

Beaver Creek Wetlands Association

The Spotted Turtle

Volume XX, No. 4

Fall 2007



2007 Calendar

October

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Kickoff

Wednesday, October 3,
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CFC is the annual fund-raising drive held by federal employees in their workplace, raising millions of dollars each year and benefiting thousands of non-profit charities. CFC donations account for a significant portion of BCWA's annual income, and are greatly appreciated!

BCWA's CFC number is 72199 – for both the Miami Valley Combined Federal Campaign and for the Heart of Ohio Combined Federal Campaign.

Work at Fairborn Marsh

We hope to have volunteer crews working at Fairborn Marsh at 9 AM Saturdays and 1PM Sundays through mid November. Watch for emails describing the work and check www.beavercreekwetlands.org for any updates too. We will be doing trail improvements, plantings, weeding, honeysuckle control and sign placement among other things.

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The BCWA is Beset with Goals!

We covet more acres; healthier habitat for birds, flowers, butterflies, and unique wetland plants; more trails and boardwalks for the public to enjoy. We desire observation decks for bird watching; great signage to guide and inform the visitor; and our list goes on.

Currently one of our focus points is the parcel we call "The Fairborn Marsh". Located on the border of Beavercreek Township and the city of Fairborn, this 58 acre piece was purchased by the BCWA in early 2000. At the time, it was ready to be snapped up by developers but we were able to snap first! Since that time, with your help, we have been whittling away at the considerable mortgage. In two more years we will own this piece, free and clear!

This parcel is unique in the corridor of the wetlands as it contains a wide range of habitat within its borders. The star is the long oval marsh which is the largest natural open water area in these wetlands, attracting ducks, Great Blue, and Green-backed herons, Sandhill cranes, Snowy and Great egrets, and other water birds to its shores and surfaces. A large portion of land is valuable upland that has been planted with native prairie grasses with scattered burr oaks. This is re-creating a habitat disclosed by records from 1802 and is creating a buffer between nearby housing and the marsh. Careful management is allowing these grasses to become the dominant plant life. Trails are being cut into the tree line along the east side of the marsh and a viewing platform has been constructed near the shore.



Bottle Gentian (photo by Mark Martel).

The future of this parcel calls for:

- a safe parking lot for visitors
- directional and informational signage
- one or two more viewing platforms
- important drainage control to a large ditch that bisects the property
- a boardwalk over part of the marsh
- trail improvement and extension.

With your help all these things are possible. Please respond with your tax-deductible donation when more information arrives in your mail in November. We believe these things WILL happen with your help and the rewards will be great!

- Susie Scott

From the President... Almost Twenty Years of Progress

"The most rewarding things you do in life are often the ones that look like they cannot be done."
- Arnold Palmer

In 1988 questions were being asked. Could we save a few hundred acres of amazing wetlands from destruction and development? Could we restore habitat lost over time to various projects of man? Could we catch the attention of our community and get the public to believe in this worthwhile undertaking? Could we protect the aquifer beneath these acres and help ensure clean and plentiful water for generations to come?

These were questions that were in the minds of those that saw the future and believed. I am sure there were a few doubters, but the reality is that there were more believers than doubters. And so, on the wings of belief, the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association was born.

Now almost twenty years later over 1700 acres have been brought under the protection of the organizations that this association has brought together in a common cause. Now wildlife has an almost continuous corridor of sanctuary over twelve miles in length. The work is continuing in order to make the final connections in the corridor. Now that original committee of community leaders has grown to a commitment by over 2000 members and supporters. Now students of local universities and public schools benefit from the chance to research and study a real working wetland environment. Now the Beaver Creek Wetlands of Greene County is recognized as an important natural resource in the state of Ohio.

We are asking you to keep believing and supporting the BCWA. The rewards are real. We are more ardent believers than ever. Our communities are blessed with believers. Isn't it a wonderful thing that no one listened to the doubters?

Susie Scott
President, BCWA

Spotted Turtle Name and Logo: The logo of the BCWA is a rendering of the Spotted Turtle by wildlife artist Charley Harper. Harper, who generously donated the drawing back in 1988. Charley passed away in 2007 and will be sorely missed. His work has been adopted by the National Park Service and is appreciated worldwide. 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 a picture to include, please send them to us at admin@beavercreekwetlands.org. Also, we welcome any comments or questions that you'd like to have addressed in this newsletter. For newsletter submissions, questions, or comments, please include "newsletter" in the subject line of your email. 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.

