

# Beaver Creek Wetlands Association

# The Spotted Turtle

Volume XIX, No. 2

Spring 2006



## 2006 Calendar

### April

April 28/29

Audubon Birdathon. Volunteers and pledges needed.

Fri, April 28 - Sat, April 29

### May

(National Wetlands Month)

**Boy Scouts Camporall** – we will be there with our display.

Saturday, May 6th.

**Beaver Creek Wetlands Assoc.**

**Annual Membership Meeting**

Tuesday, May 16th, Bergamo Ctr.

### July

**North American Butterfly Assoc.**

**Butterfly Census** - Date TBA

**Greene County Fair**

Sunday, July 30-Saturday, Aug. 5

### August

**Fairborn Sweet Corn Festival**

Volunteers needed. Call 320-9042.

Sat, Aug. 19 - Sun, Aug. 20

### September

**Beavercreek Popcorn Festival**

Volunteers needed. Call 320-9042.

Sat, Sep. 9 - Sun, Sep. 10

### October

**Combined Federal Campaign**

**Kickoff** - Date TBA

## Annual Membership Meeting: Your Attendance is Requested!

**S**ave the date!!! Our annual Membership Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 16th at the Bergamo Center. This is an open meeting, so invite your friends and relatives!!!

This year's guest speaker is Gary Coover, Curator Emeritus of the Boonshoft Museum of Discover and Research Biologist at Crane Hollow State Nature Preserve.

Gary was Curator of Biology at Dayton's Boonshoft Museum of Discovery from 1974 through 1999, where he worked extensively with hoverflies to determine new species. He recently conducted a comprehensive study of ants in Ohio, resulting in *The Ants of Ohio*, published by the Ohio Biological Survey. This study was based on 15,000 specimens housed at the museum. Since 2002, Gary has been devoting his time to a comprehensive biological inventory of Crane Hollow State Nature Preserve, a 1200 acre, 3 mile-long wooded valley.

We urge all members to come to this special event, meet fellow members, and learn more about your organization's work and accomplishments. So please reserve the 16th and be sure to keep an eye on your mailbox for your invitation! The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m., with a pre-meeting hike led by Don Geiger at 6:00. Refreshments will be provided at a pre-meeting reception. For more info, contact us at 320-9042 or [admin@beavercreekwetlands.org](mailto:admin@beavercreekwetlands.org).



*This tree at Siebenthaler Fen was girdled by beavers. See Jim Amon's article on page 4 to learn about beavers' impact on the wetlands.*

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## From the President

Your Association continues to press forward on preserving the Big and Little Beaver Creeks and their headwaters. Largely due to the leadership of Dr. Jim Amon, Dr. Don Geiger, and Dane Mutter, ideas for preservation and restoration work continue to be recognized, accepted, and for some of the projects, partly funded by government agencies and the BCWA. Work will continue through the spring and summer at the Fairborn Marsh and in the Creekside Reserve. Your help, physical labor, and continued support are vital. So, when you can, please respond to the call for help.

I have had the high privilege and honor to serve as the president of your association for the past 7 years and on May 16, 2006, my eligibility expires. In these past seven years, many new properties were brought into protection starting with Southdown, then Creekside, the Fairborn Marsh, and most recently the Pugh-Hagenbuch family donation. Our partners also brought the Koogler properties and 28 acres on the South side of US 35 into protection. A document providing guidance for development of properties that preserves wetlands, controls water runoff, provides guidelines on noise and light pollution, and setback distances was developed and provided to local government entities. The idea of archives came alive and were created at Wright State University. Trail guides were developed and published. Memorial benches were created and placed. A very large commemorative rock was placed and dedicated at the Hagenbuch Preserve. The kiosk at the Siebenthaler Fen was repaired and long hours of work in fund raising were accomplished. These are only a few of the improvements made during the past seven years.

