



The Steward

Protecting and Preserving the Ohio River Corridor

WesternWildlifeCorridor.org

Fall 2022

President's Journal

Jeff Ginter

This year we celebrate our thirtieth anniversary, and it's shaping up to be a busy and exciting year! In this article I'll share news about some of our activities and successes.

The Board of Trustees of Western Wildlife Corridor has authorized three major capital investments at the Kirby Nature Preserve, which we expect to be completed in the coming months. Perhaps most anticipated of these is the creation of a path, intended to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, which will go around a portion of the prairie. This six-foot wide path will start at the left of the barn and will loop around the prairie for a distance of about 270 lineal feet. It will feature a dense graded aggregate surface, a natural seat retaining wall for part of the distance, and several boulders / outcroppings at the far end. These improvements will provide visitors with beautiful views of the prairie, hillsides, and barn. The project was designed by Rachel Robinson Design and will be constructed by Jeffrey Allen Corporation. Construction is expected to start in November of 2022, and should take about six weeks, depending upon the weather.

Hikers will appreciate our second capital investment at Kirby, for funding of the materials for a footbridge to extend our Creekside Trail at Kirby. The footbridge will extend over the tributary of Muddy Creek that runs parallel to South Road. This bridge is being designed and constructed by volunteers from the Miami University Student Chapter of the nonprofit organization Engineers without Borders, and is being

overseen by one of the professional mentors for the chapter, Mike Brunner. The bridge will be about eighty feet long, with steel trusses and a wooden deck which will be three feet wide. The design has been completed and the WWC Board has approved the funds to purchase the materials. Both the design work and all labor for construction are being donated free of charge. Construction is expected to occur in the spring of 2023. Western Wildlife Corridor extends its sincere thanks to Mike and the other EWB volunteers:

- Project Management: Ryan Yu, Patrick Hanley, Ian Dunham
- Truss structural design: Ian Dunham, Sarah Freeman
- Installation of abutment pile test stands: Everyone above
- Storm runoff and stream flood calculations: Jake Perry, Sarah Freeman
- Field surveying and processing survey data: Everyone above

Our third capital investment is to make some very necessary upgrades to fix the roof of our barn and address deferred maintenance. This project, by John P. Tumlin & Sons LTD, will include the installation of a new metal roof, plus new rafters and beams to strengthen the roof, other improvements including repairs to the exterior siding, and the installation of new electrical fixtures and receptacles.

Funding for all of these projects is via grants from two anonymous donors. We are deeply grateful for the generous support and very excited to put this grant money to good use!

continued next page

President's Journal – continued from previous page

As a land trust, land conservation, and protection remain a key focus for us, and we continue to have successes in those areas. In January 2022, Green Umbrella (the regional sustainability alliance for Greater Cincinnati) recognized our Kirby Nature Preserve as a "Greenspace Gem." This designation "recognizes and celebrates natural areas in the Green Umbrella region with outstanding scenic value, biological diversity, scientific importance, or historic interest." This outstanding achievement is the direct result of the ongoing, sustained effort of Western Wildlife Corridor at the Kirby Nature Preserve to remove invasive plants and protect natural habitat. If you have not recently visited Kirby, we encourage you to come out and hike the trails in this preserve of more than fifty protected acres.

We're working really hard to protect more land in the Corridor, and those efforts are bearing fruit. Firstly, we are making good progress to acquire a couple more parcels on Hillside Avenue, bringing us closer to having contiguous properties where we potentially could have trails. Most excitingly, we are engaged in negotiations for some very remarkable land acquisitions elsewhere in the Corridor. Given that discussions are underway, I can't share any details, but hopefully in an upcoming newsletter our dedicated Land Stewardship chairperson, Tim Sisson, will have an article sharing some big news!

Habitat Restoration plus:

What's our habitat restoration all about? It's one of the most important things we do! If you've never done one of these before, we encourage you to join us, as it doesn't require any special skills. No registration is necessary, but please contact a project leader to make sure it hasn't been cancelled. For more information, please go to <http://westernwildlifecorridor.org/habitat-restoration/> and read the document *Habitat Restoration: Frequently Asked Questions*.

