

Beaver Creek Wetlands Association

The Spotted Turtle

Volume XIX, No. 3

Summer 2006



2006 Calendar

July

North American Butterfly Assoc. Butterfly Census - Date TBA

Greene County Fair

Sunday, July 30-Saturday, Aug. 5

August

Ohio Prairie Conference

Fri, Aug. 11 - Sat, Aug. 12, Cox Arboretum.

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



Gary Covert (speaker) and his wife, Holly. Photo by Sally Meike.

Annual Meeting: A New Era Begins!

This year's Membership Meeting was held on Tuesday, May 16th at the Bergamo Center. This meeting marked the beginning of Susie Scott's term as BCWA President. Susie will be joined by Richard Robertson, who agreed to serve as Vice President. As well, Robert Louis and Doug Hull have agreed to continue their roles as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. A big thanks to outgoing President, Denny Jarvi, for providing years of leadership and inspiration.

Susie Scott was named as the Volunteer of the Year. In addition to having served multiple years serving as Vice-President, she spearheaded our annual membership drives and coordinated our ongoing fundraising efforts. Susie also spent a great deal of time this past year working on an insert in the Neighbors Section of the *Dayton Daily News*. Susie created the idea and sold banner ads to help defray the insert publishing costs. This insert was distributed on May 4th to the Beavercreek Area and did a great job explaining the history and activities of the BCWA.

This year's guest speaker was Gary Covert, Research Biologist at Crane Hollow State Nature Preserve. He discussed his efforts to create a comprehensive study of ants in Ohio, which resulted in *The Ants of Ohio*. He also talked about his latest daunting task: a comprehensive biological inventory of Crane Hollow State Nature Preserve, a 1200 acre, 3 mile-long wooded valley!

The financial reports presented by Treasurer Doug Hull are featured on page 6 of this newsletter.



Newly elected BCWA officers:
Robert Louis, Secretary; Richard Robertson, VP; Doug Hull, Treasurer; Susie Scott, President.
Photo by Sally Meike.

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From the President

DRAMA IN THE WETLANDS

As the crow flies, we live about one-half mile from the wetlands. Sitting at my computer I look out to our landscape and a small water garden. This spring a Great Blue Heron by-passed the wetlands and landed right on our lawn with a bright eye on our goldfish.

The Scarlet Tanager that flashed through the ash tree may make a meal for the Sharp Shinned hawk nesting nearby. The garter snake in the perennial bed always startles me and delights my grandsons. Nature is full of drama.

As citizens and BCWA members you participate in this wonderful bit of theater and the parts you play are crucial. You are cast in the role of protector of the beautiful Beaver Creek Wetlands. Each of you fills your role in your own distinct way. Whether you are contributing to the funding effort, stuffing envelopes, planting trees, removing honeysuckle and garlic mustard, counting birds for the Audubon Bird Count, building boardwalks, or writing your congressman about environmental concerns, you are part of an outstanding cast that together deserves a standing ovation.

I am honored to have been asked to serve as President of the BCWA for the coming year. The drama of nature has always excited me and I look forward to working with you and the trustees to advance the efforts of protecting and restoring the Beaver Creek Wetlands.

It takes many minds, hands, and hearts to accomplish so much. So, please, when the BCWA calls and needs you, step up and join the cast. Together we are producing an incredible show.

- Susie Scott

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. 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

Coyote, *Canis latrans*

The answer is yes! The Question? Could that medium sized, slender grey dog with a bushy tail hanging at a 45 degree angle (with a black tip), running across my yard, be a coyote?

According to the Ohio Division of Wildlife, the coyote made its first appearance in Ohio in 1919 and today is found in all 88 counties. Historically, they have been associated with open territory, but, in Ohio have shown a preference for rolling farmland with brushy habitat. Some biologists theorize that with the advent of the interstate highway system, coyotes found wide, grassy berms loaded with meadow voles and field mice. They followed these "trails" eastward and are now found throughout the U.S. A pair was found in New York City in the spring of 1995.

