



Bull's Run Newsletter Spring, 2010

Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum in Middletown is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to preserving the natural area of Bull's Run, striving to develop the park as an environmental facility and educational resource for people of all ages.



Naturalist's Ramblings....



GREEN BABY STEPS!

(Yes, you can! Just do it!)



If you read as much about environmental and conservation issues as I do, perhaps you also get overwhelmed with the complexity of the problems. When that happens to me, I remember the saying "Small things done with great love can change the world." And I get busy doing small things, doing what I can to make a difference for the natural world. If I'm out of energy and feeling glum, then I make a list of the small steps I have already incorporated into daily life. You know some of them. Take short showers, do laundry in warm or cold water, switch to compact fluorescent bulbs, compost kitchen waste, drive a hybrid car. Below are some other small steps to turn into habits. More great ideas for daily, weekly and monthly baby steps, can be found at www.thegreenguide.com sponsored by National Geographic.

- Make your own household cleaners: Yep, baking soda and vinegar clean just about everything! You can get fancy and add essential oils, Borax, or lemon juice. Try Googling "nontoxic household cleaners" and find a plethora of resources. Stop exposing yourself and the environment to nasty, deadly stuff... take a look at the cautions listed on a bottle of commercial cleaner. Do you really want that in your lungs? www.ecocycle.org/hazwaste/recipes.cfm
- Keep your tires properly inflated: uh-huh. It makes a difference not only in your safety while driving, but it uses less gas which equals less air pollution and less drilling in pristine environments. And it keeps your tires rolling longer. While you are at it, refrain from aggressive driving; speed wastes gas. Or you could bike or walk! www.tirerack.com
- Buy organic food. Why eat poison? Buy local. Do you really need strawberries in January shipped from another country? Plant a garden! www.revivevictorygarden.org
- Eat right, exercise, get rest and stay healthy: If you don't think that has anything to do with taking care of the earth, then you are fooling yourself about the toxins, pollution, expense, and dangers of everything from medical research on lab rats to antibiotics flushed into our rivers to the time and money spent on our current health care debate. Be your own best health care giver! It is free! Check out www.worldwatch.org
- Think before you act. This is probably the hardest yet most important green habit to create. We are creatures of habit but have you ever stopped to analyze why you do what you do? Why you think what you think? Get in the habit of a 10 second pause to consider wants versus needs (a whole other article!) and the consequences of your impending action. Ten seconds to think of the earth. Now that is a Green Grownup step!

Barb Reuss, Naturalist

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF SPRING

Migratory birds are returning to begin their families – watch for grackles, warblers, finches, wrens and more to visit your feeders as they return from warmer climes to renew the cycle of life.

Early wildflowers are poking up through the rain softened soil – hepatica and harbinger of spring will be followed by bloodroot, purple cress, toothwort, anemones, ragwort, violets and trilliums.

Leaf buds are swelling on trees – Ohio and Yellow buckeyes are two of the earliest to leaf out.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I have never been fond of going to the grocery because it's always something! Right off I realized I forgot to get my reusable bags out of the back seat. It was too cold to go back for them. I was feeling guilty already. Too many choices to be made; didn't I have a coupon for that back home, maybe we already have one of those, which one is the better deal? Deciding which toilet paper to buy can become a major math problem alone with the double roll verses the single, comparing the number of squares, the two-ply versus the one ply, which one is on sale and which one do I have a coupon for? Is it better to use the coupon, or just buy the generic? Getting through the checkout without being overcharged becomes a reason for a celebration!



I arrived home from the store to find a Cooper's Hawk using my patio full of birdfeeders, for his grocery store. Throwing down numerous plastic bags, I reached for the binoculars. I could tell he had a meal because the air was filled with feathers. The hawk was a little smaller than a crow, a deep dark grey, with yellow talons, a rounded off tail with several horizontal stripes, and a yellow hooked beak tipped with black. His head was flat with yellow piercing eyes. I watched him as he ripped off a piece, looked around and then ripped off another. Occasionally, he would pull up something red but mostly feathers. I thought how can a bird eat another bird? Is that cannibalism? Suddenly a squirrel appeared on the scene. He ran across the patio over to a pile of discarded sunflower shells. The hawk was aware but too occupied with his meal. The ripping went on when out of the blue, the squirrel charged the hawk. Startled, the hawk flew up about 7 feet and landed on a bar next to the birdfeeders. The squirrel continued to rummage through empty sunflower seeds. The hawk was looking right at me with his puffed up rusty red and white barred breast. He continued to look left and right but mostly straight ahead with a satisfied look. The squirrel would occasionally run across the patio and the hawk would stop to gaze down upon him. I was dreading what was going to happen

next. The squirrel was busy with his hunt below and the hawk continued to sit above him so I left to get my camera. For 10 minutes I tried to get a good shot but there was the screen, the dirty window and the flash going off in the glass etc. Suddenly, the hawk flew at our grill. He was on the ground poking at our grill cover pacing back and forth. He stood beside the grill for probably a minute then flew off. I went outside to see what he had been eating. All that remained was a pile of grey feathers. Dove? Curious, I walked over to see what was so interesting about our grill. I lifted the cover and sitting side by side underneath were two darling little wrens. I quickly dropped the flap down and went back inside. Their secret was safe with me.