Saturday, September 17, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Habitat restoration at Kirby Nature Preserve.

Leaders: Tim 513.922.2104 and Matt 513.604.6728

Saturday, October 1, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Trail Restoration at Bender Mountain Nature Preserve.

Leader: John 513.304.2310

Saturday, October 15, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Habitat restoration at Shady Lane Preserve.

Leaders: Ed 513.919.5186 and John 513.304.2310

Saturday, November 5, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Habitat restoration at Whitetail Woods.

Leaders: Gary 513.304.4303 and Tim 513.922.2104

Saturday, November 12, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Trail Restoration at Bender Mountain Nature Preserve.

Leader: John 513.304.2310

Saturday, November 19, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Habitat restoration at Buckeye Trace Nature Preserve.

Leaders: Gary 513.304.4303 and Tim 513.922.2104

For the locations and directions on where we will meet for the habitat restoration projects, please check the WWC calendar: <http://westernwildlifecorridor.org/calendar/>

Mid-week hikes

Did you know that Western Wildlife Corridor volunteers do a mid-week hike almost every week? This is where we might do some light habitat restoration or trail building. E-mail Tim Sisson at hikertim419@gmail.com to be added to the distribution list.

Upcoming Events

Great Outdoor Weekend Adventure Hikes

Saturday, September 24 and Sunday, September 25

Kirby Nature Preserve and Bender Mountain Preserve

Kirby Nature Preserve, Saturday, September 24, 10 a.m. — noon

A moderate hike will begin through our prairie and into a beautiful cedar glade. Then we'll hike up a creek valley through an equally beautiful forest. A strenuous hike will begin through our prairie and cedar glade. Then we'll climb through a very nice mature forest to a hillside limestone quarry where you'll be treated to a fantastic view of the Ohio River Valley. Meet at Kirby Nature Preserve, 2 East Main Street in Addyston, Ohio.

Bender Mountain Preserve, Sunday, September 25, 1 p.m. — 2:30 p.m.

The hike will start at 1:00pm with a climb through a beautiful forest on our Eagle Scout Trail. At the top we will be treated to a spectacular view of the Ohio River Valley. We will then hike along the ridgetop trail to Pawpaw Gap and beyond for the return to the trail head. The moderate hike will start at 1:00pm and will meander along the slope of Bender Mountain through an equally beautiful forest. At Paw Paw Gap, with a little luck, we will be able to sample that delectable fruit. This hike is rated moderate to strenuous. Meet at the gravel parking area on Bender Road about ½ mile from Hillside.

Fall Foliage Fest Hike and Art Show

Saturday, October 22

Kirby Nature Center and Preserve

Nature Hike at Kirby Nature Preserve

Saturday, October 22, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Leader Tim Sisson

Join Tim on Saturday October 22 for a day of hiking at the Kirby Nature Preserve. Enjoy the trails, and learn to identify the trees and wildflowers of Western Wildlife Corridor and learn how we are managing our forest. Meet at Kirby Nature Preserve, 2 East Main Street in Addyston, Ohio. Cost: Free, no registration is required.

Art Show at Kirby Nature Center

Saturday, October 22, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Exhibitors include Sally Sisson Anderson, Jesse Smith, Mary Ann Perkins, David Garza and Lori Vogel. Bring your friends to enjoy some early holiday shopping and see some great art reflecting our natural environment. Kirby Nature Center is located at 2 Main Street, Addyston, Ohio. Cost: Free, no registration is required.

Fossil Hunt with Jack Berninger

Saturday, November 12, 2:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Kirby Nature Center and Preserve

Get ready for some family fun with WWC, where your family will go on an adventure discovering all the interesting fossils in our dry creek bed at our Kirby Nature Center. This outdoor program will start with a short explanation by Jack Berninger, and each child will be given a special fossil at the start of the program! Admission is free. Location: Kirby Nature Center is located at 2 Main Street, Addyston, Ohio. Cost: Free, no registration is required.

Thank You, Walt McBeath!