The work goes on. We are dialoging with ODNR and ODOT on management plans for the Zimmerman Prairie and the old Ohio 835 on ramp. Cuts in the fence in the bike trail at the old Ohio 835 on-ramp are under way to provide the south side of Beaver Creek access to the bike trail. An observation platform near that site is being developed. Every bit of this work was generated by members of the Association and all of this vital work would not have taken place without the dedicated service of the people that drove these successful outcomes. I thank these people for their dedication and their work. I have learned much from working with them and look forward to serving in new capacities.

- Denny Jarvi

**Spotted Turtle Name and Logo:** The logo of the BCWA is a rendering of the Spotted Turtle by wildlife artist Charlie Harper. Harper, who generously donated the drawing back in 1988, lives in Cincinnati and has produced a wonderful array of art covering innumerable aspects of nature. Some of his work has been adopted by the National Park Service and has entertained and informed people from all over the planet. Our newsletter title recognizes the Spotted Turtle as an icon for the many rare animals and plants that are protected in the Beaver Creek Wetlands.

**Submissions, Questions, or Comments:** The BCWA is a member-based organization. Just as we rely on you for annual support, we also rely on you to make this newsletter the product of several diverse voices. So, if you have an idea for an article or if you have a nice picture to include, please send them to us at [admin@beavercreekwetlands.org](mailto:admin@beavercreekwetlands.org). Also, if you have any comments or questions that you'd like addressed in this newsletter, please send them to the same address. For newsletter submissions, questions, or comments, please include "newsletter" in the subject line of your email. Please note that we reserve the right to edit submissions for content or clarity.

**Donations of Land/Easements:** If you are interested in donating land, placing an easement on property, or remembering the BCWA in your will, please don't hesitate to contact the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association at 937-320-9042.

The editors wish to thank Sue Rytel for designing the layout of the *Spotted Turtle*.



Founded in 1988, the Mission of the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association is to protect the wetland ecosystem in the Beaver Creek watershed through partnerships, community networks, and public education.

# Science Corner

## Science Can Be Fun But it Really Matters, Too

If you like adventure and yearn to know about the world around you, you have to read *The Song of the Dodo* by David Quammen. It is a beautifully written book full of stories of exploration, history and adventure based on chronicles of the greatest minds in all of ecology. It is a story of islands, geography, and the things that do or do not live there. It is a story of ecological decline and extinction but it is, as well, a story of hope; hope that we will learn for the adventures of these great scientists and explorers and be able to conserve and protect our greatest living resources. Please read it. The following are my gleanings from that book.

The book is relaxing and wonderful to read but it is also serious science that provides important insight into how we protect all habitats, including the Beaver Creek Wetlands. The first thing to understand is that most natural habitats from our city parks to the much larger ones like Yellowstone are essentially islands surrounded by habitats that do not support or permit survival of the plants and animals common inside those parks. Second, the scientists have repeatedly found that more species occur inside *large* natural areas than in *small* ones. Third, small “islands” far away from larger ones have fewer species than those close to the large ones. This is the basic set of

observations.

So, a particular sized island has, what some call, a natural carrying capacity, a maximum number of species it can hold and maintain. The species may change but the number there remains about the same, an equilibrium number. It follows then, that if an island is cleaved into several smaller ones each island will lose some species until it falls to its size-based equilibrium point. Some species then may become extinct in that group of islands.

The landscape of Ohio has, like an island, been subdivided many times over. As we fly over the land or travel about on a leisurely drive it doesn't take long to see that what was once vast expanses of forest is now a scattering of tiny stands of trees. The largest expanse of native prairie is Huffman Prairie where Orville and Wilbur Wright learned how to fly. It is only 109 acres a mere remnant of a once larger expanse possibly over a thousand acres. The forest and prairie were once connected and they were interspersed with wetlands. Now, each is an island. The number of lost species is unknown to me. I suppose we could find out because there are many records. Each habitat supports its present day equilibrium number of species. Or does it? Some scientists have found that systems under stress from pollutants, disruptions or many other factors are in ecosystem decline and slowly, but surely, lose species. I will bet that non-native species invading our “islands” are doing just that!

