

# Environmental Action Newsletter

What YOU Can Do for Our People & Planet  
Issue 4: Stewardship & Conservation

## Terminology Our Times ♦ Drew Langan

*Are we living in the Anthropocene? The Capitalocene? Or something else?*

This week's feature piece reminds us that few if any places on our planet remain completely free from human influence. Contemporary thinkers have spilled much ink trying to understand and chronicle modern civilization's relationship with the natural world. The neologisms that gain prominence in some circles often draw scorn and derision in others. For some, choosing the term anthropocene, "the age of humans", to

describe our times inspires hope that we can fix what we've broken through human ingenuity. For others it engenders dread: offering false hope while sparing, even worshipping, the systems and technologies that allowed for runaway greenhouse gas emissions in the first place.

You can read about the genesis of the term Anthropocene and its use in contemporary literature [here](#).

If you are particularly interested in this topic, I highly recommend Benjamin Kunkel's long-form article "[The Capitalocene](#)" in the London Review of Books.



### Earth Day Extravaganza!

*Sustainability Research Fellows  
Sat. April 22nd  
10am, Crumhenge  
Learn how to bird, tour the flora, or release your creativity at art & writing workshops!  
Get your hands dirty in the Crum Creek & discover previously unknown species!  
Free t-shirts for all who come*

### Tip

#### CARRY GLASS JARS

When shopping, you can place dry & wet goods into them

#### LIP BALM

Mix 2 parts coconut oil, 2 parts beeswax and 1 part shea butter in nonstick saucepan. Warm slowly until melted. Pour in container & allow to set for 6 hrs.

### DIY

#### WASTE + CARBON FOOTPRINT

### Fact

Cereal production not only contributes the most to food waste, but also carbon footprint

[fao.org](http://fao.org)

## Environmental Action Open House

*Hosted by the Environmental Studies Capstone*

*5:30-8pm, April 26th, Shane Lounge*

*Learn about environmental communication!*

*Prepare & sign up for the People's Climate March!*

*Make DIY toothpaste!*

*There will be chips, salsa and fruit*

## Crum Connections

### Christina Chen

#### Interview with Brittni Teresa '19

*Brittni Teresi is a sophomore psychology major and environmental studies minor currently working as a President's Sustainability Research Fellow (PSRF). Her initiatives on campus revolve around increasing student engagement in the Crum Woods, and making connections with sustainability initiatives in Swarthmore. This week, we talked to her about her PSRF initiative, the value of Crum Woods, and opportunities for student involvement on campus sustainability initiatives. Here are some highlights from our conversation:*



*Crum Woods, Swarthmore College (Taken by Brittni Teresa)*

#### What is your PSRF initiative?

My PSRF initiative is getting people more involved with the Crum Woods. A lot of this semester has been doing more research to try and figure out what are effective programs to get people more involved, and we are piloting them next week. We're going to be piloting a night walk in the woods, as well as a Crum Woods celebration with an art workshop in the woods and a bird walk. I'm also trying out how to work with the Swarthmore borough to get them more involved with the Crum Woods, and kind of see how we can use the woods as a connecting space between the campus and the borough.

#### What is special about having the Crum Woods on Swarthmore's campus?

In Delaware County, it's one of the woods that's left that's actually in a [relatively] good state. It also has a few unique species that that a lot of other places don't

have or are starting not to have. For example, the eastern hemlock—which is the state tree of Pennsylvania—is being destroyed by a disease that's going on throughout Pennsylvania. We still have a lot of really cool species that are starting to go extinct, so it's really important to take care of that. [The woods] can be used as an outdoor classroom at Swarthmore that gets more people involved in ecology.

#### How does Swarthmore compare with other institutions in terms of student engagement with the woods

Compared to other institutions, we definitely aren't interacting with our woods as much. Other campuses really do use their woods quite a bit. They have a huge connection between the biology department and any arboretum that they have, if they have an arboretum. And they have previous data sources available [that] biology students can actually access and...see different species that exist and things like that. So I'd like to help establish a connection between our bio department and the arboretum a little more. And then I'd also like to see more, perhaps, monthly programs in the woods to get people more involved. I think increasing recreational programming particularly, whether it be with tours or study breaks like the one we had with SGO this week... I think through increasing that first, you can get people more involved in other activities in the woods like clean-ups and stewardship.

#### Why do you think it's important for students to get involved in the Crum Woods?

Part of it is that I myself am a psychology major, and I care a lot about mental health. And for me, especially last year, the woods were really a place where I could come and clear my head. I remember having moments—I think everyone has felt like this [at some point]—like I am the admissions mistake...It's not a cure for everything, but I think by having people connect with the outdoors more instead of just kind of being holed up in buildings, and seeing that they do have a place in nature, can really increase mental health on campus as well as just help us we reconnect to the natural environment.

