully will translate into better stewardship and appreciation of their home and regional environments. Many of the places where people live are sterile or unfriendly to birds and do not encourage native plants. The bird walks may encourage people to be more aware of their home surroundings and to improve the habitat for birds through native plantings.”* She would like to continue to offer this program in years to come as the preserve continues to provide great habitat for birds of all kinds! A parent of one of the girl scouts emailed in and said *“My daughter actually really enjoyed it and asked for binoculars for Christmas!”* In flight at the Preserve, taught about all types of birds but also equipment that can be used to learn even more!

Contact

Silver Spring Township
Parks and Recreation Department
8 Flowers Drive,
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
717-766-1657
parkinfo@sstwp.org

