




# THE STEWARD

Protecting and Preserving the Ohio River Corridor

[www.westernwildlifecorridor.org](http://www.westernwildlifecorridor.org)

Spring 2011

## Calendar of Events

**Friday, April 1, 6 pm - 9 pm**  
Fifth Annual Wildflower Festival  
Delhi Senior Center 

**Saturday, April 9, 9 am - noon**  
Habitat Restoration  
Bender Mountain

**Sunday, April 10, 1 pm**  
Wildflower Hike  
Delshire Preserve

**Saturday, April 23, 9 am - noon**  
Habitat Restoration  
Shady Lane Preserve

 **Saturday, April 30, all day**  
7th Annual Flower-a-thon Fundraiser

**Saturday, May 7, 9 am - noon**  
Trail construction  
Bender Mountain

**Saturday May 7, 10 am-12:30pm**  
Space Invaders of the GREEN Kind  
Habitat Restoration for Young People  
Bender Mountain

**Saturday, May 21, 9 am to noon**  
Habitat Restoration  
Sister's Hill

**Saturday, June 11, 9 am - noon**  
Habitat Restoration  
Whitetail Woods

**Saturday, June 25, 9 am to noon**  
Habitat Restoration  
Bender Mountain

## PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

By Tim Sisson

### Why Pick on Honeysuckle?

You've no doubt noticed that we at Western Wildlife Corridor are obsessed with Amur honeysuckle. We have many, many projects a year where we do our best to get rid of it. We brag about the amount of land that we have cleared it from.

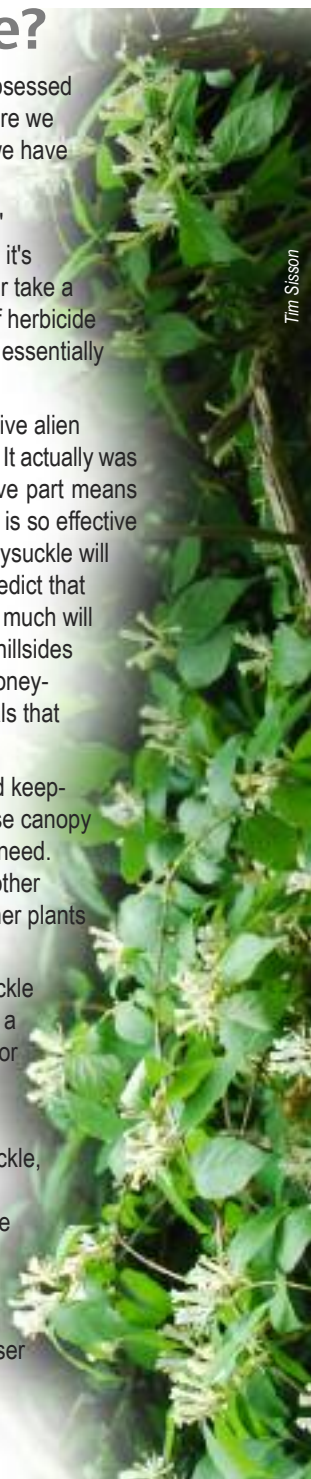
But what is the answer to the question "Why pick on honeysuckle?" The standard reply I usually give is that it kills the other plants. But, it's rooted in the ground so that it can't go over and stomp on a violet or take a pruner and cut off a new oak sapling - right? It can't grab a bottle of herbicide and spray a plant to kill it - right? Well, that last question is actually essentially true, which is part of the problem.

Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*) is what is known as an invasive alien plant. The alien part of this term means that it isn't native to our area. It actually was introduced into the US from Eurasia in the late 1850s. The invasive part means that it will "invade" an area and displace the native plants. In fact, it is so effective at this that the ground under a well established stand of amur honeysuckle will be bare; no other plants can exist there. In fact, expert botanists predict that if we don't keep honeysuckle out, eventually the forests we love so much will be gone, because tree saplings will not grow under it. Imagine the hillsides in our Ohio River valley covered with nothing but a solid stand of honeysuckle. How boring; how utterly destructive to the plants and animals that we now enjoy so much.

Honeysuckle does its dirty work by leafing out first in the spring and keeping its leaves the longest in the fall. In addition, it forms a very dense canopy of foliage. The result is that other plants don't get the sunlight they need. In addition, yes, they manufacture a type of herbicide that attacks other plants. This two-pronged approach is deadly and eventually the other plants wither away.

One more thing. Contrary to what we hear so often, amur honeysuckle doesn't help stabilize steep slopes. For one thing, it does not have a deep root system; it has a "clump" of roots that are fairly shallow. For another thing, that bare soil under honeysuckle gives just the opposite result, it promotes soil erosion.

