



Bull's Run Newsletter Spring 2021

Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum is a non-profit volunteer organization located in NE Butler County and serving the surrounding community. We are dedicated to preserving the natural area of Bull's Run, and strive to develop the park as an environmental facility and educational resource for people of all ages.



Spring Happenings at Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum



Signs of spring are everywhere! Snowdrops, daffodils and other flowers are emerging from bulbs in gardens, goldfinches are changing from olive drab to cheery yellow, and rain (instead of snow) is falling. Wildflower Walks, free and open to the public, will begin on Sunday, March 28, at 2 pm, with 3 others until the beginning of May. Join fellow enthusiasts for a guided walk to explore the ever-changing forest carpet of colors as the spring ephemerals take advantage of the spring sunshine before the forest canopy develops to shade them. And this spring, Brood X of the periodical cicadas will be emerging.

Other changes are happening, too. Our naturalist, Stephanie McCabe, hired just as the Pandemic was shutting things down last spring, informed the Board of Directors that she was resigning at the end of 2020. As the world moves on past the COVID year, we will slowly return to a new normal. The outdoor experience is still available to explore with social distancing and wearing masks while enjoying nature, since there are many others not from your household also enjoying nature. BRNSA will continue to have its gates open during daylight hours, so get out and explore!

Nancy Clark, President

Note about the Naturalist

We are currently interviewing several applicants for the part-time position of BRNSA Naturalist. The Board of Directors will be making the final decision in early April. Please check our Facebook page and website for the much anticipated announcement. We look forward to hopefully being able to offer Spring Nature Tots by the last week in April through May as the new Naturalist settles in to the job.

Maple Sugar Hike

We were thrilled to have a beautiful sunny day to visit our tapped maple trees on the trail, and had a great turnout as well. Our hike began a journey through the process of collecting sap, to the finished product and the modern, highly regulated grading system of syrup available today. The highlight was tasting the three different grades of syrup and even some maple sugar prepared from sap collected at Bull's Run.



Spring Wildflower Walk Series

Spring officially begins on March 20 this year, and this marks the beginning of a rainy season with warming temperatures and days growing longer. These cues tell plants it's time to come out and grow! As the season progresses there is an ever changing variety of beautiful native woodland flowers to see. To enjoy the wide variety of wildflowers, join us at more than one of our Spring Wildflower Walks to spot any of the over 30 different species we have identified at Bull's Run!

Large flowered trillium – Ohio State Wildflower →



Bird Watching at the Arboretum

For birdwatchers, spring is a very exciting time of year. Migration, which is a seasonal movement from one region to another, is happening! Waves of birds, motivated by increasing day length and warmer temperatures, among other factors, travel north in search of food resources and nesting sites. Migrants can travel short, medium, or long distances seasonally.

While necessary, migration is full of hazards, both natural and manmade. Birds exhausted from flying long distances are vulnerable to predators and bad weather. Unfortunately, many birds succumb to obstacles like communication towers and tall buildings, especially when lights are left on, confusing their navigation skills.

There are some simple things you can do to help make your yard an oasis for migrating birds. Start by keeping it wild! Avoid using pesticides and herbicides so the seeds and insects in your yard are safe for birds to consume. Delaying garden clean-up until it warms up in spring, and not removing fallen leaves allows overwintering insects and their eggs to emerge providing food for insect eaters. A source of clean, fresh water would be a welcome sight for weary migrants.

Blue-grey Gnatcatcher↓



Many species of warblers and other songbirds pass through Ohio on journeys north, while some will stay here and breed.

In our area, late April through May is a good time to get outside and observe.

If you feed birds, you may see an exotic-looking Rose-breasted Grosbeak at your feeder; they love oil sunflower. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are a beloved and highly anticipated gem of spring, and we can expect them in our area mid to late April or early May.

They will readily come to feeders filled with homemade nectar of

one part sugar to four parts water. Blue-grey Gnatcatchers are an abundant early migrant, and their high-pitched, squeaky calls are easily recognizable as they flit through the trees. Colorful warblers move around quickly as they search for emerging insects. Spotting them is easier before trees begin to leaf out.

Please join us for our Migrating Bird Walk at Bull's Run on Saturday, May 8 at 10 am.

