

# The Friends of High Point State Park

❄ Winter 2008



## Ice is Nice

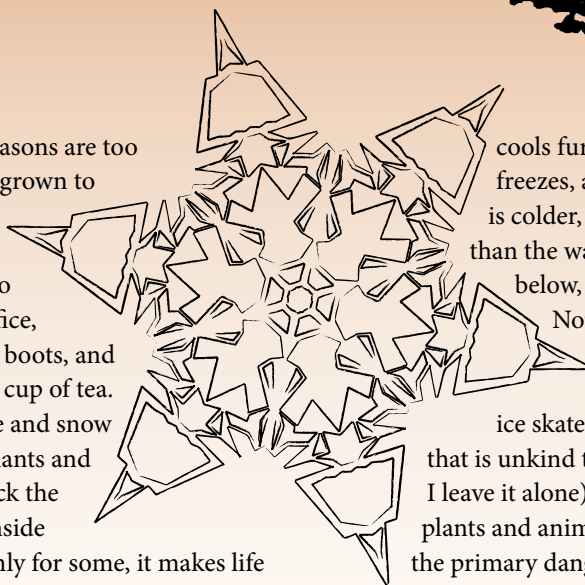
by Kate Foord *Interpretive Specialist, Natural Resources*

I'm a bit of a klutz, so you might think that winter (a.k.a. the Slippery Season) is a bad time for me. I may take a few additional spills in the cold, but I have good boots, Yaktrax, and crampons and I use them wisely. Besides, most of my injuries tend to be furniture-related. I do better out in the open.

Truth is, I rather like ice, and really like it's fluffiest form—snow. Lucky for me High Point is the snowiest place in New Jersey. Several activities I enjoy—cross-country skiing, tracking, snowshoeing, building snow men—all require a decent coating of white. In winter the world opens up to me and I can explore places

that in other seasons are too wet or too overgrown to penetrate. At the end of the day, I go back to a warm(ish) office, lose my clunky boots, and have a nice hot cup of tea. But what do ice and snow mean for the plants and animals that lack the warming-up-inside option? Certainly for some, it makes life more difficult. Food can be scarce and getting around is harder. Some, like our friend the groundhog, pretty much skip the season altogether. But plenty don't.

cools further. It eventually freezes, and the ice, which is colder, but less dense than the warmer water below, remains on top. Not only does this characteristic of ice benefit ice skaters (a winter sport that is unkind to the clumsy, so I leave it alone), but also aquatic plants and animals. For them, the primary danger during the frozen winter months is not the temperature, it is that they may use up the oxygen in the water before the spring thaw.



### Officers

Myra Snook - President  
Lynn Panico - Vice President  
Roberta Bramhall - Secretary  
Michael Bender - Treasurer

Friends of High Point State Park  
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McAfee, NJ 07428

High Point State Park  
1480 State Route 23  
Sussex, NJ 07461

Park Office: 973-875-4800  
Interpretive Center: 973-875-1471

The Friends of High Point State Park is a not-for-profit organization that fosters and supports the historical, scientific, educational, interpretive, recreational, and natural resource management activities in the Park. Our support takes the form of funds, materials, and voluntary services for which no government funds or resources are readily available.



### Life under Ice

Consider the red-spotted newt. This common aquatic salamander remains active throughout the winter. A few years ago Lake Marcia froze fast and clear, and you could see fish swimming and the newts paddling around beneath the ice as if nothing unusual was going on.

Other critters hibernate in the mud at the bottom where they temperatures almost always remain above freezing. Why? Because H<sub>2</sub>O has a very unusual property. Like most substances, water becomes more dense as it cools. Unlike other substances, water reaches its maximum density at 39°Fahrenheit. At lower temperatures it expands. This is why pipes burst when they freeze, and how mere water possesses the power to crack rock.

When a pond freezes, the water closest to the air cools first. When the surface water reaches 39°F it sinks to the bottom. This process continues until all the water is 39°F, then the surface water

### Making the Most of Snow

Some mammals benefit from an ample snowfall. Rabbits, with their big snowshoe-like hind feet, travel with relative ease over the surface of the snow (unless it's very soft). It gives them a boost, enabling them to nibble on twigs and branches they wouldn't have been able to reach from the bare ground.