The hope part of the story is this. We know what causes loss and while we can't replace extinct species we know what supports larger

numbers of species. All we have to do is de-fragment the landscape.

That is what the goals of the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association are all about. We need to put the ecosystem back together. We need to build larger and larger islands. We have now put much of the wetland corridor back together but more is yet to be done. We have included prairie and forest but we have development adding stress and invasive plants doing harm as well. But we are armed with knowledge, and knowledge is power. Wish us well.

- Jim Amon



*Visit the newly updated educational kiosk in the Siebenthaler Fen for more great educational information about the wetlands.*

*Thanks to Bob Louis for updating the kiosk!*

### Leave It to Beaver

Beaver Cleaver on the sit-com from too many years ago always seemed to have some kind of situation, but unlike the real world it always seemed to come out right and everyone was happy. Well, at least that is how I remember it. Our local beaver populations have gotten into some situations too. Most recently flooding out bridges. Not good! So why not just trap them and transport them to a place where they need beavers?

Unfortunately I don't think that is possible any more. Since 1990 when we first noted that they were back in the Beaver Creek their numbers have skyrocketed. So everybody has more than they need - that is, more than we can live with. Some places with Beaver

are large habitats and quite distant from people. Yellowstone Park comes to mind. Around the Dayton Metropolitan area beavers bump into somebody's back yard, road or field too often.

It is not always just humans that have problems. We have had problems when they flooded all the rare species at the Ankeny Fen, they flooded the shallow marsh at CEMEX Reserve and diverted water away from the wet prairie. In Fairborn, they made water deep enough to prevent good drainage from the Beerman Fen and in the Koogler Reserve they kept flooding on some tree species so long that they have begun to die, and at Fairborn Marsh they cut a channel to the creek. Then when they left and their dam washed out, the

marsh was made drier than usual. The problem is one of competing priorities. Do we want to leave it to beaver or do we protect the small remnants of nature remaining in the whole wetland corridor? The Beaver Creek Wetland Management Group is composed of land owners and managers from the public and private sectors that meet every couple of months to look over issues of management, and the topic of beavers comes up often and will continue to do so. Right now we leave beavers alone if they do no significant harm, but we are forced to deal with them by professional trappers frequently. Nobody said taking care of the wetlands would be easy.

- Jim Amon

### Grass-of-Parnassus

Sometimes a plant is given a common name that is actually the name of a member of a different plant family. Perhaps the plant was so-named because it resembled a member of that other family. Perhaps there was another reason. One example of a plant that is named from another plant family is the Grass-of-Parnassus (*Parnassia glauca Rafinesque*).

The Grass-of-Parnassus is a member of the Saxifrage Family (*Saxifragaceae*), not the Grass Family (*Gramineae* or *Poaceae*). In fact, the Grass-of-Parnassus doesn't even resemble the true grasses. The generic name, *Parnassia*, was named for Mount Parnassus, a mountain in Greece,

which was sacred to the Greek god, Apollo. This mountain is where the Greek naturalist, Dioscorides, studied many of his plants. However, The Grass-of-Parnassus is not even native to Greece. The specific epithet, *glauca*, is Greek for "bluish green".

The Grass-of Parnassus was listed under other names, too. A scientific synonym for this plant was *Parnassia americana Muhlenberg*.

Other common names for this plant, some of which are also named for members of other plant families, are American Grass-of-Parnassus, Bog Star, Fen Grass-of-Parnassus, White Buttercup, and White Liverwort.

**Description:** Perennial

**Height:** 4-25 inches.

**Stem:** The stem is smooth.

**Leaves:** The leaves are simple and have unbranched veins, so they resemble grass.

**Flowers:** The flowers are creamy white with green veins. Each stem has only 1 flower, which located is atop that stem. Each flower is radially symmetrical and is about 3/4-1 1/2 inch wide.

**Habitat:** Fens, wet meadows and fields, and other alkaline wetlands.

**Range:** Northern U.S. and eastern Canada. Although not found in the Beaver Creek Wetlands, these plants can be seen at Ceder Bog.