So, the answer to the question is that if we do not contain honeysuckle, it will quite literally change life as we know it. We will not have the magnificent forests and beautiful wildflowers to hike through or drive past or enjoy next to our homes. We will not have the great variety of birds, mammals, insects, and so forth to enjoy, because they depend on natural areas and native plants. Since foliage is where we get life-sustaining oxygen, this will be diminished due to the lesser quantity of leaves with shrubs only.



Tim Sisson

Continued, p. 2

# PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL, CONTINUED FROM P. 1

So, that's why WWC is obsessed with honeysuckle. That's why a new group, Connecting Community Conservation Volunteers ([www.cccv.us](http://www.cccv.us)), is forming to mobilize the community to control honeysuckle. The next time you see mention of a project to control honeysuckle, either with WWC or another organization, please consider giving a little time to help out. Take my word for it; whacking honeysuckle is enjoyable work with a group of like-minded people (sort of like the barn raisings of pioneer times). It is also one of the most effective ways I can think of to get whole body exercise (as good as a visit to the gym, and free too!). The best reason is that you will be helping with an extremely worthwhile cause - a way of truly making a difference. ♡

Yes, this pile of honeysuckle is taller than the people that cut it!



## NATURALIST'S CORNER

The Luna moth (*Actias luna*) is one of the most beautiful creatures we have in the Western Wildlife Corridor. It is a large moth in the silk moth family with a wingspan of 3 to 4 inches and long tails on its lower wings, yellowish green to pale bluish green in color. It is found in woodlands in every state east of the Great Plains.

Luna moths attach their eggs to the leaves of birch, hickory, persimmon,

have larger more feathery antennae, which they use to detect the pheromones. Because Luna moths are nocturnal, it is rare to see them in the daytime. They hide from predators by mimicking leaves on the ground. One predator that eats Luna moths as they fly at night is the owl.

The number of Luna moths has decreased since the 1960s, due to habitat

destruction and the increased use of street lights. Luna moths are highly attracted to light, and lights disrupt mating.

sumac, sweet gum and walnut trees. Green caterpillars emerge ten days later and eat the tree leaves. The caterpillars molt their skin five times in four to five weeks. Then the caterpillar encloses itself in a paper-thin brown cocoon made of silk and leaves. It metamorphoses into a brown pupa. After two to three weeks, the pupa skin splits, and the Luna moth emerges. In our area, there are two generations of Luna moths each summer. They overwinter as pupa.

The Luna moth has no mouth parts. It only lives about a week, long enough to mate and lay eggs. Females use pheromones to attract males. The males

## The Luna Moth

by Mary Uhlenbrock

Lucky for the Luna moth, WWC is preserving the wooded habitat it needs to survive. And lucky for us, if we happen to see a beautiful Luna moth. ♡

*This Luna moth was found on Bender Mountain by Dennis Dearwater last summer. Even with the long tails on the lower wings missing, it is still a beautiful and rare sight in daylight.*

## Eagle projects abound on the new Bender Mountain Preserve!

By Adele Grout

Eagle Scout candidate Michael Harvey of Troop 418 (located in Miami Heights, OH) chose to continue to build out the trail on Bender Mountain for his Eagle project. This trail was started in the spring of 2010 by Eagle Scout Travis Holtman, also of Troop 418.

Michael took on the task of putting in the second part of the trail which starts where Travis left off and connects to a third section that leads to the top of the Bender Mountain. Michael's team of workers, consisting of scouts from his troop, friends and family members, used a variety of tools to cut and form the trail. Michael's section of trail includes several segments of stone steps. There are three groups of stone steps with five or more stairs and additional smaller sections of stairs on the trail. The stones were found on the side of Bender Mountain and Michael, along with his crew, collected the stones and placed them in position. His work will allow easier navigation of the trail for future hikers and visitors. Michael also eliminated a huge amount of honeysuckle plants along the site to restore the trail area. The portion of the trail he constructed is about 1/4 of a mile long.

We wish Michael much success as he finishes up the remaining work as an Eagle Scout candidate and we hope very soon to hear that he has achieved scouting's highest honor, the Eagle Scout Rank. Thanks, Michael, for your excellent work on the Bender Mountain Preserve Trail. 🏹



Here's Mike and part of his crew prying a huge rock out of the ice.

Tim Sisson

## Committee Chairpersons

### Land Stewardship:

**Tim Sisson**

**513.922.2104**

### Outreach

**Leesa Miller**

**513.284.1046**

### Fundraising

**Rebecca Sisson**

**859.512.1983**

### Newsletter:

**Mary Uhlenbrock**

**513.382.8683**

**Jennifer Doerger**

**513.469-6380**

## MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION

Anyone can make a difference by leaving a lasting gift to conservation. By including the Western Wildlife Corridor in your estate plan, you can have a real impact on the future of our natural world. Some of the techniques for doing this, listed below, are very simple:

1. Name WWC as the beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k) or Pension Plan.
2. Name WWC as the beneficiary of an insurance policy.
3. Make a donation of real property, securities or cash through your will or trust.