The coyote, like any other wildlife species, needs shelter, food and water to maintain life. Its strength is that it can adapt and exploit almost any habitat to its advantage. The coyote has found urban and suburban "habitat" much to its liking. Researchers find that they will pass up garbage cans and dumpsters, preferring to catch dinner on the run. Squirrels, rabbits, field mice, city rats and an occasional small pet are available to this opportunistic predator. They also feed on fruits, grasses, vegetables, and carrion. Their omnivorous diet adds to their adaptability. For shelter, coyotes have been found in drain pipes, empty buildings, and since most cities were established along major waterways, there is natural shelter and a ready supply of water to drink.

Jim Amon, Biology professor at Wright State University (WSU), has seen numerous coyotes in the Beaver Creek Wetlands. Here they are a stone's throw from suburban development with all the amenities of a natural wetland habitat. He often sees them in the vicinity of the open prairie and dense shrubby wetlands near New Germany Trebein Rd. and on the pipeline right of way that runs a north/south route through the wetlands corridor. They frequently cross Fairgrounds Rd. at Siebenthaler Fen. Dave Warner, Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODW) Officer for Greene County, has on occasion sounded his siren in the evening and gotten howling responses from coyotes in this vicinity. The coyote is a nocturnal animal. But, as it gains confidence and feels less threatened by man, its only predator, it will hunt and move from place to place in the daytime. Rob Boley, BCWA Trustee, saw a coyote near WSU's campus.

How many coyotes in the wetlands? It's difficult to get an accurate count. Lynn Holtzman, biologist for ODW, says that census methods used for other wild mammals don't work too well for coyotes. Information from trappers is scarce because coyote pelts are not worth much and there is little incentive to trap. Road kill counts are unreliable because coyotes seem to avoid fatal contacts with autos, although, the first coyote I saw in SW Ohio was struck and killed near the Dayton International Airport one snowy night in the early '80s. Five Rivers MetroParks staff and volunteers play coyote calls in strategic locations and record the responses.

Coyotes are monogamous. They mate between January and March and the pregnant female carries her young for a little over eight weeks. The young are born in April-May and just like young

puppies are blind, helpless and unable to fend for themselves for the first few weeks of their lives. The female selects and prepares the den and sometimes two or three females will share a large den. Related females will sometimes act as helpers in caring for pups of other coyotes in the den. At birth, the male takes the lead in obtaining enough food for the female and the pups. Later, both parents hunt and feed the young. The parents will regurgitate their stomach contents for the youngsters' meal.

At about three weeks of age, young leave the den under watch of their parents. At 8-12 weeks, pups are taught hunting skills. They stay together as a family unit all summer but about mid-fall they "launch" and establish their own territories. Female coyotes are cited as being exceptional mothers. If her pups are threatened at the den, she will relocate immediately. They have been observed making at least three moves when their den became unsafe.

Don Geiger, Biology Prof. at the University of Dayton, says that people often drive out to the Mount Saint John campus and wildlife sanctuary in the evening to see coyotes in their car headlights. This is a good suggestion. Try slowly driving the Beaver Creek Wetlands Corridor along Beaver Valley Rd, New Germany-Trebein and Trebein Rds. in the cool of the evening for some coyote watching. Report coyote sightings to the BCWA office -- 937-320-9042.

For more information contact Rick Jasper at the Ohio Division of Wildlife, District 5, Xenia, 937-372-9261; or try their State website: www.dnr.state.oh.us/wildlife/default.htm.

- Dane Mutter

In the Hood

What's the difference between a neighborhood and the "hood?" Well, I'm not a sociologist, but my guess is that the hood is where all the action is. Far away from the tedious, spotless, and straight-edge suburban landscape, the hood pulses with seeming disorder: break up, break down, in-your-face wildness. Who can survive it?

Like the hood, riparian (from Latin *ripa* meaning [river] bank) habitats throb with motley communities: rapping woodpeckers; cruising stonecats; scurrying water gliders, balletic dragonflies; hip-hop rabbits; and contractor beavers felling trees to build dams and housing. Teeming with snags (standing dead trees), the river banks challenge all to survive. And who are the victors? They are wetland trees - oaks, elms, red and silver maples, river birch, box elders, and buckeyes - that tolerate fluctuating water levels and saturated, low-in-oxygen soils to make one of the most productive habitats in Ohio.

Wetland trees grow into some of our tallest and offer layers of habitats for myriad creatures to find homes and raise a family. Each creature finds a niche: Blackburnian warblers feed at the upper canopy, bay-breasted warblers feed at the middle and yellow-rumped warblers at the lower canopy to the ground. Hollow trees provide cavities for nesting turkey vultures and Carolina chickadees. Wetland trees are food plants for a number

of butterflies. Tree roots and fallen logs give places for wildlife to breed, hide, and feed.