Voies (mousy rodents with truncated tails) generally have the most to fear from above as hawks and owls are their primary predators. In winter they live in tunnels beneath the snow which effectively shield them from being seen from a bird's eye view. When the snow begins to melt in the spring their tunnels are revealed in grassy areas.

In addition to providing visual cover, snow also insulates the ground, acting like a coat of down, protecting the soil surface from fluctuating air temperatures. This helps plant roots and hibernating animals survive. During winters when the soil freezes before the snow falls, greater

*Continued next page.*

## From the President...

The Friends extend special thanks to Dr. Karl Springob and all the other former Boy Scouts who camped at Kamp Henry Kohl and their families for their generous donations. Their donations have been used to purchase and plant trees as memorials on the site of the former Scout camp and around the lake. Kamp Henry Kohl existed from 1942-1951. The present bathhouse facility is located on the former camp site and these trees will be a wonderful addition to the present signage about the former camp.

The Friends also wish to take this opportunity to express thanks to Kuperus Farmside Gardens for their generous donation of a number of extra trees to this project.

The Friends sponsored their annual Open Hearth Cooking Day on October 27, 2007 at the Interpretive Center. Roberta Bramhall and her team of capable helpers did an excellent job as always. Despite the rainy weather good food and freshly-pressed cider was sampled by the interested visitors. Also thanks go to Susan Grossman for manning the sales tables at which a number of new items were available for purchase. Next year's Open Hearth Cooking day is scheduled for October 4th—we hope to see you there!

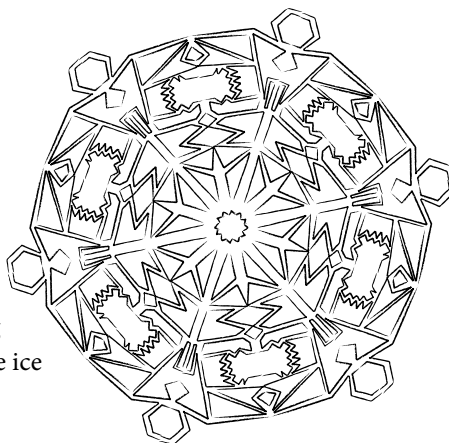
Mark your calendar for February, 2, 2008 when the Friends will sponsor an ice fishing demonstration to be held on Lake Marcia. Displays and hot chocolate will be available in the Interpretive Center.

- Myra Snook ❖

## Ice is Nice continued

numbers of plants and animals die.

Ice is an important part of the Kittatinny Ridge's ecology, and has been for thousands of years, and it helps as much as it hurts (except when I fall, then it just hurts). On February second the Friends of High Point will be celebrating ice in the park. Join us for ice fishing demonstrations and to learn more about the role ice has played in High Point's history.



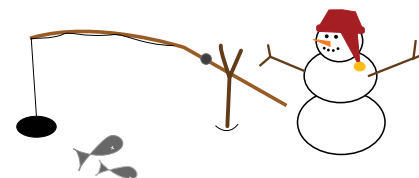
## Coming Events

February 2

### High Point on Ice

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Presented by Friends of High Point State Park. Michael Bender will conduct old-fashioned ice fishing demonstrations on Lake Marcia. A warm fire, snacks, and other icy activities will be available in the Interpretive Center. The Friends will also be selling hand-crafts and park souvenirs in the Interpretive Center.



March 8

### Annual Meeting of the Friends of High Point State Park

1:00 PM in the Interpretive Center.

All members encouraged to attend.



## Join the Friends of High Point State Park!

Membership is open to individuals, families, and businesses who are interested in and support our objectives. Membership year begins March 1 and ends February 28 of the following year.

☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ Individual \$8.00

☐ Family \$10.00

☐ Benefactor \$25.00

☐ Business \$50.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make checks payable to:  
Friends of High Point State Park  
PO Box 354  
McAfee, NJ 07428

Yes! I would like to volunteer

☐ Programs ☐ Fund raising ☐ Sales ☐ Other (please specify)