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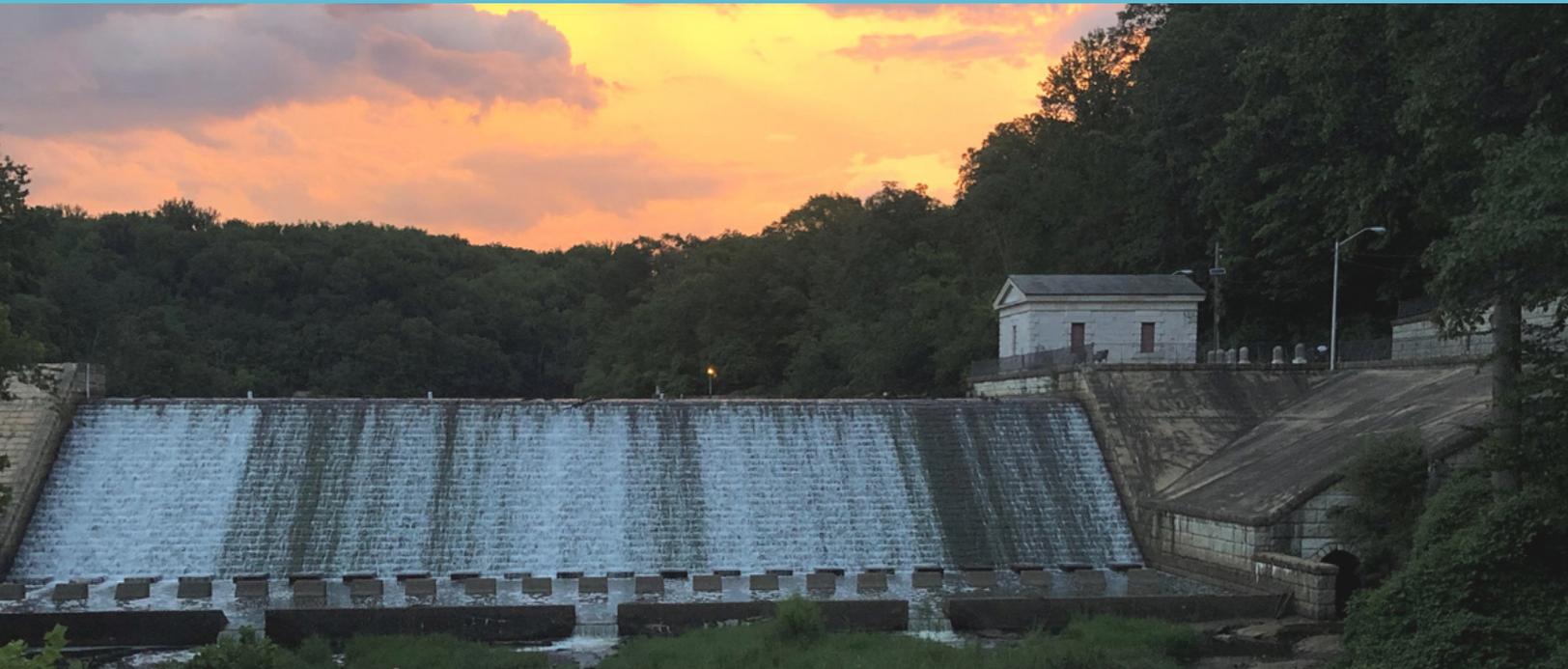
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LAKE ROLAND  
NATURE COUNCIL



# NEWSLETTER



## Featured Articles

Upcoming Programs

Species Profile:  
Great Blue Heron

Lost and Found

## COVID-19 Updates & Recommendations

Currently, the Lake Roland Nature Center is open for visitation and restroom use. Baltimore County is not mandating that masks be worn in government buildings. We are now accepting pavilion rental requests for 2023. Lake Roland will continue to host programs throughout winter. Space is limited, and pre-registration is required. For more information, please visit our website at [www.lakeroland.org](http://www.lakeroland.org)

1000 Lakeside Drive, Baltimore, MD 21210

# Upcoming PROGRAMS

## Lake Roland Story Time!

**Saturday, December 17th**  
**9:00am—10:00am**  
**Ages 6 and under, FREE!**

**Where do animals go when it snows?  
How do they prepare themselves for  
winter weather? Join us to read a  
book that answers these  
questions.**

## Longest Night Hike and Campfire

**Wednesday, December 21st**  
**5:00pm - 6:30pm Ages 8+,**  
**\$5 per person (\$3 members)**

Our shortest days and longest nights are upon us! Celebrate the Winter Solstice with a night hike. Afterwards, we'll learn some winter lore around a warm fire.

