

#### **41) Shaver's Creek Environmental Center**

Informal Education

3400 Discovery Road, Petersburg, PA 16669 (about 12 miles from University Park campus)

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Shaver's Creek Environmental Center (SCEC) is situated within Penn State's 7,000-acre Stone Valley Forest in Huntingdon County, PA. Features of SCEC include an indoor exhibit room containing live animals (e.g., reptiles and amphibians) and environmentally themed exhibits, a raptor area with non-releasable birds of prey available for public viewing, many miles of walking trails set within a mixed hardwood forest, several overlooks of 72-acre Lake Perez, and native plant landscaping on the main property.

SCEC staff serve the local community of central Pennsylvania through day-long and residential environmental education programs with K-12 students, annual festivals to celebrate the seasonal cycle, public programs focused on birdwatching, plant science, and other outdoor-related leisure pursuits, and live animal interpretive programs. Staff are also involved in and contribute to several citizen science projects including eBird, Christmas Bird Count, Project FeederWatch, Project NestWatch, Hawkwatches, Monarch Tagging, eDNA, PA Amphibian and Reptile Survey, and Frog Calling Survey.

In addition to community outreach efforts, SCEC faculty teach many Penn State courses within the departments of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management (RPTM), Forestry (FOR), Science Education (SCIED), and Ecosystem Science and Management (ESM). The AURORA program is Shaver's Creek's outdoor orientation program that engages incoming Penn State freshmen with backpacking experiences in central Pennsylvania, New England, and the Pacific Northwest. SCEC classes are unique in that they often blend coursework with the center's community programs so that undergraduate students experience real-world teaching and leadership experiences.