Unloading food from the plastic bags, I thought maybe getting our food at a grocery isn't so bad after all!

Debbie Grant, President

EARTH HOUR 2010!

On **Saturday March 27, 2010 at 8:30 p.m.**, Bull's Run will be taking part in **Earth Hour**, an initiative of the World Wildlife Fund. **I will be leading a Night Hike at Bull's Run from 8:30 to 9:30pm.** Please spread the word.

We are proud that our organization is showing leadership in conservation and sustainability. Simply by turning off lights for one hour, we will be joining millions of concerned citizens and corporations in showing the world we can work together to resolve the threat of global warming. You can also take positive action by signing up to participate. Learn more about Earth Hour and pledge your support at www.earthhour.org. To get a better sense of the magnitude and inspiring nature of the event, please take a moment to watch the official Earth Hour 2010 video on their web site.

Last year hundreds of millions of people took part in the third Earth Hour. Over 4000 cities, towns and municipalities in 88 countries officially "switched off" to show support for action on climate change, making Earth Hour 2009 the largest voluntary action in history.

Earth Hour 2010 will be even bigger. It will be a global call to action to every individual, every business, every church and every community throughout the world. It is a call to stand up, to take responsibility, to get involved and lead the way towards a sustainable future.

I'm excited about Earth Hour, both as a Naturalist and as an individual. I hope you'll join me, Bull's Run and millions of supporters in over 100 countries by **Switching off your lights for Earth Hour from 8:30pm to 9:30pm on March 27, and show the world what can be done!**



OUR FOUR LEGGED FRIENDS ALSO YEARN FOR SPRING

The snow piles have melted, but we can't wait until green takes over grey and brown. We have cabin fever, and our record snowfalls have made it hard for even the most hard core walkers to get out and walk every day. I think that my dog has suffered even more than I have. For a while it was hard for him to walk, much less do his "duty" in 12 inches of snow. Spring comes officially on March 20, so let's hope that Mother Earth cooperates and warms us up soon.

Bull's Run hosts a dog walk every third Sunday of the month from 2 - 3pm. It is a GREAT opportunity for a low key walk through a beautiful nature setting. The original purpose for the dog walk was to give any dog owner a chance to socialize their dog with others, and it has been quite successful. I have had numerous times when participants' dogs have frolicked and run to the amazement of their owners, who have stated that their dog has "never acted like that before". It has also given me a chance to meet some really awesome people. Although this walk is officially a dog walk, I encourage anyone that wants a leisurely stroll through the park to come and join us. It is people socialization, as well as dog socialization.

The next dog walks will be on March 21 and April 18. Dogs must be on leashes. Meet at the shelter and bring a bag for clean up (for the dogs, of course). Please join us. ALL are welcome. Contact Boo at 423-2314 or 320-2206.

Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum
Memberships and Donations—December 18, 2009-March 15, 2010

MEMBERSHIPS

Loren Ackerman	Abby and Bill Ison
David K. Adams	Ivy League Plant Club
William and Debbie Akers	Leonard Kahny
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Marcia and William Andrew	Todd and Nancy Leff
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Doug Bean	Barb Reuss and Jeff McMullen
Laird and Jan Becker	Michael and Katie McNeil
Anne Berns	Dennis Meyer
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Susan and David Voyles
Nancy Wells

Mary Lou Williams
Wilson (Highview) PTO
Bob and Gibbie Wise
James, Sheila, and Bobby Withrow
Sue Wright

CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEMORY OR HONOR

In memory of Robert Driscoll
By Nita Driscoll
In memory of Esther Furlow
by Joan Shivers
In memory of Edward Gaker
by Elizabeth Cole
In memory of Don Hite
by William and Debby Akers
In memory of Wilhelm Matthiesen
by Heinz and Giselle Matthiesen
In memory of Charles and Phyllis McChesny
by David McChesney
In honor of Jeff McMullen
by Bob and Midge McMullen
In memory of Thomas Allen Nenni
by George and Stephanie Nenni
In memory of Jane Rehse
by Bruce Peters
In honor of Barb Reuss and Jeff McMullen
by Mary Hensel

In appreciation of Barb Reuss
by Julianne Nickell
by Chris Parker
In memory of George and Marie Rigas
By Diane Hileman
In memory of Dodee Saylor
By Gene and Pat Saylor
In memory of Jeanne Stephenson
by Bob and Midge McMullen
by Allen L. Phillips
by Margaret Phillips
by Betsy Sloope
by Mary Lou Williams
In memory of Robert and Henrietta Triick
By William and Joyce Triick
In memory of Mary P. Valentine
By Heath Valentine
Correction of Dec. newsletter:
Jo Annette Perry in memory of George, Elaine,
and Gary Perry (not Peters)

Educational Outreach

Peter Ammentorp
Ric and Cheryl Brewer
John Dupps
Imogene Orts
Jim and Lynnette Schluter
Don and Susan Thompson

General Donations

Doug Bean
Wilson and Nancy Breiel
John Dupps
Barbara (Boo) Schmeidt

Bridge Renovation

Middletown Garden Club

Invasive Removal

Jeff and Barb Reuss

*Please advise us of any misspellings or omissions
and accept our apologies for the same.*

2009 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT AT BULL'S RUN

It was a mild winter day with fresh snowfall, overcast skies and calm winds. Seven loyal birdwatchers were treated to a sight worthy of a Christmas card as five male and two female cardinals dashed from the snow-capped bird feeders to the snow-covered foliage. The feeders were also busy with Carolina chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, tufted titmice, downy woodpecker and a white-throated sparrow. Also spotted along the trails were a brown creeper, a red-bellied woodpecker, and a Cooper's hawk. Sixty-four birds representing 11 different species were recorded on a beautiful winter morning.