## New Years Day Hike

**Sunday,**  
**January 1st**  
**9:00am—10:00am All Ages, FREE**

*Start the year off right by enjoying the great outdoors! A Park Naturalist will lead you along the trails and point out interesting natural features along the way. Dress warmly for the weather and bring a water bottle with you. Space limited.*

## Primitive Fire Making

**Friday,**  
**January 6th 2:00pm—3:30pm**  
**Ages 10+ with an adult,**  
**\$3 per person (\$2 members)**

Our ancestors used fire to heat their homes, cook their food, and light the way. How did they make fire before the advent of lighters and matches? Learn how to make fire from various materials, and practice it yourself! Children must be registered with an adult.

Please email us at [LakeRol-RP@BaltimoreCountyMD.gov](mailto:LakeRol-RP@BaltimoreCountyMD.gov) to register.

# Species Profile: Great Blue Heron

By Omar Lloyd

The great blue heron, an iconic bird of the Chesapeake watershed, is the largest heron native to North America. It is only surpassed by the goliath and white-bellied herons. Often called a 'crane', it is commonly found near shores of open waters and in wetlands over most of North America and Central America, but can occasionally be found in coastal Spain and areas of southern Europe. The body of the heron is long and narrow, and covered in mostly gray feathers, with a white underside. It has a long grayish neck, a large black "eyebrow" with yellow to red eyes, and a long yellow bill. They have a head-to-tail height of 36 to 54 inches and adults can weigh between 4.7 and 5.5 pounds. A great blue heron can live up to 15 years. There exists a distinct white morph in Florida called the "great white heron", but it's unknown if this is a subspecies or an entirely different species.



Great blue herons live in groups called 'colonies', inhabiting all kinds of fresh and salt waters, including marshes, swamps, subtropical mangrove swamps, and even desert rivers. It is found throughout most of North America (including all lower 48 states); as far north as Alaska in the summer and as far south as Florida, Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America in the winter. It is a migratory bird, but some remain residents in areas where the water does not completely freeze and they can continue to feed. Here at Lake Roland, great blue herons can be seen year-round at the lake itself or in its tributaries, either looking for food along the shores or flying overhead.

The heron spends most of its time on the edges of rivers which allows it to easily catch aquatic animals and fish. It uses its long, slender legs to stalk potential prey and then quickly strikes the water with a thrust of its bill, eating and swallowing its prey whole. Their diet consists mostly of fish, but they have been observed eating frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, voles, rodents, and even smaller birds. They are not picky eaters! Adult herons themselves are not often preyed upon due to their size, but some of their predators include birds of prey, like eagles, and alligators and crocodiles in the south. Their eggs are a food source for crows and raccoons, while juvenile and younger adult herons are targeted by raccoons, turkey vultures, hawks, and eagles. Herons mate with a new partner every year, and lay 2 to 7 eggs. Eggs incubate for 28 days, and, once hatched, are fed by both parents via regurgitation. After 60 days they are able to fly, and a few weeks later they leave to hunt on their own.

Human disturbance regularly disrupts nesting in the early seasons, and in the past, they were often hunted, their large size making them easy targets. Currently, their population numbers are healthy and stable, and they're usually classified as being of "least concern." We invite you to observe many different wildlife and animals year-round at Lake Roland.



# LOST AND FOUND



# TIME

is ticking

# AWAY!



If you have lost your keys, eyeglasses, cell phone, or any other miscellaneous items, check with the Lake Roland Nature Center! A good samaritan may have turned it in. If we don't have it, we can make note of what was lost and contact you if it's found!

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## Support Our Wishlist

**Please consider visiting the Lake Roland Amazon Wishlist and donating an item.  
ANYTHING HELPS!**

Links to our Amazon Wish List and Amazon Smile Account can be accessed by selecting the Donate to Lake Roland tab on our website at [LakeRoland.org](http://LakeRoland.org) or by clicking the links at the bottom. AmazonSmile is a nonprofit division of Amazon that will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the Lake Roland Nature Council. It is a safe and secure way to support the park without any cost to you.

[AmazonSmile Account](#)

[Amazon Wish List](#)