



THE STEWARD

Protecting and Preserving the Ohio River Corridor

www.westernwildlifecorridor.org

Spring 2012

Calendar of Events

Friday, April 13, 6pm to 9pm

Sixth Annual Wildflower Festival
College of Mt. St. Joseph

Sunday, April 15, 2pm

Wildflower Hike
Delshire Preserve

Saturday, April 21, 9am to noon

Habitat Restoration
Shady Lane Preserve

Saturday, April 28, half day or all day

Eighth Annual Flower-a-thon Fundraiser
All over the Western Wildlife Corridor

Saturday, May 19, 9am to noon

Habitat Restoration
Anders Court

Sunday, May 20, 2pm

Hike through old growth forest
Bender Mountain

Saturday, June 2, 9am to noon

Habitat Restoration
Bender Mountain

Saturday June 16, 9am to 3pm

What's Up Under Your Trees? Native
Shrub Workshop
Earth Connection

Saturday, June 23, 9am to noon

Habitat Restoration
Whitetail Woods

Saturday, June 30, 9am to noon

Habitat Restoration
Shady Lane

PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

By Tim Sisson

A BIG YEAR FOR WESTERN WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

2012 has started out amazingly well, and promises to get even better. We started with a winter hike on January 29, which attracted a crowd of more than sixty people. Our trek started with a stroll down Sister's Hill. Then it got interesting with a climb up Bender Mountain on our new Paw Paw Gap trail. Everybody made it and was exhilarated by the climb. We then hiked out the ridge trail to the overlook, where we enjoyed the view of the Ohio and Rapid Run Creek valleys. A hike back the ridge trail to the starting point completed the day.

The presentation of the movie "Green Fire" about the legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold followed on February 19. It was inspiring to hear how much he accomplished in an era where environmentalism was not a strong force. If you get a chance, read his book "A Sand County Almanac." I'm sure it will help you understand why Western Wildlife Corridor's work to protect the Ohio River valley is so important.

The WWC Winter meeting on February 28 continued our run of great events, with another crowd of over 60 people. Attendees learned about the progress we are making with our trail construction and two projects to protect properties. Then, Meg Riestenberg gave a very, very interesting talk on Greater Cincinnati's geological history. Meg knows her stuff and is really good at presenting it in a way that is so understandable. Everyone enjoyed the evening immensely.

Well, that's the past. What are we planning for the future?

Our next big event is our Wildflower Festival on April 13. This will be our sixth festival and it truly promises to be bigger and better than ever before. Our festivals over the last couple of years have had very interesting displays, native plants for sale, and children's activities that were big hits. There was one problem - we had outgrown the space at the Delhi Community Center. We have fixed that problem this year by moving to the College of Mount St. Joseph, where we will have over twice as much room for our activities, and much more parking. We have commitments for more vendors and displays, so this year's festival will surely be the best yet.

Our Flower-a-thon on April 28 will continue an eight year tradition of exploring our corridor. We

are again planning an extravagant dinner at the day's end. With all the rain last year and the mild winter, I'll bet the wildflowers will be extraordinary this year, making this one of the most enjoyable Flower-a-thons ever.

The year's last big event will be our 20th Anniversary, to be held this fall. Twenty years ago we started with a vision of a beautiful forested corridor that would be protected forever. After 20 years, we will celebrate our successes as we make that vision a reality.

If you have attended any of our events this year, you know they have been really enjoyable. If you haven't joined us yet, I hope you can attend some events in the future. Our listings in this issue of the Steward provide details and contact info. I hope to see you soon! 



Leesa Miller

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

Friday, April 13, 6pm to 9pm Sixth Annual Wildflower Festival College of Mount St. Joseph

This family event will feature nature games and activities for children, a wildflower plant sale, a painting class, and presentations by local environmental organizations. Contact Rebecca at 859.512.1983 or rsisson654@zoomtown.com to learn more about this enjoyable event or to inquire about participating.

Sunday, April 15, 2pm 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, which is also a "tune-up" for contestants in our Flower-a-thon, contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net.

Saturday, April 28, half day or all day Eighth Annual Flower-a-thon Fundraiser

In this fun event, participants compete to identify the wildflowers of the region. Beginners can join an experienced team to learn more about wildflowers. Each participant solicits pledges from friends, relatives, neighbors, businesses or corporations for each species found during that day.

You can begin your day at 8am with a breakfast around the fire at Embshoff Woods Park, or join us at 1pm at the gravel pull-off on Bender Road. Teams will explore the Ohio River valley to search for and identify wildflowers. A gourmet catered dinner and a raffle cap off the day. The team identifying the most wildflowers will receive the event's coveted Golden Trillium Award. To register, (fee of \$15 per person required), contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net.

Sunday, May 20, 2pm Spring Hike Bender Mountain

Today we'll hike along the slope of Bender Mountain to get to a very special old growth forest. We'll then wander up to the ridge top and hike over to the Paw Paw Gap trail which will return us to the starting point. The wildflowers will still be excellent and the views from the top of the mountain will be spectacular!

Contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net with questions.