After nine impactful years and three full terms, Walt McBeath stepped down from the WWC Board of Trustees at the end of May 2022. Walt's enthusiasm, leadership, and his expertise in business and fundraising have been extraordinarily impactful to the success and growth of Western Wildlife Corridor. In large part thanks to Walt's efforts, in 2016, we received the donation of the Kirby Nature Preserve, which now spans over 50 acres, along with the donation of our headquarters building, christened the Kirby Nature Center. Walt's fundraising efforts led to increases in our membership numbers and a significant jump in average donation size per member; and most notably we received several large anonymous donations which solidified our finances and allowed us to take several important steps forward as an organization in terms of staffing, land acquisition, and capital investments.

As generous and regular donors themselves, Walt and his wife, Susan, have helped out WWC in many ways for many years. One of the earliest things they did was to donate funds for the purchase of the 2-acre parcel of land that sits between Sisters' Hill and Hillside Avenue, extending the protected area at the Bender Mountain Nature Preserve. To cite a few other examples: they provided funds towards the renovation of the Nature Center, including funding of the kitchen; they paid for the installation of a bench for weary hikers at the Bender Mountain Nature Preserve; and they funded a worker to remove honeysuckle from some of the steepest and most challenging sections of Bender Mountain.

Happily, Walt will remain engaged with Western Wildlife Corridor. Walt continues to lead our annual membership drive, and he serves on the Land Stewardship Committee. And, putting a smile on the faces of countless members, Walt provided a selection of fine wines for many WWC events, including our holiday parties. Hopefully, we'll have a chance to sample his wine selections at a future event!

Thanks, Walt—you've been an inspiring leader of this organization, and we appreciate everything you've done and continue to do for the Corridor!

The Rose-Breasted Grosbeak

Sally Sisson Anderson — Artist in Residence, Western Wildlife Corridor

If you feed the birds in winter, you may have noticed a beautiful bird appearing in February or March. I had three of these birds last winter. They are called the Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks. I had two males and one female. The males have black heads, wings, backs, and tails. They have a bright rose-colored patch on their white breast. The females are quite different-looking, with brownish upper parts, darker wings and tail, a buff streak through the eye and along the head, and a buff belly. However, both birds have big strong beaks suitable for cracking seeds and eating crickets, beetles, and grasshoppers. They are related to Cardinals, and are about the size of a Robin. You can attract them to your feeder by putting out sunflower seeds.

The Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks go to the northeast and Midwest through Minnesota for the summer as well as Canada in the south and through the prairie provinces. They like open deciduous woods. In fall, they migrate to Mexico, Central America, and northern South America. Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks arrive at their breeding grounds in late April or early May. Some may stay in states like Tennessee while others go on to Canada, ending up in Saskatchewan or Quebec. Usually, Grosbeaks raise a family of a few chicks. Both birds help in nest building in the woodlands. The female lays one to five eggs of a pale green color. Males do a third of the incubation; females do the rest. During nesting, the birds sing a lot; the male does a soft melodic song like a robin. They also communicate with a sharp "pink" or "peak" noise like that of a woodpecker. You might have heard that "pink, pink" and thought it was a woodpecker, but they rarely sing in our area. The young birds are fed on insects by both parents and fledge in nine to thirteen days.

The Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks forage in trees and shrubs for insects and berries. They are

omnivores. They eat a lot of blackberries, mulberries, raspberries; seeds of smartweed, milkweed, sunflowers, and other plants; and buds and flowers. Maximum life span for a wild Rose-Breasted Grosbeak is about twelve years. They often get killed by colliding into buildings and cars. Mortality due to natural causes can be by disease or by predators. Cooper and Sharp-Shinned hawks go after them, as well as Screech Owls and Short-Eared Owls. You can help Grosbeaks during migration by feeding them. Since 1966, the Grosbeaks have experienced a decline in population in their summer range.



The Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks forage in shrubs and trees for insects and berries.



Membership Donations – Thank You!