If you'd like to learn more about migration, here are a few resources:

www.Allaboutbirds.org is a great website by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

"A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration" by author and Ohio resident, Kenn Kaufman
www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com Typically held in-person on the shores of Lake Erie, this year's festival of migration will be held virtually

Search www.birdwatchersdigest.com for great information on creating bird-friendly habitat in your yard, and on attracting hummingbirds or other favorite species

Rachel Diver, Board Member

Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum Contributions
Received since the Winter Newsletter

2021 Memberships

Loren Ackerman
David and Janice Adams
Barbara Balsmeyer
Doug Bean
Laird and Janet Becker
Chris and Tom Buchert
Shirley Butts
Cherri Carpenter
Dewitt Chapple
Nancy Clark
Ed and Susan Combs
Ron and Barbara Conley
Jennifer Cupp
Joe and Carolyn DiStaola
Rachel Diver
Don and Judy Dixon
John Dupps
Carol Duricy
Don and Betty Elworth
Lana Ernst
Patricia Gage
Elaine Garver
Bob and Mary Alice Gast
Greg and Dianne Gerber
Cissi Glickfield
Forest and Debbie Grant
Jane Gold
Ed and Rose Grau
LaVerne Hopper
Kenneth Johnson
Ray and Jean Anne Kiefhaber
William King
Brad and Marge Kochunas
Mike and Priscilla Lane
Elizabeth Martin
Heinz and Gisela Matthiesen
Ted and Marcia Miller
Peter Moroz
Jeff McMullen and Barbara Ballard
Terri Mulhall
Larry and Amanda Mulligan
Imogene Orts
Richard and Virginia Palmer
Elizabeth Patterson
Pamela and Loring Pearson

2021 Memberships

Greg and Patty Pratt
John and Jennifer Ridge
Thomas Ritter
Elizabeth Rogers and Ernst Bever
Kathleen Dobrozsi Romans
Jim and Lynnette Schluter
Tom Scott
Judy Shillinglaw
Joan and Glen Shivers
Greg Siewny
Debbie Simpkins
Julie Thomas
John Whittington and Beth Everage
Mary Lou Williams
Breiel Wilson
Miranda Wilson

Fundraising Contribution

Loren Ackerman
Barbara Balsmeyer
Doug Bean
Laird and Janet Becker
Chris and Tom Buchert
Dewitt Chapple
Ron and Barbara Conley
John Dupps, Jr.
Carol Duricy
Patricia Gage
Elaine Garver
Bob and Mary Alice Gast
Greg and Dianne Gerber
Cissi Glickfield
Jane Gold
Forest and Debbie Grant
Ed and Rose Grau
Kenneth Johnson
Brad and Marge Kochunas
Peter Moroz
Imogene Orts
Kathleen Dobrozsi Romans
Joan and Glen Shivers
Greg Siewny
Mary Lou Williams
Breiel Wilson

Facilities Improvement

Joe and Carolyn DiStaola
John Dupps, Jr.
LaVerne Hopper
John and Jennifer Ridge
Julie Thomas

Land Stewardship

Jeff McMullen and Barbara Ballard
Greg and Patty Pratt

Education

John Dupps, Jr.
Jim and Lynnette Schluter

Middletown Community

Foundation

John Dupps, Jr.
Ed and Rose Grau

Memorials

Lana Ernst
In loving memory of
Bruce Peters, Jr.

Ray and Jean Kiefhaber
In loving memory of
Ronald Williams

Greg and Patty Pratt
In loving memory of
Ronald Williams

Jim and Lynnette Schluter
In loving memory of
Phyllis DeWeese Morgan

Julie Thomas
In loving memory of
Joseph M. Thomas

Debbie Kopp Simpkins
In loving memory of
Ed Simpkins
Marian Kopp

In Kind
Diver's – photo contest prize
Mike Wertz – mowed prairie

These contributions were received between 12/5/2020 and 3/15/2021. If our records do not reflect your records, please notify us and we will be sure to include you in our next newsletter where we list new contributions to Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum. Thank you for your support!

17-year Cicada Invasion

Spring of 2021 is the big one as spring rains approach. May and June will get noisy as Brood X, a group of periodical cicadas that emerge every 17 years, will tunnel out of the ground and take over southwest Ohio and other areas of the eastern United States. Seventeen springs ago, the parents of these cicadas emerged, mated and laid eggs on tree branches over a six-week period. The eggs matured and hatched, then the nymphs dropped to the ground and burrowed underground for 17 years, molting several times (instar stages) as they grew bigger from sucking moisture found in plant roots.

