



A healthy riparian buffer zone.



Volunteers planting at Trees for Tribes site.

Trees for Tribes

Falling Waters Preserve was fortunate to become a Trees for Tribes planting site in 2011. The Hudson River Estuary Program coordinates with volunteers to plant trees and shrubs native to the region along tributaries that have lost their vegetation, creating what are called riparian buffers. These buffers help to prevent erosion by stabilizing stream banks and improve water quality by soaking up impurities before they can reach tributaries, and eventually the river. Wildlife also benefits greatly from the shelter, food and shade the vegetation provides.

Once the trees are planted, host groups like Scenic Hudson become responsible for their care. We'll be working hard to ensure the new vegetation at Falling Waters Preserve grows into thriving riparian buffers.

Why we protected this place...

Scenic Hudson chose to preserve this 168-acre tract of land in partnership with the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill and the Esopus Creek Conservancy not only because of its beauty and ecological importance, but also to help uphold an essential aspect of the Sisters' mission. In their land ethic, they pledge to use and share the earth in a responsible manner, particularly lands to which they hold title. This partnership allows all three organizations to further their complementary environmental goals.

Thank you for respecting the Sisters' privacy by staying on marked trails.



Become part of our online community at: www.scenichudson.org
 NatureNotes created by Susan Hereth and Abi Locatis (SCA).

NatureNotes

FALLING WATERS PRESERVE *Glasco*



Falling Waters Preserve provides splendid opportunities for strolling through beautiful scenery, listening to the "music" of the park's two namesake waterfalls, admiring views of the Hudson River and getting close to its shore. Falling Waters also is rich in history, and remains a place of rest and retreat for the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill. By partnering with Scenic Hudson and Esopus Creek Conservancy, the Sisters are able to share this striking place with others.

Who's Scenic Hudson?

We're a group of dedicated people who care about the Hudson River Valley. Starting in 1963, our founders fought to stop a power plant from destroying a mountain. Since then Scenic Hudson has continued protecting special places like this park. Now we're focused on Saving the Land That Matters Most—working with communities and other partners to preserve lands of the highest scenic, ecological and agricultural significance.

For more information about the 50-plus parks we've created or enhanced, visit www.scenichudson.org/parks.



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From high meadows to river bluffs to shoreline, Falling Waters Preserve drops more than 150 feet in elevation. As you walk its trails, traveling from high ground to the river's edge, notice how the land around you changes. Look at the trail map to see the elevation change.

High Ground

The grassy fields along the entrance road sit atop the preserve's highest ground. Many bird and insect species rely on grasslands for habitat and food. These fields are managed to maintain healthy wildlife populations and preserve the native plants on which they depend. A careful mowing rotation avoids disturbance during birds' nesting season and prevents the growth of fast-spreading woody and invasive plants.

To the north of the preserve, the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill maintain several buildings, which are not open to the public. For more than 130 years the Sisters have provided counsel and expertise in many areas—including education, health care, the arts and social services—to poor and underserved residents of the United States, Peru and Pakistan. The Sisters purchased this property in the 1930s so members would have a place to enjoy summer relaxation. Reverence for all creation is a strong tenet of the Sisters' beliefs. They partnered with Scenic Hudson so others could share their reverence for this magnificent land.

Going Down

Two waterfalls—one at either end of the preserve—give Falling Waters its name. Both are located on Hudson River tributaries that have no name. Both also are perennial streams, meaning they experience water flow year round except during conditions of extreme drought. Many forms of aquatic life, including insects, amphibians, small fish and mollusks, can survive in such streams even when the water level is very low. Mature hardwood trees line the streams' slopes, providing stability from erosion and shady cover during warm weather. Such forests also store more carbon than any other type of ecosystem, playing a critical role in keeping our air clean and making their conservation especially important.



Dragonflies often start their lives as nymphs in perennial streams.

odenevs.org / islandwood.org

Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill



www.critsite.com



Lowland

The flat land at the bottom of the Father C. Jorn Trail didn't exist until the early 1900s. The river here was filled in to allow construction of the Mulford Ice House (upper left). This huge, windowless building stored up to 10,000 tons of ice that was cut from the river each winter and shipped to New York City during warmer months to provide refrigeration. The icehouse was destroyed by fire in 1915. Remnant bricks are stamped with the word "Lent." The Lent family began making bricks out of Hudson River clay here in Glasco around 1828, though these bricks most likely were manufactured in Coeymans, 35 miles upriver. Davis Sedge, (pictured lower left), a plant designated a New York State threatened species, grows among the scattered bricks. Songbirds and waterfowl feed on its seeds. Please stay on marked trails so you don't disturb the wildlife.

Shoreline

At the mouth of both tributaries, waterfowl such as mallard ducks often can be found in spring and fall, during their annual migrations through the region. Nearby areas are popular with duck hunters, but Falling Waters provides refuge for these birds. During winter months, bald eagles perch in the trees along the river. They're scanning for fish, which they can spot up to a mile away. The spiky black objects littering the ground along the shoreline are water chestnut seeds. In the summer, this invasive aquatic plant spreads prolifically, lowering the water's oxygen content and making it difficult for other plants and animals to survive.



L-R: freeeaglepictures.com; Kevin Fleming; lamanyana

