



# THE STEWARD

Protecting and Preserving the Ohio River Corridor

[www.westernwildlifecorridor.org](http://www.westernwildlifecorridor.org)

Spring 2007

## Calendar of Events

### **April 21, 1 p.m.**

Tune up Hike and Sign Dedication  
Meet at end of Delhi Pike, at the barrier

### **April 27, 6—10 p.m.**

Flower Festival  
Delhi Township Lodge  
5125 Foley Rd.

### **April 28, All day**

Flower-a-thon  
Breakfast kickoff 7—9 a.m.  
Embshoff Woods  
4050 Paul Rd.

### **May 19, 9 a.m.—noon**

Habitat Restoration  
Delshire Preserve

### **June 2, 9 a.m.**

Explore Bender Mountain Hike

### **June 9, 9 a.m.— noon**

Habitat Restoration Bender Mountain

### **Sept. 29, 5—8:30 p.m.**

Great Outdoor Weekend event:  
Introduction to animal tracking, 5—6 p.m.  
Night hike, 7—8:30 p.m.  
Story Woods Park

### **Coming in October:**

**Tracking clinic with Bill Reichling**

*See pages 4-5 for more event information*

## Flower-a-thon: No Experience Required

*By Joan Gillespie*

Hello and welcome to 2007. Isn't it wonderful that winter is now at our backdoor? I'm Joan Gillespie. I am on the Board of Trustees for the Western Wildlife Corridor and also the Horticulturist for Delhi Township Parks and Recreation. I'm happy to say this is my third annual Flower-a-Thon! The first year Tim Sisson, President of WWC, tried to persuade me to join his team to hunt the woods along the Ohio River for wildflowers. I responded, of course, with, "I don't have a clue what a wildflower is, how could I possibly help?" So with field guide in one hand and pen and paper in the other, I went anyway and was in awe of the amazing little flowers on the sun dappled woodland floors. We found several varieties of trillium, Virginia bluebells, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and running buffalo clover, just to name a few. Now I'm hooked.

Last year the teams located nearly 250 different species in different locations like Congress Green, Shawnee Lookout, Delshire Preserve, and Embshoff Woods. At one of our meetings I opened my big mouth and said "Why don't we put together a list?" and before I could get it out of my mouth, Tim handed me copies of lists teams handwrote while trekking up mountainsides. Let me just say it's been a major task deciphering hand writing from ten different team captains! There were also different names for the same plants. I started a spreadsheet with the common name first in alphabetical order, and I searched high and low for the correct botanical name to follow. The next three columns allow us to fill in the wildflower's locations for the next three years, which should make the event a little easier. After the Flower-a-Thon I will be open to new ideas on how the list can be revised if need be. The only thing left to do now is get a team together, call Tim Sisson (513-922-2104), get sponsorships, come to the Wildflower Festival on April 27th for education and fun, grab the checklist I made, go to the kick off on April 28th. Oh, and have fun the whole day! See you there. ✓

### **Celebrate Wildflowers with WWC's April 27th Wildflower Festival**

Let's face it. Wildflowers seldom make headlines. But with so much gloomy news, we could use some good news this spring. How about wildflowers? Come celebrate wildflowers with WWC at a new event this year: Wildflower Festival. Spring brings to mind tulips and daffodils, but it can make your heart smile to see an entire hillside covered in Virginia bluebells, and the experience of coming across a seldom-seen trillium will be stamped into your memory for years.

In hopes of increasing wildflower awareness, WWC has planned an array of family activities. At the festival, learn about wildflower identification and location. There will be wildflower games, displays, and live music by Wild Carrot, and a wildflower drawing class will also be offered. The 6-10 p.m. event is free, with food and other items for sale. See Calendar to left for dates and times, or call Joan Key at (513)451-6756 for more info.



*Blue-eyed Marys are a common sighting during Flower-a-Thon*



# PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

By Tim Sisson

## Western Wildlife Corridor: What, Where, Why, Who?

Recently I was asked to put together a presentation on Western Wildlife Corridor basics for a volunteer training program. As I was doing this, it occurred to me that readers of our newsletter might be interested in this information too. So, for all of you who are new to our organization, or have been too busy to get familiar with land trusts, here's some basic facts to give you a better idea of just who we are.

**What is Western Wildlife Corridor?** We are different things to different people. A short "dictionary" type definition is that we are a Land Trust; a tax-exempt charitable organization that is in the business of protecting natural areas in their region. To the IRS, we are a non-profit, tax exempt, 501 (c) (3) corporation. To me (and to most of us that are very active with WWC) we are an organization that is seeking to protect, and restore to a natural state, the beautiful forested hillsides and creek valleys near the Ohio River.

**Where are we?** We are interested in protecting natural areas that are adjacent to and in the vicinity of the Ohio River from Mill Creek (near downtown Cincinnati) to the Indiana border.

**Why do we do what we do?** The short answer is because natural areas are so important to us, to our community, to our world.

Imagine, if you can, traveling along River Road thru North Bend or Sayler Park, through an Ohio River valley that is devoid of trees and covered with housing. Imagine driving up Bender Road, or South Road, or Delhi Pike through the same environment. If you are anything like me, that kind of world would be much less pleasant to live in than the world we have today.

