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## Creek Stomp explores what's in the water

By [roch](#) on August 23, 2017



Participants in the Chiques Creek Watershed Alliance's Creek Stomp search Rife Run for aquatic life to indicate the health of the stream.

Manheim's Mummau Park buzzed with activity on Wednesday, Aug. 9. The park's pavilion and the adjacent stream, Rife Run, were the hub of activity during the Chiques Creek Watershed Alliance's annual Creek Stomp.

An estimated 90 children and adults enjoyed the opportunity to cool off in the stream while looking for organisms to scoop up under the supervision of Lancaster County Conservation District watershed specialist Matt Koffroth.

"It's good to see so many people getting a first-hand look at one of the streams in the watershed," said Steve Gergely, CCWA president. "Events like this are fun, but also educational. Hopefully they'll leave with a new appreciation about the importance of maintaining good water quality."

Among those excited about the opportunity to explore the stream were Archer and Grant Grissinger. Although the two boys visit the park frequently and were attracted to the creek, they had only seen it from the stream bank or the small observation platform. The Creek Stomp was the first time their mom allowed them to explore the stream. They netted several small clams, which they excitedly showed to their mom.

Shepherd Todd, who had participated in last year's Creek Stomp as well, shared his stream finds. He proudly displayed and identified four crayfish, two small fish, and a mayfly.



Archer Grissinger gets a close-up view of the clams he and his brother, Grant, netted during the Creek Stomp. (Photos by Rochelle Shenk)

After collecting samples from the stream, children and their parents gathered in the pavilion to further examine their finds with Koffroth. He explained how their finds relate to the health of the stream.

The clams that many participants found are not necessarily good. While they do filter water they are not native to streams in the state.

"Native clams are about the size of your pinky nail. The clams we found today are larger," Koffroth explained. "They're native to China and shouldn't be here."

He pointed out that crayfish, which many people found, are a good find as are the number of small fish, mayflies, and dragonflies.

"Dragonflies are our friends. They live for two weeks, which is longer than mayflies, and they eat lots of mosquitoes," Koffroth said.