Saturday, June 16, 9am to 3pm Earth Connection What's Up Under Your Trees? Native Shrub Workshop \$8.00 (includes lunch)

Please join us to learn more about native plants that grow under the canopy of large trees in Eastern Forests (RSVP Kathy McDonald at Kathy@cincinnatiabirds.com or call 513.941.6497). Plants in the understory layer consist of a mixture of seedlings and saplings of canopy trees together with understory shrubs and herbs. This is a vital layer when recreating natural habitats in landscapes. You will learn what shrubs work well in your yard or restoration project, and what to plant to provide food for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

Learn the best way to eradicate invasive species and what plants best replace them. We'll also talk about conservation, local efforts to monitor our state nature preserves, and how you can help! Speakers include Chris McCullough, Christine Hadley, Debi Wolterman, and more. We will also have some shrubs for sale. Hikes to see native shrubs and understory trees in native wooded habitats will be led by Tim Sisson. The event is presented by Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society, CCCV (Connecting Community Conservation Volunteers), Greater Cincinnati Wild Ones, Midwest Native Plant Society and Western Wildlife Corridor.

Directions: Earth Connection, 370 Need Rd, Cincinnati, OH (across from Mt. St. Joseph College in Delhi). About 15 minutes from downtown Cincinnati. Go West on Route 50 River Road (the 6th street viaduct). Stay on River Road until a traffic light at Fairbanks. Turn right and go just over 4 miles to Neeb Road. (Fairbanks becomes Delhi Ave.) Turn left on Neeb, and left into the very first driveway. Go up the hill and turn right. Earth Connection is the leftmost building across the parking lot. If you get lost, call Kathy at 513.748.0281.

Earth Connection is a solar, energy efficient facility that was environmentally designed.

Join us for Habitat Restorations!

Why habitat restoration?

Many times 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 that native plants and animals can thrive.

Contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net for more information.

Sat., April 21, 9am to noon Shady Lane Preserve

In addition to honeysuckle, Shady Lane Preserve is being invaded by dreaded garlic mustard. Today we will be fending off both of these! Contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net with questions.

Sat., May 19, 9am to noon Anders Court

This is a small property off Anderson Ferry near Delhi Pike that has some huge Burr Oaks and a winding creek. It could be a really nice "pocket park". For this project we will begin cleaning it up and removing alien plants. Contact Greg at 513.404.5250 or gfl2376@gmail.com with questions.

Sat., June 2, 9am to noon Bender Mountain

For this project we'll probably concentrate on removing the dreaded Garlic Mustard. Contact John at 513.941.4877 or john.kleinp2@yahoo.com with questions.

Sat., June 23, 9am to noon Whitetail Woods

A good old-fashioned honeysuckle whacking project. Contact Greg at 513.404.5250 or gfl2376@gmail.com with questions.

Sat., June 30, 9am to noon Shady Lane

This will be another good old-fashioned honeysuckle whacking project. Contact Tim at 513.922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net with questions.



Here's a photo from a hike at the Delshire Preserve showing an entire slope filled with wild hyacinths!

Tim Sisson

Pam Plire

Wildflower Festival

DEER DRAWING & PAINTING CLASS, BOOK SIGNING

by Sally Sisson Anderson

Western Wildlife Corridor is presenting a free art workshop taught by Sally Sisson Anderson, at the Wildflower Festival on Friday, April 13. The class will focus on how to draw and paint deer. We will be painting in watercolor. It will run from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. Please call 353-2708 to register and to obtain the supply list.

Sally has recently illustrated a children's book, which she will be signing and selling at the festival. It is called "The Fairy Gate." It is the story of a simple school outing that becomes an adventure into fairy land, written by Gerald Lehmann. One of these books will be included in the Wildflower Festival Raffle.

"The Fawn," shown at right, is the emblem and raffle print of this year's Wildflower Festival. Look for the raffle items towards the front of the festival. It is contributed and painted by Sally Sisson Anderson, Western Wildlife Corridor's Artist in Residence. All fawns of North American deer are spotted, but they lose their spots in late summer. Deer don new coats twice a year, heavy and grayish for winter, cool and brown for summer.



WWC Assisting with CMC Exhibit

We are all accustomed to envisioning and maintaining our yards and gardens in a certain way, and take pride in a weed-free, neatly-trimmed, grassy green lawn. But did you know that our yards and gardens could be just as attractive and more nature-friendly by changing some of our long-held practices and preconceptions of the "perfect" lawn?

The Western Wildlife Corridor is happy to be helping out on a new exhibit at the Cincinnati Museum Center (CMC) that will explore how these practices and preconceptions came to be, and some of the less conspicuous and unfavorable consequences of our actions. Alternatives will be highlighted such as planting native plants and flowers, appreciating and attracting backyard wildlife of all kinds, and dealing with our yard and garden pests in more environmentally sensitive ways. With bird and insect population numbers falling at alarming rates, visitors will learn what they can do in their own backyards to create sanctuary for an amazing array of interesting and beautiful animals, insects, and plants. Resource materials, from groups such as The Western Wildlife Corridor and The Wild Ones, will also be available for visitors to take home with them.