BCWA Annual Report: Copies of the BCWA annual report are available by request. Email the office at admin@beavercreekwetlands.org or call 937 320-9042 to request a copy.

Thanks to 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.

Our technological world is full of new jargon and some of it is just a bit obscure so I thought it might be time to help clarify the whole Carbon Footprint issue. Carbon is a chemical element that is found in all living things and if we find it outside of living things it is fairly likely that it has been directly or indirectly produced or influenced by living things. A few examples of things having lots of carbon include sugar, carbon dioxide, wood, oil, coal, natural gas, limestone, peat moss and perhaps closer to home, your body – skin, flesh and bones. We are as the intelligent Voyager satellite in one *Star Trek* movie said “carbon-units”.

One way to look at the carbon story is to start with plants and our atmosphere. Plants take carbon dioxide gas (CO₂) from the air and turn it into sugar and make lots of oxygen. They require light to do that. Plants also, just like us respire and some of that sugar is converted back to (CO₂), and use up a little of the oxygen they produced. The rest of the sugar is used to build the plant itself, so let’s look at just one component of that. The main sugar produced is glucose and if the plant puts these glucose units together in just the right way they make cellulose, the main thing found in wood, and the stiff parts of the plant in stems and leaves. All plants do this, from giant redwoods down to tiny mosses. If cellulose is burned, it is converted back to carbon dioxide and it goes into the air. If the tree or moss dies, the cellulose sometimes decomposes due to microbial activity and much of the cellulose is, again, released to the air. This part of the story might be called the Carbon Cycle but it is a

little more interesting when you look closer. We will do that in a minute.

First, a couple of terms and clarifications. Carbon in rocks and minerals and carbon in CO₂ is called inorganic carbon and almost all the remaining forms are organic carbon. Most organic carbon is in living things or was in the past part of living things. Carbon takes many other forms, too. In its softest form solid carbon is called graphite – that is the stuff that we put in pencils. On the hardest end diamonds are nearly pure crystalline carbon.

Most of you know that CO₂ is a greenhouse gas. That is, when it is in the air it helps trap the energy from the sun and helps warm the planet and that too much can make the planet too warm. Every time we or any living thing breathes, we or it exhales CO₂ but plants “immobilize” carbon or turn it into a solid when they make cellulose. So a tree captures or some say “fixes” carbon by taking CO₂ out of the atmosphere. That is why planting trees is said to be good for the environment. Now if those trees are harvested they are not burned or allowed to rot the CO₂ they have “fixed” stays out of the atmosphere.

If wood or other forms of organic matter, like cellulose, are in wetlands some interesting things can happen. Even CO₂ gets involved. CO₂ and organic matter in wetlands are probably surrounded by anaerobic soils. Anaerobic just means no oxygen is present. Under those conditions methane (CH₄) can be produced. CH₄ is methane or natural gas and can be burned to produce fairly clean energy, but when it is burned it produces CO₂ so it can add to global warming via the greenhouse effect. Lots of methane comes from cows and people, too -almost anything with a digestive system that is anaerobic (most all) can produce it. Furthermore, CH₄ is a much stronger

greenhouse gas than CO₂. But the cycle does not end there. Wetland plants produce oxygen and carry it into their roots where it supplies bacteria in the root zone with oxygen that changes the methane into CO₂. The plants fix the CO₂ and make cellulose and under anaerobic conditions the plant parts are very slow to rot even when they die. If rotting is not complete, the wetland produces peat that ties up the carbon and keeps it out of the atmosphere for centuries.

So, now you know a little chemistry a little ecology and one of the most important cycles of life on the planet. You also know that wetlands can be an important way in which we can protect our environment from all of the greenhouse gases we have overproduced - our “carbon footprint”.

- Jim Amon

Office Helpers Needed

We need someone or a team of BCWA members to take care of the cleaning and upkeep of the wetland office - the Coy House. Once a month we would like to have someone come in and clean, dust, vacuum, sweep, clean the restrooms and tidy up anything around the entry - inside and out. It is not a big job and would probably take no more than an hour or so but it would be well appreciated. We use the office for day to day things and for a few meetings each month and it is a nice place to bring visitors who want to talk to us. If you can help give us a call or email. 937-320-9042 or admin@beavercreekwetlands.org.