- Gordon Mitchell,  
Columbus MetroParks

## Honeysuckle Removal at Creekside Reserve

With the help of a grant from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, bush honeysuckle removal has taken a giant step forward at Creekside Reserve. Viewed from US-35 the woods at the south end of the Reserve are pleasantly open and free of honeysuckle thickets, thanks to Greene County Parks' newly acquired Ammbusher machine. A total of 12 acres of woodlands have been cleared in record time.

The goal of the physical removal is to allow native plants characteristic of the woodland habitat to become established and form a well developed herbaceous ground cover. A related goal is to allow us to control invasive plants such as garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) and lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*) that crowd out native ground cover. Physical removal is not suited for areas where an

herbaceous layer is established. In this part of Creekside Reserve the density of honeysuckle precludes growth of a herbaceous layer, native tree seedlings and even bush honeysuckle seedlings!

Part of the program is to develop methods that will enable us to use physical removal in a way that leads to the return of a healthy woodland habitat. Our volunteers are busy treating the shattered stumps with Roundup to find a method to prevent re-growth from the stumps. They are also applying Roundup to the second-year garlic mustard rosettes before they flower and scatter seeds again and to lesser celandine mats near stream banks. Developing methods that can be widely applied in such situations is critically needed given the proportions of bush honeysuckle invasion in this part of the state.

- Don Geiger



*Greene County Parks' newly acquired Ammbusher machine is clearing out invasive honeysuckle in record time!*

## Needed: New Members!

The BCWA is driven by the talents, skills, and dedication of its members. While we have made much progress in our mission over the years, we still have a long way to go! That means that if BCWA is going to succeed, we will need the driving force of future generations.

Please consider this as an appeal for young members with a fresh perspective! If you are a young person who is already a member, we implore you to promote the BCWA through word-of-mouth. As well, we encourage your participation in our volunteer events and/or one of our ongoing projects. One-time projects are also a great way to get started! For example, last year a group of students from Wright State University designed a new brochure for BCWA. The possibilities are nearly limitless!

If you are a young person who isn't a member, please join today! As a grassroots organization, we can function as an asset to the community only if we truly represent the communities that we serve. And as an organization firmly dedicated to education, a diverse range of perspectives is vital for our outreach efforts!



**Annual BCWA  
Environmental  
Achievement Award**

At this year's Beaver Creek Chamber of Commerce awards dinner, the BCWA recognized the **Bill and Grace Hagenbuch Family** as this year's BCWA Environmental Stewardship Award Winner.

Bill and Grace and their four daughters, Bonnie Gordon, Kate Hagenbuch, Christine Martin and Susan Martin, are this year's recipients of the award. The Hagenbuch generosity goes back a long way. Bill's mother donated the 200-year-old Jacob Coy house for historical preservation; the basement of this building is now BCWA's office.

Bill was among the founders of the BCWA. In fact, the early meetings were held in Bill and Grace's home. Grace provided a lot of help, cut newspaper clippings, and kept records that have since been placed in the Wright State University archive section for all to study. Bill was the first president of the association. He created and maintained its records and database for many years. Their daughters have followed in their parent's footsteps, spending countless hours preparing ground, planting trees, and helping eradicate invasive species.

Most recently Bill and his daughters donated over 10 acres of their property to the west of North Fairfield Road to the Association and also created an environmental easement for their property that will be managed by the BCWA. There is a lesson in environmental stewardship from which we can all learn. Bill and Grace, together with their daughters, have left a lasting legacy on how to preserve the environment. They are true stewards of the land.

- Denny Jarvi, President

**BULLETIN BOARD**

**Birdathon: Many Birders Needed!!!**

This year's Dayton Audubon Society Birdathon will be held from 5:00 pm on Friday April 28 through 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 29. Teams will be counting bird species in this 24-hour period to raise funds for Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm and the BCWA.