Black Walnut Tree of Honor
Western Wildlife Corridor thanks the following individuals for their support of \$1,000 or more:

Linda Graviss
Magnified Giving
Midwest Native Plant Society



Rick Helmchen

Yellow Violet – Bender Mountain Nature Preserve

Red Oak Tree of Honor
Western Wildlife Corridor thanks the following individuals for their support of \$500 to \$999:

Bill & Beth Burwinkel
David & Ally Nurre
Elder High School Student Council "Walk for Others"

Beech Tree Steward Recognition

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

Steve Johns

Paw Paw Steward Recognition

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

JoAnn Dirr
Leeann Garrett
Walt & Susan McBeath



Rick Helmchen

Rue Anemone – Bender Mountain Nature Preserve



Tim Sisson

Prarie Rose – Kirby Nature Preserve

Special Thanks
Western Wildlife Corridor would like to give special thanks to Nancy Fenton in memory of Christopher P. Moore and to Liz Maxell in memory of Virginia Gilmore.



Western Wildlife Corridor Membership

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

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

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

WWC STEWARD RECOGNITION

- \$100—\$199 Paw Paw
- \$200—\$499 Beech

TREE OF HONOR

- \$500—\$999 Red Oak
- \$1,000 and up Black Walnut

Enclosed is my tax deductible donation: New Member Renewal

Add My Additional Donation for Land Acquisition: \$ _____

Total charges to be made to my account: \$ _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Check enclosed (*make payable to Western Wildlife Corridor*)

Visa/Mastercard Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

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

Volunteer! May we contact you with volunteer opportunities? YES

Donate online at www.westernwildlifecorridor.org

Mail to Western Wildlife Corridor, P.O. Box 389077, Cincinnati, OH 45238-9077

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

Create Your Legacy at WWC

Make Your Annual Gift Last Forever

Perpetuating your annual support can be as simple as adding a bequest to your estate plan, naming Western Wildlife Corridor beneficiary of a life insurance policy or of a deferred compensation plan, or via some other deferred gift vehicle that designates a certain amount or percentage from your estate to Western Wildlife Corridor.

Thoughtfully crafted gift plans offer benefits to the donor as well as to Western Wildlife Corridor.

For more information on how to accomplish your goals and leave a lasting gift for nature, please contact WWC at 513.921.9453 or hikertim419@gmail.com



Jeff Ginter

A new memorial bench in memory of Bob Maxwell was installed on Ridge Trail at the Bender Mountain Nature Preserve, on Saturday, May 21, 2022.

Left to right: Liz Maxwell, Greg Bruening, Dan Bruening, Mike Bruening

WWC Fall Foliage Fest Art Show

As part of our Fall Foliage Fest, the WWC will be hosting a nature-themed art show on October 23 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Kirby Nature Center, located at 2 East Main Street, Addyston, near South Road and Cleves Warsaw. It will be a great opportunity to do a little early Christmas shopping and support the following local artists:

Sally Sisson Anderson has been drawing and painting all her life. She studied under Charlie Harper while attending the Cincinnati Art Academy, and she is the artist in residence for Western Wildlife Corridor. Earlier, she was the illustrator for the Great Parks of Hamilton County, and illustrated exhibits and signage for their Native American museum at Shawnee Lookout. Sally's illustrations have been featured in *International Artist* magazine. She has also illustrated a children's book, as well as a cover for *The Herb Companion*, a national magazine.

Dave Garza is a photographer with an interest in natural subjects and abandoned human-made objects and structures, which nature is quick to reclaim. Recently, he has been experimenting with homemade pinhole lenses. David has been a photographer for the local music scene for the last 20 years, getting much of his inspiration from the documentary end of the craft. His work has been used by musicians and bands for their album covers and promotional material.

Mary Ann Perkins, a graduate of the University of Cincinnati, worked as a research scientist at UC and P&G for 33 years before becoming an executive communications expert at P&G. When she retired, she became interested in gardening, watercolor, and jewelry making and volunteered at the Cincinnati Zoo and WWC. As a self-taught artist, Mary paints animals and flowers from her gardens. She loves to play and experiment with colors, exploring diverse media to create interesting, fun, and lively compositions.