It [also] helps bring back the sustainability mindset to the natural environment. I think it's really important to change human behavior, but it's also important to kind

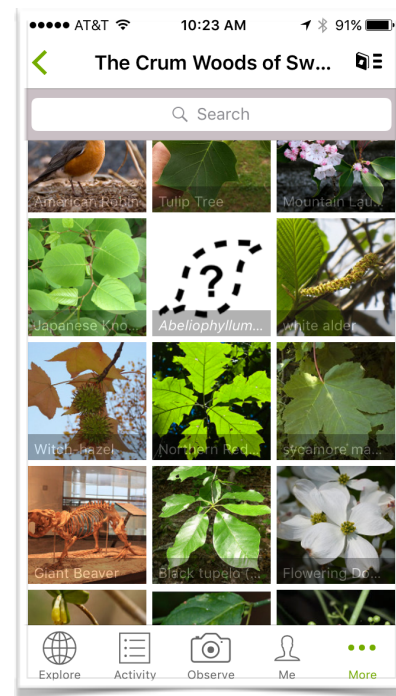
of show people some of the places why it's important. So CO2 emissions increase temperature, but what does that mean? I think by getting more involved in the woods, seeing how many invasive species are there, seeing how there are bird populations that don't have the right timing anymore to be out at the right time, and [how climate change] is affecting their populations...I think connecting people back to that and seeing how our behavior really is impacting natural environments gives more of a reason to care more about sustainability.

### How can students get involved in the Crum Woods?

Well, very tangibly getting involved in the Crum Woods would be going to the night walk next week., going to the Crum Creek clean up, and attending the Crum celebration. There's also an app called iNaturalist that has a project on the Crum Woods. You can search "Crum Woods" and upload pictures of various trees or animals that you see in the Crum Woods that you find interesting. And someone from the community can actually help identify it if you don't know what it is, and it gets added to pictures of things that people have seen in the woods. There's a whole guide on there to tell you different things that we have in the Crum as well.

### How has your experiences been working with the administration and staff as a PSRF fellow?

PSRF is really about trying to create, trying to show students that they have agency in making change and headway on sustainability projects, and really connecting us with stakeholders on campus who care a lot about projects but may not have the time to get them done. I think it's been a huge learning experience for both sides. In the beginning, I would say I had a moment where I felt like I was just kind of carrying out work that I didn't necessarily want to do. My project was a lot aimed towards data collection, and I started to feel like I was really just starting to carry out what the faculty wanted. But then I realized that when you have more conversations with people, you kind of...you show that you aren't saying things as a student who doesn't know anything. You have background. You have knowledge. Through more research you find data to support you...The faculty and staff really do want to listen to you and they do care about that. So part of it is really just having to speak up for yourself as a student, and advocate that and say that, "Yes, I have ideas that I want to carry out this way." In doing that, it's also been great because it gives me a lot more resources, and more access to higher administration. I get to tell Val



*Crum Woods page in iNaturalist to help identify plants and animals. (Available in mobile app stores!) (Brittini Teresa)*

Smith my ideas, and the Directors of Sustainability are supporting me in trying to figure out what I want to do. It gives me a lot more ability to organize projects.

### Would you recommend PSRF to future students interested in sustainability?

Definitely. It's a lot of work, so you got to make sure you have the time, but it's worth it!

## FOR MORE WONDER, REWILD THE WORLD

CHRISTINA CHEN & SID KAKKAR

[George Monbiot](#) reimagines conservation as "rewilding," which goes beyond preservation to the mass restoration of ecosystems by reintroducing apex predators. Instead of imposing a fixed idea of what the "right" ecosystem looks like, "rewilding" simply means bringing back missing species and reversing other ways in which humans has sought to tame nature, but otherwise stepping back and letting nature decide.

**Food for Thought:** Some people have criticized the concept of "uninhabited wilderness" as erasing the history of indigenous people and perpetuating historical injustices, as modern preservation practices sometimes displace people who live there. How can practices of "rewilding" avoid perpetuating systems of oppression and instead serve as a radical space of hope and action?



## Call Your Rep's: Scott Pruitt Edition

Here are this week's most controversial bills related to environmental issues.

*Call Scott Pruitt, the EPA administrator and have your voices heard!*



**Who to call: Scott Pruitt**  
**+1 202-564-4700**

### Tips:

- ▶ Say your name, city, and zip code to the staffer
- ▶ Mention why you care! Add something related to why this bill matters to you
- ▶ If leaving a voicemail, give your full address
- ▶ Remember to thank them for their time & attention!

Go to [5calls.org](http://5calls.org) to learn more!

## Ban the Use of Brain-Damaging Pesticides on Farms

### *What does this pesticide do?*

The insecticide chlorpyrifos, sold by Dow Chemical, causes neurological damage, autoimmune disorders, and impedes fetal development.

The chemical has been banned in residential areas since 2001.

Much of the residue from chlorpyrifos found on crops exceeds safety limits, endangering farmworkers and their children.

Scott Pruitt, the new EPA administrator, ignored the EPA's recommendation in 2016 that the ban be applied across the agricultural settings.

Environmental and farmer advocacy groups argue that Pruitt's decision ignores scientific evidence in favor of Dow Chemical and puts farmworkers and children at risk.



## Oppose the US Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement

### *What happened?*

In 2016, 143 countries including the United States formally committed to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

The agreement is designed to limit the increase in global temperature to below 2°C.

Scott Pruitt, head of the EPA under Trump, ignores overwhelming scientific evidence that climate change is real and a threat to the future of the Earth.

Pruitt advocates for the US to renege on the agreement and ignore the emission targets in favor of protecting the interests of fossil fuel companies.