NATURE NOTES

Volunteers Train to Become Naturalists



*L to R:
Cris Barnett
trains future hike
leaders
Rob Evans,
Bob Louis,
Lorie Burger and
Sue Rytel*

Twelve individuals, who are members of Beaver Creek Wetlands Association and/or B-W-Greenways, recently completed naturalist training. Cris Barnett, chief naturalist with Greene County Parks provided excellent training for the group including four hours of classroom based training and a full day of field instruction. Slides, hands on instruction, demonstrations and humor kept the group interested and entertained.

After our formal training we spent a delightfully cool morning at Siebenthaler Fen enjoying treats like Pileated woodpeckers, blooms of Bottle Gentian and Green and Leopard

frogs. In the afternoon we followed pink ribbon blazed path into the Koogler Wetland and Prairie Preserve where BCWA volunteers are preparing a new trail and controlling invasive plants, ate lunch on the lookout deck and made comparisons of the plants we saw to those we had seen at Siebenthaler Fen.

These trained volunteers are now available to lead hikes in the Beaver Creek Wetlands. To schedule a hike or a request a presentation for your group, please call the BCWA office at (937) 320-9042 or email admin@beavercreekwetlands.org.
- Reported by Lorie Burger, freshly graduated naturalist.

Be Careful During Hunting Season

Hunting for deer and waterfowl is allowed on Division of Wildlife property. The most active time seems to be around the Thanksgiving to New Years timeframe. November is the peak month of all hunting activity in Ohio as the majority of Ohio hunters will be in the fields, woodlands, and on the water. So, hunters and hikers alike visiting the wetlands or any other public hunting area during these peak times should be sure to wear bright colors.

New Monitoring Equipment at Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve

Dr. Jim Amon at Wright State University has installed wetland and weather monitoring equipment at the Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve and you may see it as you walk the trails. Please do not touch it – the equipment is quite sensitive.

One interesting benefit for you is that the readout of that equipment will soon be available for anyone via our website. The instruments are positioned so that they monitor water entering the wetland from Beaver Creek and then check it again as it departs the restored wetland. In addition to the water temperature and depth you will be able to see conductivity, which alerts us to added dissolved substances in the water and at the inlet you can see pH, turbidity (how clear), and oxygen. The daily rainfall from the weather station is interesting when you can watch the rise and fall of the creek water levels hours after the rain event. You can even check the temperature and relative humidity before you venture out for a walk in the wetlands.

This Wright State University project is sponsored by US EPA, in cooperation with the Ohio State University, Kenyon College, Shawnee State University, Central State University. Each university will soon have similar monitoring capabilities, and the information will be available soon for education and research. The current research project for the equipment examines the movement of fertilizer and other substances that are flushed out of soils whenever there is a rain event. Excess nitrogen and phosphorus from throughout the corn belt has entered the Gulf of Mexico resulting in a “dead zone” the size of a small state.



Picture of Koogler Prairie by Susie Scott.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE SIX YEARS MAKE!

When the Fairfield Road interchange was constructed, part of the earth was excavated from an area East of that location and North of Route 35. The Beaver Creek Wetlands Organization along with our advisors, used this excavation site to create a wetland and an upland prairie where approximately 70 varieties of plants were sown from seeds from local wetlands. We also added prairie grass and circles of flowering plants that now cover the steep banks of this excavation. To the North the wooded area was overtaken by invasive honeysuckle and that was targeted for control.

The first year and second years after the initial plantings, I was very disappointed that all this work was done and there was very little to see. By the third year and each year since, I noticed more plants and flowers. This year, even though we are experiencing dry weather, the prairie, wetland and steep bank have been in spectacular color and filled with plant diversity.

This area is a part of a much larger area known as Creekside Reserve, a part of Greene County Parks. The restoration site has been dedicated to Bill and Grace Hagenbuch in recognition of their community service. Bill and Grace were a team of the original people to start and support the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association. The site number 14 on our web site (www.beavercreekwetlands.org) and Little Beaver Creek flows through the area. Watch for special naturalist guided hikes to the area in the future.

The woods South of Little Beaver Creek and North of the bank described above have been going through a major transformation. Invasive species, including the honeysuckle, are being removed. After that is removed, the next spring brings wild flowers because now is the first time their seeds and seedlings have air, light and moisture to thrive and grow. All of the work has been accomplished by volunteers, and this year on September 21st we have logged 404 volunteer hours, surpassing last years total. We still have October hours to add to this number and a bunch of honeysuckle to cut. A special thanks goes out to all the volunteers and organizations that have supported this project.

Why put all this effort into the wetlands? Not only do we learn about plants and nature and why wetlands are important, but our true reward comes from the beauty and surprises we see from year to year, which excites our senses. We are truly making a difference for future generations.

