

PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL WWC is planning an Awesome Spring by Tim Sisson



Expert identifying wild flower

Tom Malone



Drawf Larkspur - Beekley

Tim Sisson



Native plants for sale at recent festival

Maureen Mohr

Whatever you fancy in an outdoor experience, Western Wildlife Corridor will have it for you this spring!

Flower-a-thon We kick off with our Flower-a-thon on April 29. The Flower-a-thon is an excellent chance to have fun while increasing your knowledge and appreciation for wildflowers, no matter how much you know about them. Start times are 9 am with Panera's bagels and coffee at the Kirby Nature Center, and 1 pm at the gravel lot on Bender Road. Then we head out into the preserves where you will join hikes led by experienced wildflower enthusiasts. You will have a chance to see uncommon flowers like drooping trillium, blue-eyed Mary, fern-leaf phacelia and, with a little luck, the green dragon and federally endangered running buffalo clover. At the end of the day you will be treated to a lasagna dinner and discussions about wild flowers in our corridor. We will also have displays featuring native wild flowers and other plants. There are sure to be tall tales about wildflowers to be enjoyed as well. Per person fee is \$15, which includes breakfast and dinner.

Everyone is welcome. Please join us by sending in the registration form included in this issue of the Steward!

Wildflower Festival Have fun and learn about nature at the Kirby Nature Center on May 20 from noon to 5pm. A native plant sale, hand-crafted items for sale, displays by local environmental organizations, and activities for children will all be included.

Grand Opening of Kirby Nature Preserve and WWC 25th Anniversary All are welcome to the Grand opening of Kirby Nature Preserve and WWC 25th anniversary on June 10th. From 11am until 4 we will have an open house, as well as guided tours, free lunch, nature presentations, guided hikes as well as children's events. Starting at 6pm we will have a banquet for \$35 per person which will include a social hour, buffet dinner and a celebration which will be MC'd by Jim Scott. This will be a great time to celebrate our past and the great future we will have. Hope you will join us.



Native plants for sale at recent festival

Tom Malone



Festival scene 2016

Tom Malone



Tour our recently renovated nature center on June 10

Tim Sisson

VOLUNTEER CORNER



Tim Sisson

Sharp-lobed Heptatica - Bender Mountain



Tom Malone

Fungus — Bender Mountain



Tim Sisson

Wild Blue Phlox - Delshire Preserve

Habitat restoration is one of the most important and valuable activities Western Wildlife Corridor engages in. In fact we consider restoration of a property to a natural state to be just as important as legally protecting the property through acquisition or a conservation easement.

In our neck of the woods, habitat restoration usually means removing invasive alien plant species like amur honeysuckle, winter creeper, lesser celandine and garlic mustard, so that the native plants and animals can thrive.

Clearing of amur honeysuckle is accomplished primarily through our group volunteer projects where we meet at a preserve on Saturday mornings for two or three hours. See our calendar in this issue of The Steward for the projects listed for this spring.

After a preserve has been initially cleared of honeysuckle, volunteer monitors “adopt” a particular preserve to visit periodically to keep track of its condition. Monitoring is especially important for keeping the invasive alien plants from coming back after a preserve has been restored. By removing them when they first appear, we can keep large areas free of aliens. We need more monitors. If you enjoy hiking in the woods and want to help keep them beautiful, please volunteer to be a monitor by contacting Tim at 513-922-2104 or hikertim419@gmail.com.

In addition, a group of us meets on Wednesdays to take a walk in a preserve and while we are there, we just can't help removing the alien plants that are always trying to sneak in. If you would like to join one of these walks, also contact Tim and he'll add you to the email list for these.

We hope you can volunteer for some of these activities where we work to create and maintain those fabulous preserves we all enjoy so much in the Western Wildlife Corridor.

Some of our Awesome Volunteers!



Tim Sisson



Tim Sisson



Tim Sisson

Putting in native plants at Kirby Nature Center

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

See full list of events online – WesternWildlifeCorridor.org

Thirteenth Annual Flower-a-thon

Saturday, April 29, 9 am to 8 pm

Meeting places Kirby Nature Preserve and Bender Mountain

The Flower-a-thon hikes will give you a great chance to learn about the wild flowers of our region. Experts will lead us on hikes through several preserves in the corridor, showing us the amazing variety of plants there (see more details in the President's Journal in this newsletter). Contact Tim at 513.922.2104 for more information.

Wild Flower Festival – Kirby Nature Center

Saturday, May 20

Have fun and learn about nature at the Kirby Nature Center. A native plant sale, hand-crafted items for sale, displays by local environmental organizations, and activities for children will all be included. Contact Rebecca at 859.512.1983 to learn more about this enjoyable event or to inquire about participating.

25th Anniversary



and Kirby Grand Opening!

Saturday, June 10

Starting at 10 am and running to 4 pm we will have hikes and tours, and a free lunch. Then for a fee, we will have cocktails at 6 pm, followed by dinner and presentations. Jim Scott will be the emcee.

Why Habitat Restoration

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 (or Winter Creeper) 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 tsson@fuse.net for more information.

AMUR HONEYSUCKLE EVEN SECRETES A TOXIN THAT KILLS NATIVE PLANTS!

Habitat Restoration plus:

Saturday, April 15, 9 am to 12 pm

Habitat restoration at Whitetail Woods and Black Walnut Gorge. Leaders: Gary 513.941.5414 and Tim 513.922.2104.

Saturday, May 13, 9 am to 12 pm

Habitat restoration and trail repairs at Kirby Nature Preserve. Leaders: John 513.941.4877 and Ed 513.919.5186.

