

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 regularly featuring our volunteers in Volunteer Vibes so that we can all learn who they are and why they do what they do for the Preserve. Let's meet our volunteers!

Susan Livingston

Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Rockland County, NY, and moved up to New Paltz to attend SUNY New Paltz.

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

I am a Community Science Volunteer, which I joined in 2015. I volunteered for StreamWatch briefly in 2017 but was not able to commit to two volunteer activities at that time.



Photo: Susan Livingston

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

I hiked on Mohonk Preserve numerous times and decided I would love to take up one of their volunteer activities to contribute and play a role in monitoring environmental impact. Growing up, I was outdoors all day whenever possible, whether it was in snow, sleet, wind, rain, or simply a sunny day.

What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?

I am most proud of being able to capture the stages of development in the phenology process of our designated trees and plant life that we track and seeing the photos displayed in our Phenology Volunteer Newsletters. Also, being able to meet and interact with other Phenology volunteers when I can is wonderful! I work full-time, so I'm not able to meet up with a group often enough, but I just love the camaraderie, support, and educating new Phenology volunteers on the aspects of observing and tracking at our citizen science site whenever possible.

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

The trails that lead to Duck Pond are some of my favorite hikes because you can start out walking with open fields around you that later transform into wooded areas, and then on to streams and a pond. Of course, any wildlife that one may encounter along the way is always exciting which, over the years, has included: two great-horned owls (this was in May over 10 years ago) in neighboring trees, a black bear, which I've seen several times up until a few years ago, snapping turtles, and various birds, snakes and insects.