



JARRETT NATURE CENTER

Horsham Township

The Jarrett Nature Center, a unique educational feature of the Hatboro-Horsham School District, earned a 2007 Land Development Award. The nature center received the award for the outstanding vision, extensive collaboration, and commitment involved in the successful creation of this popular outdoor classroom.

History

This 13-acre site, situated between the Hatboro-Horsham High School and Simmons Elementary School, contains environmentally sensitive lands, which include extensive floodplain, wetlands, woodlands, and a tributary to Park

Creek. The outdoor classroom was named in honor of the Jarrett family, who originally owned a farm on this property dating back to 1798. The dairy barn, remnants of a farm pond, and an outdoor fireplace are all that remain of the farm.

Concept

After many years of planning by volunteers, administrators, teachers, and the Home and School Association at Simmons, the concept for the Jarrett Nature Center was realized. A master plan was developed through a consultant and many committed volunteers. This





outdoor classroom would be used by teachers, students, and the community for environmental education, nature appreciation, and passive recreation. The concept was to teach by real example in multiple disciplines such as science, the environment, art, and culture. Due to its location in the school district, the Jarrett Nature Center is accessible to many students.

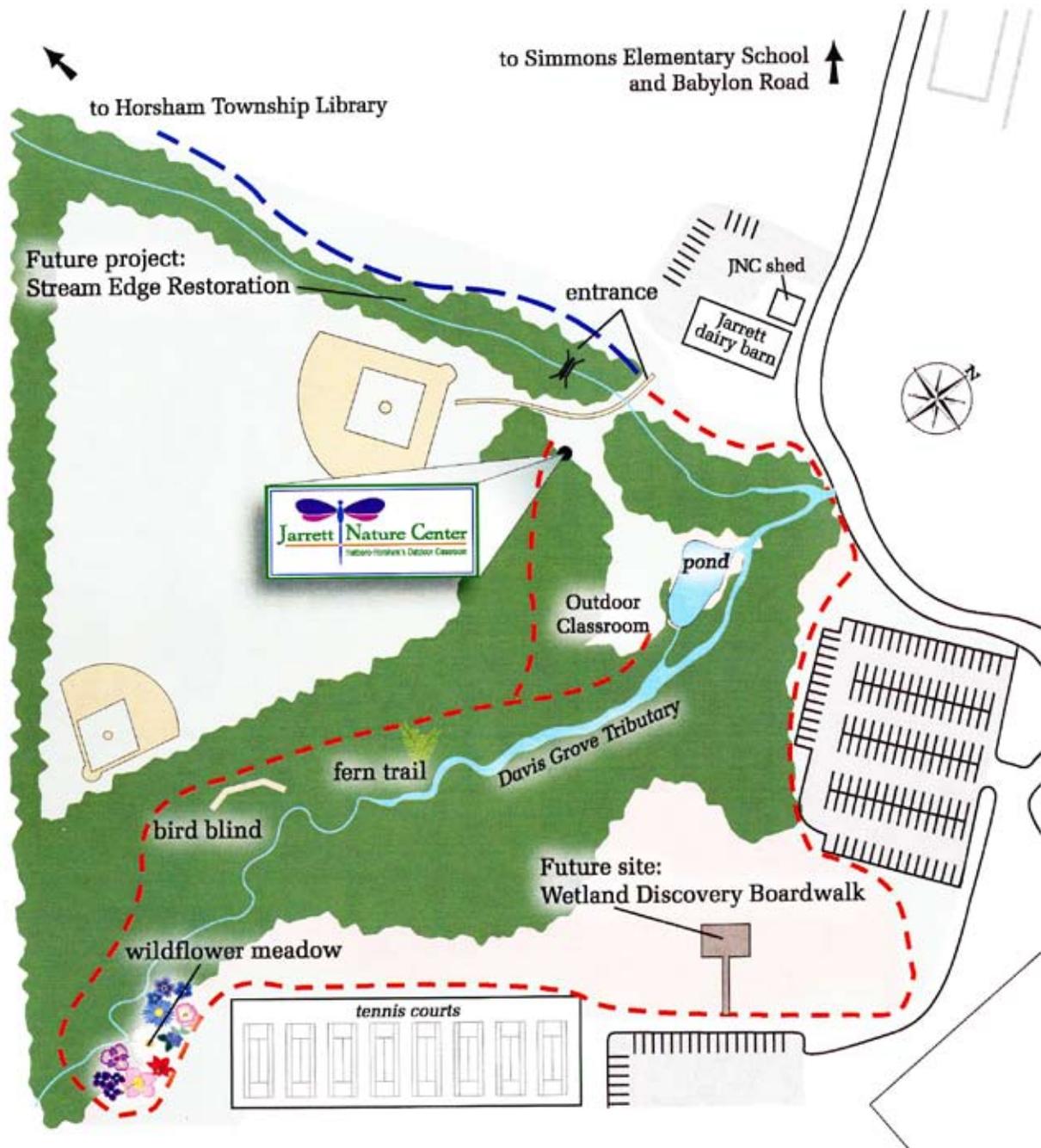
Improvements

Significant funding from various public and private groups, as well as the work of dedicated volunteers, helped accomplish many improvements over the past several years. The highest priority was the restoration of a former farm pond. Funds were raised, and the pond and weir structure were completely rebuilt. The pond was enhanced with plantings of native and aquatic vegetation. Woodlands on the site were restored with help from student, community, and local business volunteers. Volunteer organizations also perform regular cleanups, remove invasive species, and plant native vegetation. Two bird blinds, designed and constructed as Eagle Scout

projects, encourage the study of nature. A naturalized meadow, created from an adjacent lawn, also provides many educational opportunities. Attractive, informative signs that describe the various habitats were designed by a high school art student and purchased with a grant from a local company. A loop trail, also built by volunteers, meanders through various environments on the site. This trail will eventually connect to the Horsham Library and the Power Line Trail outlined in Horsham Township's open space plan. Future improvements include a boardwalk through the wetlands, improved access, stream bank restoration, removal of invasive species, and future trail connections.

The Jarrett Nature Center has become a valuable teaching and learning resource for the school district. It supports curriculum development with programs and activities that encourage imagination and appreciation of the natural environment. This appealing outdoor classroom offers students and teachers an exceptional learning environment and is an asset to the school district.





Location

Babylon and Horsham Road
(Situated between the Hatboro-Horsham High School and
Simmons Elementary School)
Horsham Township
Montgomery County

Project Data

Land Use

Nature Center – Outdoor classroom for
Hatboro-Horsham School District

Tract Size

13 acres

Key Features

- Master planning
- Creative educational concept
- Habitat enhancement
- Collaboration with public and private groups and volunteers

Owner

Hatboro-Horsham School District
229 Meetinghouse Road
Horsham, PA 19044

Planner/Landscape Architect

LandConcepts Group
593 Skippack Pike, Suite 300
Blue Bell, PA 19422

Engineer

Hibbeln Engineering Company, L.L.C.
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