The wetland tree canopy helps to prevent erosion by deflecting downpours and cools the water temperature. Below that is the shrub understory. Bladdernuts, wahoo, elderberry, buttonbush, spicebush, and silky dogwood provide food and nesting places for stream wildlife and also slow erosion. The natural riprap created by the roots of willows and sycamores holds up the banks (unlike human-engineered riprap that contributes to stream degradation). Riparian land also connects habitat for other creatures such as amphibians, reptiles and mammals that use streams to lay eggs or find food, but then spend the rest of their time in fields or ponds.

But riparian snakes, mosquitoes, black flies, sticktights, brambles, stinging nettles, and poison ivy are part of natural communities that

modern Americans shun and devastate through channelization, deforestation, agricultural runoff, and edge-to-edge suburban and industrial development. In all of our wisdom, we Ohioans have destroyed an estimated two million acres of riparian habitat since settlement. In return, we've gotten polluted waters, soil erosion, and degraded landscapes.

In his essay "Walking," Thoreau writes that "if it were proposed to me to dwell in the neighborhood of the most beautiful garden that ever human art contrived, or else of a Dismal Swamp, I should certainly decide for the swamp." Thoreau believed that hope and the future "are not in lawns and cultivated fields, not in towns and cities." Rather, life "consists with wildness. The most alive is the wildest." So our wild riparian hoods are not just vital to wildlife's survival, but ours as well.

- Nancy Bain, President, Native Plant Society of the Miami Valley



Check out the variety of wetland trees that live along the Siebenthaler Fen Boardwalk.

Volunteer Hours and Projects

The following is a summary of the volunteer hours from January 1, 2006 through June 9th compared to all of 2005. As more property is protected, more volunteers are needed to maintain and enhance these properties. The following data applies:

Work Site	Creekside	Siebenthaler Fen	Fairborn Marsh
2005 Hours	167.5	29	185
2006 Hours	149.5	36	78.5

There are many projects that need volunteers. If you are a student and plan on a science career, there are work and monitoring projects such as the following:

1. Build an observation platform at Fairborn Marsh
2. Trail improvement at the Fairborn Marsh-Clear brush, widen trail etc.
3. Invasives Control at Fairborn Marsh
4. Help with a plant study of Pearl's Fen
5. Elevation Survey of Pearl's Fen-Use surveying equipment to create contour map
6. Bird Census at Creekside Reserve
7. Bird Census at Fairborn Marsh
8. Beaver monitoring on Beaver Creek
9. Water quality monitoring in Beaver Creek Watershed
10. Tile removal at the Siebenthaler Fen
11. Clearing invasive species, cut honeysuckle and open up a new Fen at Creekside Reserve

If you or a friend are interested in any of these projects, please contact our coordinator or leave a message at 320-9042 or send an e-mail to admin@beavercreekwetlands.org.



This is the shell of a juvenile Dragonfly that has climbed out of the water to a cattail leaf and split the shell and emerged as an adult, having to hold on to the leaf for about an hour before it can fly. This picture was taken at Creekside Reserve in early June. The dragonfly, about 3 inches long, feeds on flies and mosquitoes while in flight. The dragonfly's wings are narrow, transparent and net-veined and they come in several different colors. Take a tour through the Beaver Creek Wetlands and see how many different colors you can find. - Robert Louis

Wetlands Education: Controlling Invasives

Recently, BCWA Advisor, Brother Don Geiger, Professor of Biology at the University of Dayton, led a group of volunteers at Creekside Reserve. The group cleared several acres of the invasive species, Garlic Mustard.

This plant grows about three feet high with little white flowers at the top of the main stalk and tips of the branches. It forms seed pods which extend from the stem in an upward curve at the top six inches of the stem and branch. It has taken several years to determine an effective method of the proper elimination of this species. The roots give out a chemical which hinders the growth of plants and wild flowers native to this area.

A previous method of control was to pull the plant from the ground but the stem has enough energy to mature the seeds. Our volunteers are trying a new method, developed by Don, which involves using a weed whip or string trimmer to cut the stalk just below the seed section of the stem and then cutting the stalk near the ground to complete the task. This method will have to be used for several years even if successful as the seeds from previous years will still germinate.