The exhibit opens May 12, 2012 in CMC's Ruthven gallery.

Photo supplied by Cincinnati Museum Center



Vernal Ponds

by Joe Kappa

Vernal ponds are known by several different names such as temporary, seasonal or wetland pools. Typically, vernal ponds fill up with water during the early months of the year, generally February and March. They only hold water for several months, and are usually dry by July or August, which is long enough for amphibians to use them to reproduce. Most amphibians require vernal ponds for their eggs because fish, which often feed on young amphibians, aren't usually found in them since they can't survive once the pond dries up. Most mole salamanders lay clusters of eggs either on the bottom of the pond or they "glue" them to sticks suspended in the water. Our local small-mouth salamanders for some reason often prefer small running streams, and glue their eggs to the bottom of rocks. This is unusual behavior since small-mouth salamanders in the rest of the country prefer to lay their eggs in vernal ponds. This variation led to our local small-mouth salamanders being re-named "stream-side" salamanders.

Recently a group of WWC members gathered at the newly acquired property on Hillside road near Bender road, and spent the morning developing vernal ponds. It is hoped that populations of mole salamanders such as the stream-side, Jefferson or even spotted sala-



Small-mouth salamander

Joe Kappa



Here's our muddy but happy crew after finishing the pools.

Joe Kappa

manders may begin breeding in these vernal pools.

Mole salamanders spend most of the year underground where they are protected from the sun and can remain moist. The exception to this subterranean existence is near the end of winter when the pre-spring rains come. Generally by the end of February, when the ground is thawed and there has been enough rain to establish vernal pools, the salamanders leave their underground burrows and run to the pools to breed. Most people go through their entire lives without ever witnessing this marvelous event, since it happens at night when it is raining. It's a mystery how salamanders know when to leave their burrows. Observers have been known to go to ponds several nights in a row and not see any sign of salamander activity, then for some unknown reason they all seem to show up at the same time. Vernal ponds have become scarce in the Delhi area. Hopefully, the new ones WWC just developed will provide a future opportunity for the residents of Delhi to observe first-hand this marvelous phenomenon. 🐸

VOLUNTEER CORNER

I have been volunteering for a long time and worked with many organizations, and Western Wildlife Corridor is one of the best groups of volunteers I have worked with. Our volunteers are reliable, hardworking and fun to be around.

Marianne Brater is one of the volunteers who make WWC successful. When we have an event like the Membership Meeting or the Holiday Party, Marianne is one of the first to arrive to set up and one of the last to leave after cleaning up. She comes up with fun raffle items and organizes our raffles at the Wildflower Festival and Flower-a-thon Banquet. She arranged for WWC to participate in the Sixth Sense fundraiser at Biggs. She is currently working on getting reloadable gift cards from Remke Biggs, which will generate regular donations like the Kroger gift cards do.

A valuable service Marianne provides is answering WWC phone calls. Along with calls from people interested in WWC events, she frequently gets calls from people who have found an injured animal. Since we have "wildlife" in our name, they figure we can help. Marianne has phone numbers of organizations that do animal rehabilitation to give callers. She also calls the members who prefer to get phone notification for WWC projects.

Marianne started volunteering for WWC twenty years ago when Sr. Dee Sizler asked her to help. Marianne is an associate of the Sisters of Charity and met Dee, who was the WWC vice-president then.

Marianne recently retired from the WWC Board of Trustees. She thought it was time for new people to serve on the board. We will miss her on the Board, but are happy that she will continue to work on fundraising and phone calls.

Western Wildlife Corridor is an all-volunteer organization. With dedicated volunteers like Marianne and many others, we manage to protect places where wildlife and wildflowers can thrive.

Mary Uhlenbrock

Here's Marianne signing a document when she was secretary.



Matching Gifts

Do you work for a company that matches gifts to charitable causes or charitable entities? You could actually double your gift to Western Wildlife Corridor by utilizing this service through your place of work.

Some corporations offer matching gift programs to the spouses of their company employees and to the retirees from their companies as well. Some companies with local ties that match employee donations are Procter & Gamble, General Electric and Macy's.

We truly appreciate the donations you give to Western Wildlife Corridor and we encourage you to check with your company to see if they will match your donation. We would be happy to complete any matching donation forms that your company requires or provide you with the needed information to complete the form.

Your donation, along with your company's matching donation will give Western Wildlife Corridor the help it needs to protect the beauty of our Corridor for years to come. ♡

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- Bob Nienaber
- Joyce Richter, SC
- Rebecca Sisson



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Please indicate how you would like to help!

JOIN WESTERN WILDLIFE CORRIDOR 2012-2013

New Membership Renewal

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

<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Supporting
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sponsoring
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> / month Guardian	

DONATE TO THE LAND ACQUISITION FUND

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

VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES

Help with Habitat Restoration Help with Outreach and other needs

Name _____ Phone number _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City, State, Zip _____ Email _____

Please mail to:
Western Wildlife Corridor, Inc.
PO Box 389077
Cincinnati, OH 45238

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



Tim Sisson

Sunset over the Western Wildlife Corridor.