These large insects are not harmful to humans. They are simply going through the noisy stage of their incomplete metamorphosis life cycle. As the wingless nymphs emerge after spring rains soften the soil and soil temperatures reach 64°, they will climb a tree trunk and split their exoskeleton in a final molt to transform into winged adults. The males are responsible for the noise as they flex their tymbal muscle causing circular ridged membranes, drum-like organs found in their abdomens, to vibrate. Their “song” attracts the females for mating. The adult stage only lasts a few weeks as they mate and then lay eggs on narrow tree branches.



Cicadas, both annual and periodical, are mostly beneficial. They prune mature trees, aerate the soil, and once they die, their bodies serve as an important source of nitrogen for growing trees. Some fishermen claim they make wonderful bait. The down-side of periodical cicadas is the threat of damage to very young trees as the females insert their ovipositor to lay eggs. Some dogs may have digestive issues if they eat too many of the insects they find on the ground or tree trunks.

Dr. Gene Kritsky, Dean of Behavioral and Natural Sciences at Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati, worked in partnership with the Center for IT Engagement (ciTe) to create the

Cicada Safari app. To join Cicada Safari and help map the 2021 emergence, download the free app from the Apple app store or Google play.

More information about all types of cicadas can be found at <https://www.cicadamania.com/>

Spring Photo Contest

There are so many spring wildflowers and other signs of nature coming back to life after surviving another winter. We want to see nature through your photos! The only rules are that it must be a subject within Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum, and that photographers must stay on the trails. Keep in mind that we have plenty of poison ivy monitoring who strays from the trails! The winner will receive a hummingbird feeder, Bull's Run t-shirt, and a feature in the 2022 Bull's Run Calendar. Send entries to naturalist@bullsrun.org by 12:00 p.m. on May 31. *Fall Photo Contest prize: BRNSA Shirt, suet feeder and suet cakes. Awarded to Lisa Camden*



Bull's Run Fundraising Challenges

For the safety of our volunteers and community, our main fundraiser, The Annual Garage Sale, has been postponed for the second year. Programs and workdays are still taking place while maintaining safe distances. As we navigate this challenging time, your support is critical in order to maintain and improve Bull's Run, as well as offering educational programs to the community. Please join us with your 2021 membership. Additional contributions are most appreciated!

More Ways to Help Bull's Run

Kroger Community Rewards Program:

Kroger Community Rewards makes fund-raising easy...all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card! This will not affect your fuel rewards in any way. We currently have 15 families participating in this program. Will you help, too?

1. Sign in to your digital account (or create one).
2. Search for our organization **Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum**.
3. Enter our NPO number **MX093**
4. Select our organization **Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum** from the list and click "Save".

Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper's Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, **at no added cost to you**. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending as it relates to the total spending associated with all participating Kroger Community Rewards organizations.

2021 Work Days

Spring is on our doorstep, though we keep holding our breath in hopes it doesn't snow again so we can get out and get planting! We have 5 work days planned for this spring where we need many hands to help us keep the park in great shape for visitors in spring and summer!



Prairie recently mown by Mike Wertz and ready for seeds collected at a workday last fall.

As always, that includes removing invasive plants, including honeysuckle and euonymus, so we can make more room for native plants. We will be planting over 50 new native tree and shrub seedlings, along with spreading seeds in newly cleared spaces. Strengthening the biodiversity of the park is helping us rebuild from the loss of so many ash trees over the last decade. Climate change is giving us milder winters, increasing the number of pests, and more rain, making blight and other diseases more common. Adding more variety of plants ensures that the park inhabitants have alternative food sources and shelter in case any single plant species is severely affected again.

We have tools, but we ask you to supply your own mask, work gloves and filled water bottles. So, bring yourself (and friends and family members), and enjoy the return of spring with us. With your help we keep Bull's Run usable and fun for people and wildlife!

Thanks to all who help keep Bull's Run an important asset of the community!

- ❖ Thanks to all the workday volunteers, both individuals and groups!
- ❖ Thanks to Diver's Garden and Pet Supplies for donating the suet feeder and 2 suet cakes for the prize awarded to Lisa Camden, the 2020 Fall Photo Contest Winner.
- ❖ Thanks to Mike Wertz for mowing the prairie so seeds collected last fall have a chance at new growth once they are spread at one of the upcoming spring Work Days.
- ❖ Thanks to those who shop at Kroger and have enrolled in their community rewards program, listing Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum – organization # MX093.
- ❖ Thanks to everyone who “likes” us on Facebook and shares events.
- ❖ Thanks to everyone who enters a photograph in our contests this year.
- ❖ Thanks to Aaron Grant for maintaining our website.
- ❖ Thanks to the Grant family for reconditioning the bird feeders and setting them in place for the winter feeding season.
- ❖ Thanks to the volunteers filling the feeders with seed to help supplement the diet of the feathered (and furred) winter residents of BRNSA.
- ❖ Thanks to everyone who takes the time to pick up litter around the parking lot and along the trails.
- ❖ Thanks to all Board members for their enduring support!
- ❖ Thanks to Denny Luksic for reconstructing the bulletin board at the front gate.