If you have any questions, please call 513.922.2104.

## *Your help is needed!*

It's a big job putting on the Wildflower Festival. We have a loyal crew of volunteers who do this, but we could always use more.

One particular need this year is for a photographer to document how much fun everyone is having!

If you can help out, please call Marianne Brater at 513.347.3125 or Debbie Scudder at 513.244.2532.

*Thanks!*

## Enjoy the Western Wildlife Corridor ..... Learn why it's so important!

### Habitat Restoration +PLUS!

Why habitat restoration? Sometimes the biggest threat to our preserves is invasion by alien plant species. Plants such as Amur (or bush) honeysuckle, euonymus and garlic mustard can produce such a dense cover of foliage that native plants cannot survive. We've been told that Amur honeysuckle even secretes a toxin that kills native plants! When we restore the habitat in one of our preserves, we remove these invasive alien plants so native plants and animals can thrive.

#### **Saturday, April 9, 9 am-noon Bender Mountain**

Help us continue clearing a new area on the "mountain" WWV purchased last year.

#### **Saturday, April 23, 9 am-noon Shady Lane Preserve**

In addition to honeysuckle, Shady Lane Preserve is being invaded by dreaded garlic mustard. Today we will be fending off attacks by both of these!

#### **Saturday, May 7, 9 am-noon Bender Mountain**

Our first ever trail making project on the "mountain" was a huge success. The project today will focus on completing the trails here plus repairing any damage done by the winter storms. We'll also share a light lunch with the young people who are doing a project here the same day.

#### **Saturday, May 21, 9 am-noon Sister's Hill**

#### **Saturday, June 11, 9 am-noon Whitetail Woods**

#### **Saturday, June 25, 9 am-noon Habitat Restoration at Bender Mountain**

(on the South side off Hillside)  
We will have another pizza and drinks "tail-gate" party at noon to celebrate our habitat restoration successes of the season.

Contact Tim at 513.922.2104  
or [tsisson@fuse.net](mailto:tsisson@fuse.net) for more information.

#### **Fri., April 1, 6 pm to 9 pm 5th Annual Wildflower Festival Delhi Senior Center**

This family event will feature nature games and activities, a wildflower plant and seed sale, a painting class, wildflower educational material, food, presentations by local environmental organizations and educational games for children.

Contact Rebecca at 859.512.1983 or [rsisson654@zoomtown.com](mailto:rsisson654@zoomtown.com) to learn more about this enjoyable event or to ask about participating.

#### **Sunday, April 10, 1 pm Wildflower Hike Delshire Preserve**

If you want to see wildflowers, this is the time and the place. The hillsides here are covered with many species of beautiful spring wildflowers.

For more on this event, also a "tune-up" for contestants in our Flower-a-thon, contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or [tsisson@fuse.net](mailto:tsisson@fuse.net).

#### **Saturday, April 30, all day 7th Annual Flower-a-thon Fundraiser**

In this exciting event, participants compete to identify the wildflowers of the region and learn more about them. Each participant solicits pledges from friends, relatives, neighbors, businesses or corporations for each species found during that day.

The day begins at 8 am with breakfast around the fire at Embshoff Woods Park. Teams then set off to explore the Ohio River valley, to search for and identify wildflowers. An awards dinner at 5 pm with a prize raffle caps off the day. The team identifying the most wildflowers will receive the event's coveted Golden Trillium Award.

To register, (fee of \$10 per person required), contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or [tsisson@fuse.net](mailto:tsisson@fuse.net).

#### **Saturday May 7, 10 am-12:30pm Space Invaders of the GREEN Kind Habitat Restoration for Young People Bender Mountain (concurrent with regular habitat restoration from 9am-noon)**

This is a special habitat restoration project designed for young people. Learn how alien plants harm the wildflowers in our forest and how you can help. Play an educational game to learn about the dreaded garlic mustard invading our forests! See a demonstration on how to remove this threat, and try out what you learned in our nature preserve. Light lunch served at noon.

Free T-shirts will be reserved for the first 30 student participants who register and complete the project. All participants will receive a free activity patch and are welcome to stay as our guest for a pizza lunch. Program is excellent for Scouts and may count towards official badge requirements. Families and Scout groups welcome. Designed for ages 8 and up. Sturdy shoes and long pants recommended. All children must be monitored by their parent or Scout Leader at all times. RSVP necessary for T-shirt, and recommended to guarantee a patch.