Jessee J. Smith has been making jewelry of various kinds since she was 12. Jessee learned basic metalworking techniques in her courses at Mount St. Joseph University, where she double-majored in art and natural science with a focus on entomology. Most of Jessee's inspiration comes from the insects that she loves, and from the plants that sustain them. Jessee's work has been featured in the Lark book *500 Earrings*, juried shows, and *Eclosion*, a special exhibit of the Art Science Gallery in Austin, TX.

Lori Vogel is a Cincinnati native who received her B.F.A. from Mount St. Joseph University. Currently living in Bright, Indiana, Lori paints and draws full-time, working in both acrylic and colored pencil. She depicts the local wildlife on wood, stone, and canvas. Lori hopes to bring a bit of nature into others' lives, and give them an appreciation of nature that many never see. Lori's work can be found at the Pendleton Art Center, the Cincinnati Nature Center, and in homes across the area.

A percentage of the proceeds will go to support the Western Wildlife Corridor!





PO Box 389077
Cincinnati, Ohio 45238-9077

513 921 WILD (9453)

WesternWildlifeCorridor.org

E-mail: info@westernwildlifecorridor.org

Copyright © 2022 Western Wildlife Corridor

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, OH
Permit #571

Address Correction Requested

WWC Board of Trustees

- Jeffrey Ginter, President
- Mary Perkins, Vice President
- Molly Hunter, Treasurer
- Steve Johns, Secretary
- Roger Auer
- Mary Jo Bazeley
- Sarah Kent
- John Klein
- Debbie Lutkenhoff
- Gary Rapien
- Joyce Richter SC
- Tim Sisson
- Jessee J. Smith
- Matt Taylor

WWC Committees

- Events:** Kathy McDonald (Coordinator), Joyce Richter SC, Debbie Lutkenhoff
- Executive:** Jeff Ginter (Chair), Mary Perkins, Molly Hunter, Steve Johns
- Fundraising:** Steve Johns, Tim Sisson, Joyce Richter SC, Walt McBeath
- Kirby Property Management:** Jeff Doering (Chair), Beth Warmuth, Debbie Lutkenhoff, John Klein, Tim Sisson, Jessee J. Smith, Matt Taylor
- Land Stewardship:** Tim Sisson (Chair), Jeff Ginter, Steve Johns, Roger Auer, John Klein, Gary Rapien, Joyce Richter SC, Matt Taylor
- Trail Construction and Maintenance Subcommittee:** John Klein (Chair), Matt Taylor, Joyce Richter, Roger Auer, Mark Rechsteiner, Tim Sisson, Bruce Cortright
- Membership:** Walt McBeath (Chair), Roselyn Schloss
- Nominating Committee:** Jeff Ginter (Chair), Steve Johns, Tim Sisson
- Playscape:** Debbie Lutkenhoff

WWC Leaders

- Constant Contact Administrator:** Joyce Richter SC
- Facebook Administrators:** Jessee J. Smith and Kathy McDonald
- Gardening/Native Plants:** Debbie Lutkenhoff
- Habitat Restoration Project Leaders:** Tim Sisson, Matt Taylor, Molly Hunter, Jeff Ginter, Gary Rapien, Ed Lottman, John Klein, Jeff Shaw
- Human Resources:** Jeff Ginter
- LTA Accreditation:** Molly Hunter
- Mail Processing:** Roselyn Schloss, Molly Hunter, Marie Finn
- Preserve Monitors:** Matt Taylor and Tim Sisson at Kirby; Molly Hunter at Delshire; Joyce Richter, Jeff Ginter, Roger Auer, Jeff Shaw and Rich Helmchen at Bender; Tim Sisson at Buckeye Trace; and Gary Rapien at Whitetail Woods
- Welcomers Administrator:** Matt Taylor

Newsletter Contributors

- Artist in Residence:** Sally Sisson Anderson
- Editing, Design, and Production:** Marie Finn, Jessee J. Smith
- Photographers:** Jeff Ginter, Tom Malone, Tim Sisson, Jessee J. Smith, Joyce Richter SC