The first objective is to get a very complete view of the species present in the entire Beaver Creek Wetlands corridor. To this we can add other observations made through the year by any well-qualified birders. We would like to understand which habitats harbor certain species only and which have the greatest diversity. First time Birders are WELCOME! Don't be shy; that's how many of us got started. You can, too! There are over 20 sites where we could use coverage, especially in the timeframe between 7 to 10 AM. To participate in our team, the Wright State Rails, contact Jim at [james.amon@wright.edu](mailto:james.amon@wright.edu). He can help with finding a site and can tell you how to find really good places.

The second objective is to raise money while enjoying the pleasures of birding. The Dayton Audubon Society holds this Birdathon annually and half the proceeds go to BCWA and the other half to Aullwood. Participants need to contact their friends asking them to pledge some monetary amount for each species identified. Typically that is about 25 cents to \$1 per species, but ANY amount is fine.

Please use the form below to make your pledge and make copies for any additional pledges you sign up. Then send them to BCWA – Birdathon, PO Box 42, Alpha, Ohio 45301. Alternately, you can email your pledges to: [admin@beavercreekwetlands.org](mailto:admin@beavercreekwetlands.org). After the Birdathon, we will inform you of your team totals so you can send your pledge. Please make all checks payable to the Dayton Audubon Society.

Yes, I will support DAS Birdathon. I pledge \_\_\_\_\_ per species to the team(s) checked below.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Old Birders: Charlotte Mathena, Sue Tackett, Jim Hill, John Howard
- \_\_\_\_\_ Aristoquacks: Barbara Keegan, Jennifer Monahan, Judy Whitaker
- \_\_\_\_\_ Philanthropic Phalaropes: Jim Simpson, Mike Zimmerman
- \_\_\_\_\_ Solitary Sandpipers: Mike Coogan, Mark Dillon
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Wright State Rails:** Wright State University and Beaver Creek Wetlands
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wild Berrys: Betty Berry and Betty Leve
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tenacious Towhees: Xenia Central Middle School students

Instead of a per species pledge, I will donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to Dayton Audubon's Birdathon.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Bonus:** Again this year, non-Audubon members who contribute \$20 or more will receive a membership to the National Audubon Society and Dayton Audubon! If you'd like to meet some fellow birders, feel free to bring your pledges and/or donations to Patty's Shelter at Englewood MetroPark at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, April 29th for refreshments and the big tally!

## Thank You!

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### Combined Federal Campaign

A special **THANKS** to everyone who gave through the Combined Federal Campaign to the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association. Your generosity provided \$16,149 of support!

### Miami Valley School Helps at Fairborn Marsh

**THANKS** to several students and two faculty from MVS who spent much of March 16th helping take care of the recently planted trees and preparing for more plantings on a beautiful spring-like day. The students were part of a class that visited wetlands in Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas before returning to Ohio. As a capstone to that wonderful class, their teacher got them involved in the Beaver Creek Wetlands right in their own back yard.

### May is Beaver Creek Wetland Month!

We have been working with the Beavercreek City Council for the past few months to declare May as Beaver Creek Wetland Month. By the time you read this, the resolution should have been passed at the council's April 24th meeting. In conjunction with this resolution, five large banners for the BCWA and the wetlands will hang from city light poles for the month of May. **THANKS** to the City Council for recognizing the importance of our local wetlands!



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## Join the BCWA Today!

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Membership dues go directly to fund land acquisition, our quality programming in education, habitat restoration and management of our preserve. In order to purchase future parcels of land and pay off the mortgage on our most recent purchase, we rely on your membership.

Membership categories include:

\$5-Student	\$10-Senior (60+)	\$15-Individual
\$25-Family	\$35-Contributing	\$50-Supporting
\$100-Patron	\$1,000-Life	

To join, please send a check payable to BCWA to: **BCWA, P.O. Box 42, Alpha, OH 45301.**

Please include your name, address, phone and email. Remember, the BCWA is a 501(c)(3) land trust organization and your donation is tax deductible.



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Denny Jarvi, President  
Dane Mutter, Vice President  
Bob Louis, Secretary  
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