- Robert Louis

Mowing at Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve

If you walk the trail that begins at Phillips Park and continues back across the new bridge you will be entering the Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve. Much of that area was mowed in the last days of Summer in an attempt to control the very invasive Reed Canary Grass (RCG). That grass grows rapidly and crowds out many other species decreasing the diversity of many wetlands throughout the upper Midwest. RCG can be controlled only with long-term actions and the Wetlands Association has begun to initiate that kind of program.

Published studies show that mowing followed by treatment with a special herbicide that kills only grass can work in our situation. The process will take years to complete and will also involve upstream sites that continue to produce RCG seed. Significant habitat remains unmowed and should maintain the refuge for resident and migrating animals. We hope to acquire or obtain easements to manage the RCG on all of the invaded sites within the Beaver Creek Wetlands.

The work at the Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve is being carried out by a joint operation involving the Greene County Sanitary Engineers office (who helped restore this site originally), Greene County Parks, and the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association.



**Plant a Seed -
Leave a Legacy for
Tomorrow**

Planned giving can result in tax savings and/or income to you, while helping the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association preserve and protect our wetlands, now and forever.

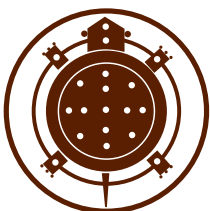
In partnership with The Dayton Foundation, BCWA can now accept gifts of cash, securities, life insurance, retirement assets, life estates, charitable annuities, bequests, and many other planned and deferred giving options.

To learn more about planned giving, please contact:

The Dayton Foundation
500 Kettering Tower
Dayton, OH 45423
(937) 222-0410
www.daytonfoundation.org

The first \$25,000 in gifts to the Endowment Fund will be doubled by a matching grant from an anonymous donor. Cash gifts to the Endowment Fund should be made payable to "The Dayton Foundation" and include a notation that the gift is for the BCWA Endowment Fund.

**Beaver Creek
Wetlands Association
Spotted Turtle Society**



BULLETIN BOARD

2006 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, 2006 and 2005

	2006	2005
Funds Received:		
Membership Dues and Donations	\$ 50,601	\$ 46,925
Capital Campaign Contributions	14,400	38,650
Grants	50,000	-
Investment Income	3,009	1,116
Other (Prop Tax Refund, Birdathon, Product Sales)	7,847	3,035
	<u>125,858</u>	<u>89,726</u>
Operating Expenses:		
Program Services	42,236	42,525
Interest Expense	5,302	6,967
Management and General	1,685	1,501
Fund Raising Activities	4,722	5,019
	<u>53,945</u>	<u>56,012</u>
Increase in Net Assets	71,912	33,714
Beginning Net Assets	<u>803,878</u>	<u>770,164</u>
Ending Net Assets	<u>\$ 875,790</u>	<u>\$ 803,878</u>

BEAVER CREEK WETLANDS ASSOCIATION
Statement of Financial Position
For the Years Ended December 31, 2006 and 2005

	2006	2005
Assets:		
Cash & Equivalents	\$ 76,335	\$ 82,724
Prepaid Taxes	-	-
Property & Equipment	871,974	821,974
Total Assets	<u>948,309</u>	<u>904,698</u>
Liabilities:		
Accrued Interest	12,423	12,426
Mortgage Note Payable	60,096	88,394
Total Liabilities	72,519	100,820
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	875,790	803,878
Temporarily Restricted	-	-
Total Fund Balances	<u>875,790</u>	<u>803,878</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 948,309</u>	<u>\$ 904,698</u>

Making a Difference

Thank You!

Thanks to the following people for volunteering to work in our booth at the Fairborn Sweet Corn Festival and at Beaver Creek Popcorn Festival.

Bruce Ford; Carol Graff; Richard Robertson; Dane & Priscilla Mutter; Sue Rytel; Ann Byrd; Susie Scott; Judith Streiff; Rob Evans; Robert Louis; Tim Staiger; Mike Zimmerman; Jim Maley; Lynn Reily; Dean Eklund; Richard Swigart; Doug Hull; Chris Martin and Kate Hagenbuch.

Also thanks to Terri & Bob Limbert for preparing the Summer Spotted Turtle for mailing.



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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or email: admin@beavercreekwetlands.org

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Place carefully to
cover bottom line completely
but do not touch top line.

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Robert Louis, Secretary
Doug Hull, Treasurer

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www.beavercreekwetlands.org

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