Hope you can join us next year for this special event!



WHO'S WHO?

Ohio has four species of tree squirrels: the eastern gray squirrel, eastern fox squirrel, red squirrel and the pocket-sized southern flying squirrel. Three are pictured here. Can you make the match?



A

While common in many urban settings, the eastern gray squirrel primarily lives among the 7.9 million acres of forestland in Ohio's southeast and southern hill country. When much of early Ohio was tree covered, the gray squirrel's territory extended throughout the state. At one time, their numbers were so great that they often ruined the crops of Ohio's pioneer farmers. It has an overall grayish color and bushy tail. Its belly is whitish and the tail hairs are tipped with white. As with other squirrels, the tail of the gray squirrel is an all-purpose tool, providing balance on tree branches and telephone wires and acting as protection against the elements. An average adult weight for the gray squirrel is about one pound.

Is it A, B or C?



B

The red squirrel is the second smallest of our tree squirrels. Its size and olive brown color make it difficult to see, especially when it is sitting still. A broad band of red fur running down the center of its back from head to tail gives the red squirrel its name. Also known as the pine squirrel, because it gathers great piles of pinecones for food, the red squirrel's diet is made up primarily of seeds and nuts. It will eat mushrooms and is known to impale the fungi on twigs and branches, letting them dry in the sun and then storing them to eat later. You can find the red squirrel throughout Ohio's forests and in wooded city areas.

Is it A, B or C?



C

Relatively new to Ohio's landscape is the largest of our tree squirrels, the eastern fox squirrel. Native to Midwest prairie states, the fox squirrel migrated east into Ohio as land was cleared for timber and agricultural purposes. By the early 1900s they had become established residents throughout much of the state, favoring then – as today – the woodlot country of agricultural western Ohio. Hefty by squirrel standards, the average adult weighs between one and three pounds. Their colorful fur, a rusty-yellow to orange coat with distinguishable ear tufts, easily identifies them as fox squirrels. Is it A, B or C?

Credit to Laura Jones, ODNR

answers on page 8

Thank You

- To Michael Wertz for clearing our drive of snow providing access to a winter wonderland.
- To Jim Britt Tree Co. for expertly removing hazardous trees.
- To Community Development Professional Bridgeworks for providing free seminars to our Board of Directors and Sheri Lawson for facilitating our strategic planning.
- To MUM for our strategic planning venue.
- To the Episcopal Church of Ascension for giving us the use of their library for our monthly board meetings.
- To Bob Wise for sharpening and oiling our work day tools.
- To Gibbie Wise for repairing the songs in our silent Audubon Birds.
- To Middletown Garden Club for their special donation for bridge repair.
- To our faithful feeder fillers who braved snow and ice to keep the birds happy: Bruce Peters and Carrie Kienlen, Chuck and Guy Stone, Les Mills and Bob Wise.
- To Aaron Grant for maintaining the website.
- Everyone who has contributed to Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum with their time, resources, and monetary donations.



We truly appreciate your support!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

March

21 Sunday 2:00-3:00 Dog Walk Join Boo Norton-Schmiedt with (or without) your four-legged friend on a leash, for a walk along the trails to enjoy the season.

27 Saturday 9:30-1:00 March Mulch Madness Workday Bring your work gloves and tools – or use ours, we welcome all volunteers with an eagerness to help keep Bull's Run at its best.

27 Saturday 8:30-9:30 pm Earth Hour Night Hike Turn off your lights and come join us for a night hike.

April

18 Sunday 2:00-3:00 Dog Walk

18 Sunday 4:00 Wildflower walk at Autumn Drive- Water Tower Park

25 Sunday 2:00 Wildflower walk

May

1 Saturday 9:30-1:00 Workday

8 Saturday 10-12 Plant Sale, *Just in time for Mother's Day!* Look for plant order forms on the website, www.bullsrn.org, in mid-April.

8 Saturday 10:30 Spring Wildflower Walk

15 Saturday 9:30-1:00 Workday

16 Sunday 2:00-3:00 Dog Walk

Visit our website, www.bullsrn.org

Contact Barb Reuss, Naturalist, to speak to your organization or for a program at Bull's Run.

Contact her at naturalist@bullsrn.org or 513-422-5063.

Winter Wonderland at Bull's Run



Who's Who Answers

Picture A is the fox squirrel

Picture B is the grey squirrel

Picture C is the red squirrel