Saturday, May 27, 9 am to 12 pm

Habitat restoration at Whitetail Woods and Black Walnut Gorge. Leaders: Gary 513.941.5414 and Bob 513.251.5352.

Saturday June 17, 9 am to 12 pm

Habitat restoration at the Shady Lane Preserve. Leaders: Tim 513.922.2104 and Robert 859.572.9661.

The Blue-eyed Mary

Sally Sisson Anderson - Artist is Residence, WWC

One of my favorite wild flowers is the little Blue-eyed Mary, *Collinsia verna*. You can find it blooming in the Western Wildlife Corridor, in the spring on the Bender Mountain preserve. The bicolored flowers are quite beautiful; you seldom see such a bright blue color, making it easy to identify. Two upper petals are blue and the lower two petals are white, a hidden fifth petal contains the stamens and the style of the flower. There is only one other species in this genus, the Violet Blue-eyed Mary, *Collinsia violacea*, that is found in the southern plains area, and is more purple.

The Blue-eyed Mary is often found in damp woodlands. It requires a certain amount of shade, with rich loamy soil. It prefers the dappled sunlight of open woods. The seeds should be planted in the summer because they germinate in the fall and then bloom in the spring. Blue-eyed Mary flourish in river valleys and along streams. This plant is an indicator of high quality woods like that found on Bender Mountain.

Most plants are from 4 to 12 inches tall. The leaves are opposite each other, and the middle leaves on the stem are largest. Rounder leaves are found at the base of the plant. Its weak stem often cause it to lay on nearby plants. The central stem has a whorl of four to six flowers, sometimes forming a round cluster. Each flower is about one half inch across.

The blooming period is in mid to late spring and lasts for three weeks. The flowers are replaced by a capsule that contains several large seeds. The root system has one long taproot. The plant spreads by reseeding, and often forms large beds.

The nectar and pollen of the flowers attracts honeybees, bumblebees, carpenter bees, horned bees, and mason bees. Other flower insects include dance flies, the giant bee fly, butterflies, and skippers. The caterpillars of the blue azure butterfly feed on the flowerbuds and seed capsules of the plant. This tiny blue butterfly is frequently seen in Ohio woodland edges and meadows.

The Blue-eyed Mary is native to Ontario, New York, then south to Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and Oklahoma. It is found in Kansas, Iowa and Wisconsin plus other states in the midwest of the U.S.

The bicolored flowers are quite beautiful; you seldom see such a bright blue color, making it easy to identify.



Registration for Western Wildlife Corridor 2017 Flower-a-thon
(April 29, 2017)

Tax deductible contribution for Flower-a-thon (\$15 per person) Total _____

Name _____ Phone number _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City, State, Zip _____ Email _____

Please return registration form and payment 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!

WWC is an IRS certified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization



Tim Sisson

Blue-eyed Mary - Bender Mountain



Membership Donations –Thank You!

Black Walnut Tree of Honor

Western Wildlife Corridor thanks the following individuals for their membership support of \$1,000 or more:

Jeff Ginter
Miami Township

Beech Tree Steward Recognition

Western Wildlife Corridor thanks the following individuals for their support of \$200 to \$499:

Dick and Kathy Hellman
Jim Dolle



Spring Beauty - Delshire Preserve

Tim Sisson

Paw Paw Steward Recognition

Western Wildlife Corridor thanks the following individuals for their support of \$100 to \$199:

Anonymous
Donald Blaney
Fritz and Mary Jo Bazeley
Fernbank Garden Club
Roger and Cindy Grant
Carl Huether
Cathy Kappa
Dave and Denise Miller
John Obermeyer
Steve and Darlene Radcliffe
Howard and Karen Rechel
David Rudemiller
Jessica and Nathan Spencer
Alvin Wulfekuhl



Bloodroot - Bender Mountain

Tim Sisson

WWC is grateful for the following Donors and their generous gifts:

In memory of Elda and Bob Wessler – Donation by Mary Perkins
In memory of Bob Maxwell – Donation by Virginia A. Gilmore



Western Wildlife Corridor 2016–2017 Membership

All donations \$100 or more will receive a special recognition in *The Steward*.
 \$500 or more will be prominently displayed on the Tree of Honor located in the Kirby House Great Room — A Lasting Memorial!

Enclosed is my tax deductible donation:

New Member Renewal

Add My Additional Donation for Land Acquisition: \$

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Check enclosed

Visa/Mastercard Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

Expiration Date: ____ / ____ Zip ____ CSV ____ \$ ____

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

- \$25 Individual Hiker
- \$35 Family Pathfinders
- \$55 Organization Trailblazer
- \$75 Mountain Climber

WWC STEWARD RECOGNITION

- \$100 Paw Paw
- \$200 Beech
- \$300 Sycamore
- \$400 Sugar Maple

TREE OF HONOR

- \$500 Red Oak
- \$1,000 and up Black Walnut

Volunteer! May we contact you with volunteer opportunities? YES

Donate online with at www.westernwildlifecorridor.org

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

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Recent Finds in Our Preserves



Dutchman's Breeches - Delshire Preserve

Tim Sisson



Mayapple - Bender Mountain

Tim Sisson



Wild Geranium - Bender Mountain

Tim Sisson



Sessile Trillium - Beekley

Tim Sisson



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Tom Malone

Hiking Bender Mountain Recently



Tim Sisson

Yellow Trout Lily
Bender Mountain



Tom Malone

Hiking Bender Mountain Recently



Tim Sisson

Denis enjoying Yellow Buckeye

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Spiderwort - Bender Mountain