

Volunteer Vibes - *Volunteers play many crucial roles at the Preserve. They maintain trails, welcome visitors, conduct research, educate youth groups, support special events, beautify our gardens, capture breathtaking photography, and much more, contributing their time, talents, and thousands of volunteer hours annually. We will be featuring our volunteers in Talus Talk so that we can all learn who they are and why they do what they do for the Preserve. Let's meet our volunteers!*

Jill Feldman

Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Yonkers, NY, coming from a long line of Yonkersites. Larry and I went to rival Yonkers high schools, dated soon afterward, married in 1978, and raised our two kids there. Once we reached retirement, we "took the plunge", sold our Yonkers home of 34 years, moved to Gardiner permanently, and never looked back.

What is your volunteer role(s) here at Mohonk Preserve?

In November 2015, I began volunteering every Wednesday helping with data entry, mailings, and even organizing the supply room! Later, I accepted the Volunteer Committee Chair role, too.

I have volunteered with the Conservation Science on several projects:

- Mounting herbarium specimens collected by Paul Huth
- Digitizing the card catalog in the DSRC library
- Interpreting and digitizing information on these cards*
- Currently, I am assisting Megan Napoli to transfer bird breeding observations (dating back to the 1990s) to an Excel spreadsheet.

*I wrote a Volunteer Voice article – "A Century of Natural History Observations" – which describes the worldwide digitization project.

Larry and I collect StreamWatch data once a month. Our assigned spot is the Humpo Marsh.

I also assist Larry with his Climate Tracking duties at the Mohonk Mountain House dock. We are currently gathering weekly water temperature and ice-cover data in concert with Professor David Richardson of SUNY New Paltz.

Why did you decide to volunteer your time and talents at Mohonk Preserve?

Once we became "locals" with more time on our hands, we immediately met with Andy Reynolds to discuss how we could best serve the Preserve and our own volunteer interests in the process.

What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?

I thrive on detail and get great satisfaction by completing a task and completing it well. But the best part of my volunteering has been getting to know and making friends with staff members at Mohonk Preserve.

Where is your favorite place/trail on the Preserve and why is it your favorite?

As a long-time member of the Preserve, one of my favorite trails is the Shongum Path. When friends or family come to visit, this is our go-to trail – close to parking, easy enough for novice hikers, with Split Rock as a destination. Walking on the plank path and hopping over streams is especially fun for our three grandsons. I am having more and more trouble keeping up with them these days.



*Jill Feldman recording Climate Tracker observations at Mohonk Lake.
Photo by Larry Feldman.*