- ❖ To everyone who has already made Bull's Run part of their 2021 giving and those who plan to contribute in 2021, we truly appreciate your support!

2021 Membership Form is included in this mailing at the top of page 7 and is also available on the website, if you have not already sent in your contribution.

Together we are making a difference!



2021 Membership Form

Tax Deductible

Our Mission Statement

Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum is a non-profit volunteer organization located in NE Butler County serving the surrounding community. We are dedicated to preserving the natural area of Bull's Run and strive to develop the park as an environmental facility and educational resource for people of all ages.

___ \$40 Family (printed newsletter) ___ \$30 Family (e-newsletter)
___ \$30 Individual (printed newsletter) ___ \$20 Individual (e-newsletter)

\$ _____ **Additional Fundraising contribution**

\$ _____ Contribution to the Endowment Fund with Middletown Community

\$ _____ Contribution in Honor/Memory of: (Name) _____

Please send an acknowledgement of this donation to: Name _____

Address _____

\$ _____ **Total Enclosed** Check # _____

Membership also payable on website

Name _____

Address _____

Phone# () _____ e-mail _____

To volunteer, schedule a program, tour, or speaker for your group,
Contact President, Nancy Clark at 513-368-3233 or email naturalist@bullsrn.org.

For event information visit www.bullsrn.org or our Facebook page.

Mail to Bull's Run Arboretum, P.O. Box 425, Middletown, OH 45042-0425

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2021 Spring Nature TOTS

**Child-centered, hands-on exploration of nature for children ages 6 months to 6 years
(and their caregivers)!**

**5-week program, on Mondays 10:00 - 11:30 am (subject to change with new naturalist)
The weeks of April 25, May 3, 10, 17 and 24.**

Learn about nature in spring through activities, exploration, crafts and more, and then wrap up your day with a snack! Sound like fun? Join us to explore nature hands on as the plants and animals come back to life on Mondays in late April and May, from 10-11:30 a.m. Nature Tots is free and includes all four seasons with a 2021 family membership. **Reservations and 2021 family membership required** (good for all 2021 Nature Tots Spring, Summer and Fall). Be sure to dress for the weather, we will be outdoors! Join us for crafts, games, and exploration.

Call BRNSA at 513-279-8958 or email naturalist@bullsrn.org to register!

*BRNSA 2021 family membership required to participate in this FREE program.

To become a member, visit www.bullsrn.org/membership or fill out the form on page 7.

Many thanks to our current all-volunteer Board of Directors for their leadership, dedication and hours of service to BRNSA: Nancy Clark, Rachel Diver, Forest Grant, Sarah Meadows, Shauna Steigerwald and Randy Wilson.



Bull's Run Photo Gallery



Take a moment to fill out the survey for Middletown City Park System Master Plan that can be found at <https://www.cityofmiddletown.org/541/Parks-Master-Plan> beginning March 26.

Mark Your Calendars For Upcoming Events

March

27 Work Day 9:30am – 1pm
28 Wildflower Walk – 2 - 3 pm

April

11 Wildflower walk 2-3 Bull's Run
17 Earth Day Work Day
24 Work Day 9:30am – 1pm
25 Wildflower walk 2-3pm
25 Wildflower Walk @
Armbruster Preserve 4-5pm
26 Spring Nature Tots

May

1 Work Day 9:30am – 1pm
2 Wildflower Walk Bull's Run 2pm
3 Spring Nature Tots
8 Migratory Bird Walk 10am
10 Spring Nature Tots
15 Work Day 9:30am – 1pm
17 Spring Nature Tots
24 Spring Nature Tots
31 Spring Photo Contest due date

June

20 Summer Tree Walk 2-3 pm

For more information, please visit our website www.bullsrn.org or Facebook page Contact Naturalist, at naturalist@bullsrn.org, to schedule a tour or service project, or speak to your organization or for a program at Bull's Run. While BRNSA works to fill the naturalist position, former naturalists, Nancy Clark and Sarah Meadows, other Board Members and volunteers will be coordinating events. Please keep checking the website and Facebook for updates on all listed events.