If you have a Saturday morning and you would like to get some exercise and fresh air, help us make a difference by volunteering and learning at the same time. To get involved, call our office at (937) 320-9042.

- Robert Louis

25th Ohio Prairie Association Conference

The 25th Ohio Prairie Conference, 11-13 August, will be held at the Cox Arboretum & Gardens MetroPark and the SunWatch Indian Village/ Archaeological Park, both in the Dayton area. The conference theme, *Human Interaction with the Prairie: Past, Present, & Future*, will be addressed in presentations by Ohio prairie experts. The featured speaker at the Conference will be Wes Jackson, co-founder of the Land Institute of Salina, Kansas.

At the Saturday evening meeting, Conference participants will hear the recounting of Ohio prairie study and conservation efforts by the major figures in the modern Ohio prairie movement. Recollections and accounts of previous Ohio prairie conferences and other Ohio prairie experiences will be delightfully discussed in an open format. To end the conference, field trips to local prairies will be conducted on Sunday morning.

The conference is open to everyone with an interest in Ohio prairies, their unique history, biology, conservation, and aesthetics. For further information and registration information, please check the OPA website at www.OhioPrairie.org or email the Ohio Prairie Association at OhioPrairie@aol.com. You can also call Yvonne Dunphe @ Cox Arboretum, 937-277-4147



BULLETIN BOARD

2005 Financial Statements

The following are the BCWA financial statements as presented by Treasurer Doug Hull at the May Membership Meeting:

BEAVER CREEK WETLANDS ASSOCIATION		
Statement of Activities		
For the Years Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004		
Funds Received:	2005	2004
Membership Dues and Donations	\$ 46,925	\$ 45,961
Capital Campaign Contributions	38,650	18,666
Grants	-	-
Investment Income	1,116	544
Other (Prop Tax Refund, Birdathon, Product Sales)	3,035	3,943
	<u>89,726</u>	<u>69,114</u>
Operating Expenses:		
Program Services	42,525	33,483
Interest Expense	6,967	10,453
Management and General	1,501	1,617
Fund Raising Activities	5,019	7,510
	<u>56,012</u>	<u>53,063</u>
Increase in Net Assets	33,714	16,051
Beginning Net Assets	<u>770,164</u>	<u>754,113</u>
Ending Net Assets	<u>\$ 803,878</u>	<u>\$ 770,164</u>

BEAVER CREEK WETLANDS ASSOCIATION		
Statement of Financial Position		
For the Years Ended December 31, 2005 and 2004		
Assets:	2005	2004
Cash & Equivalents	\$ 82,724	\$ 75,653
Prepaid Taxes	-	-
Property & Equipment	<u>821,974</u>	<u>821,974</u>
Total Assets	<u>904,698</u>	<u>897,627</u>
Liabilities:		
Accrued Interest	12,426	12,437
Mortgage Note Payable	<u>88,394</u>	<u>115,027</u>
Total Liabilities	100,820	127,463
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	803,878	770,164
Temporarily Restricted	-	-
Total Fund Balances	<u>803,878</u>	<u>770,164</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 904,698</u>	<u>\$ 897,627</u>

Making a Difference

Thank You!

Thanks to the following people for helping out with the Spring *Spotted Turtle* mailing:

Dorothy Bordewisch; Bruce Ford; Lou & Pat Falkner; Eleanor Young; Arthur & Kathy Bauer; Dorothy Mulhauser; Carole Dudley; and Richard Robertson.

And a special thanks to Susie and Dave Scott for preparing the Membership Drive mailing by themselves.

Thanks to Toni Jeske, an Archivist at Wright State, who created a small display in one of the display cases on the 4th floor of the WSU Dunbar Library featuring the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association. She used materials donated by Ray Wylam.



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper. Please recycle it when you're through ... or better still, share it with a friend!

Join the BCWA Today!

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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Spotted Turtle Editors

Jim and Carol Amon
Rob Boley

Publisher

Oregon Printing

Webmaster

Doug Hull

Emails

Administrative Coordinator
admin@beavercreekwetlands.org

President
president@beavercreekwetlands.org

Technical Advisor
technical@beavercreekwetlands.org