RSVP and questions: Leesa Miller, [momshine2000@yahoo.com](mailto:momshine2000@yahoo.com), 513.284.1046. RSVPs should include name of child, parent or scout leader, phone number and t-shirt size.



Tim Sisson

*At our spring hike last year we found a hillside covered with wild hyacinth.*

# Jumpstart Your Spring!

By Mary Uhlenbrock

Do you have cabin fever? Would you like to make your yard more attractive to birds and butterflies? Looking for a place to entertain your kids for free? Then come to the Wildflower Festival!

Adding native plants to your yard will increase the number and variety of birds and butterflies that visit. At the Wildflower Festival, there's a nice variety of perennials and shrubs at reasonable prices, and people who can advise you on what plants will do well in your yard. The plants I bought last year thrived in my yard.

Just what were those little blooms peeking out from beneath the leaves at the edge of the path last spring; the ones that were gone once you got around to visiting again? Blooming early and disappearing almost before you know it, spring ephemerals are a class of perennials deserving more atten-



Here's an example of a picture by the person giving our painting class.

tion. Learn more about these fleeting wonders when you attend the Spring Ephemerals presentation by Civic Garden Center horticulturist Paul Koloszar. Please call 513.284.1046 to RSVP by March 29.

The popular watercolor painting class taught by Sally Sisson Anderson, WWC artist in residence, will be offered again this year. The hour-long class will focus on a scene with wildflowers. Please call 513.353.2708 to register and to get the supply list.

Children love the Wildflower Festival. There are fun games, crafts and face painting. We get rave reviews about the children's activities and they get better every year.

Many local conservation groups will be there. It's a great opportunity to find out about outdoor activities and meet people who are interested in wildflowers.

Pizza by the slice, homemade baked goods and drinks are available for sale throughout the event.

So if you haven't been to the Wildflower Festival, I guarantee you will enjoy it. See you on **April 1** at the **Delhi Senior Center at 647 Neeb Road from 6-9 pm.** 🐦

# A Wildflower Extravaganza

By Rebecca Sisson

The Seventh Annual Flower-a-thon will be held on Saturday, April 30th. The Flower-a-thon is an all-day event, but you can come when you want and leave when you want. We meet for a continental breakfast at Embshoff Woods in the morning. By 8:00 am, the coffee will be perked and a roaring fire will be burning. After



Our team members always have a good time!

breakfast, we head off into the woods to start our count. The idea is to find as many different species of flowering wild plants as possible in the Western Wildlife Corridor, including any wildflower, bush or tree that is flowering on that day or has flowered in the current season. Participants ask friends, family members and businesses to pledge an amount per species of wildflower found. Pledges of a fixed amount are also welcome. Last year, the winning Cincinnati Wild Flower Preservation Society team spotted 112 species.

There are many teams that would enjoy having new members and it's a great way to learn about wildflowers, so don't be shy if you would like to come along. Each year we learn more species and increase our counts, but most of us started out as novices. It's okay to register on the day of the event. You will be welcomed and added to a team. Depending on the team and the individual members, the count may take you into the afternoon, or all the way to the awards dinner at 5:00 pm at Earth Connection. The team that finds the most wildflower species is awarded the coveted Golden Trillium Award. Everyone at the dinner receives a wildflower plant to take home. There is a \$10 per person fee to register for the Flower-a-thon.

Please join us. It is our biggest fundraiser and the money raised is used to preserve wildlife habitat in the Western Wildlife Corridor. We hope to see you there! 🐦



## A Dormant Splendor Awakening

By Wesley Paul Wiemann

When all the honeysuckle is gone  
The hiding remnant flowers begin to bloom  
upon our Bender Mountain  
Larkspur - Trillium - Jack in the pulpit.  
It's magic.

Our trail uncovers secret scenes  
High above the valley streams and river far below.  
A symphony of colors spring forth just far you  
When all the buds and blooms at once  
open up to view.



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Tim Sisson

Sunset over the Western Wildlife Corridor.

***Please indicate how you would like to help!***

**JOIN WESTERN WILDLIFE CORRIDOR 2010-2011**

New Membership    Renewal

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution at the following membership level:

___ \$20 Individual	___ \$30 Family	___ \$75 Supporting
___ \$50 Organization	___ \$100 Patron	___ \$500 Sponsoring
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**DONATE TO THE LAND ACQUISITION FUND**

Enclosed is my tax deductible donation for the land acquisition fund \$\_\_\_\_\_

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Help with Habitat Restoration    Help with Outreach and other needs

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*Thank you for supporting the Western Wildlife Corridor's mission  
to preserve the scenic beauty and natural resources of the Ohio River Valley!*