A longer answer to the why question is:

- ⊗ The hillsides along the Ohio River and the adjoining natural areas are habitats for a wide variety of wildlife and plants; some endangered.
- ⊗ The hillsides are extremely susceptible to slippage which can cause damaging land slides.
- ⊗ Forested natural areas are vital because they clean the air, help regulate temperatures and provide natural buffer zones to protect wildlife.
- ⊗ People enjoy the hillsides along the Ohio River and the adjoining natural areas; they hike in them, watch wildlife in them – to them our hillsides make the community a much better, more attractive place to live in.

**Who are we?** Which leads up to my favorite answer to the question, "Who are we?" We are a group of dedicated supporters who believe the forests around us are an essential part of our existence – and we are doing everything we can to assure their survival.

If you are not now a member and are interested in joining us, please call Leesa Miller at (513)941-1628 for membership information. ♡



**Make a pledge donation  
to your favorite  
Flower-a-Thon team!**

At the Flower Festival,  
there will be some friendly  
competition between teams to  
see which team gets the highest  
amount of pledges.

You may even get a phone call  
to give you an opportunity to  
pledge for a team.

Call Tim Sisson (513) 922-2104

***Volunteers enjoyed a winter hike  
at Story Woods in January.***



## Western Wildlife Corridor Board of Trustees

Tim Sisson, *President*  
Bruce Cortwright, *Vice President*  
Robert Thomas, *Treasurer*  
Leesa Miller, *Secretary*

Marianne Brater  
Susan Frede  
Joan Gillespie  
John Klein  
Bob Nienaber  
Don Patrick  
Jim Schenk  
Rebecca Sisson





Western  
Wildlife

Corridor

presents...

# Wildflower Weekend Extravaganza!

## April 27 1st Annual Wildflower Festival Friday

2  
Events



*Drooping Trillium*  
J.S. Anderson

**Free!**  
**Educational!**

Friday April 27  
6-10pm - Free Admission!  
Delhi Township Lodge  
5125 Foley Rd  
Delhi Township

Art Raffle Both Days Including a Charley Harper Print

### Friday

Free Games & Activities  
Live music by Wild Carrot  
Wildflower & Seed Sale  
Native Plant Info  
Food and other items for sale  
Booths:

Cinti. Wild Flower Preservation Society,  
Jr Master Gardeners,  
Cincinnati Zoo, Museum Center & much more  
Free Wildflower Drawing Class:

Call 513-353-2708 for class registration

[www.westernwildlifecorridor.org](http://www.westernwildlifecorridor.org)

Call 513-921-WILD

513-922-2104

513-451-6756

## April 28 3rd Annual Flower-a-thon Saturday

Saturday April 28  
All Day Event  
To register call 513-922-2104  
Kickoff Breakfast 7-9am  
Embshoff Woods  
4050 Paul Rd  
Delhi Township

**Beginners  
Welcome!**

### Saturday

\$10 registration fee  
Participants receive:  
Breakfast  
Free T-shirt  
Free Awards Dinner  
Many Door Prizes

Help Protect Hillside Forest Habitat

Kickoff Breakfast provided by Hamilton County Park District



**Tune-Up Hike  
and Sign Dedication  
April 21, 1 p.m.**

**Near College of Mt. St. Joseph**

Join WWC for a celebration at the new nature preserve sign, then stay for a one-hour guided trail hike along the top of the ridge near the Bender Mountain Preserve. Tune up both your body and your botany in preparation for Flower-a-Thon the following week.

For the celebration, meet at 1p.m. at the guardrail barrier at the end of Delhi Pike, near the College of Mt. St. Joseph. We will walk down to the sign, have light refreshments and return at 2 p.m. Meet back at the guardrail at 2 p.m. for directions to the Tune-Up Hike, which will start at approximately 2:15 p.m.

For more information, call Leesa Miller at (513) 941-1628.



*View from trail near Bender Mountain near the new sign*

**New Sign Will Identify  
WWC Nature Preserve Area**

A trail frequented by the community will soon have a new sign marking the WWC nature preserve. The abandoned stretch of Delhi Pike is often used for an easy hike; although it is a hill, it follows the remnants of the old road through a refreshing stretch of forest.

The nature preserve sign will be located about 5/8 mile walk from the guardrail. Extensive habitat restoration is apparent by the absence of honeysuckle bushes, which have been removed by the hard work of volunteers. The preserve is an ideal spot to unwind and enjoy the gentle breeze coming up through the trees from the river.

Be sure to visit!

**Wildflower Festival  
April 27, 6-10 p.m.  
Delhi Twp. Lodge  
5125 Foley Rd.**

Join us to celebrate wildflowers. In addition to educational booths from a variety of sources, there will be music by Wild Carrot, a wildflower drawing class; a sale featuring wildflower seeds and plants, as well as books on wildflowers; and games for children.



**3rd Annual Flower-a-Thon  
April 28, All day  
Breakfast Kick-off, 7-9 a.m.  
Embshoff Woods  
4050 Paul Rd.**

The Flower-a-Thon begins with breakfast around the fire at Embshoff Woods Park from 7a.m. – 9 a.m., courtesy of the Hamilton County Park Board. Teams will then set off to explore the Ohio River valley, to search for and identify wildflowers.

Flower-A-Thon participants will receive a free t-shirt and prizes, and an awards dinner and raffle drawing will cap off the day at 5 p.m. The team identifying the most wildflowers will receive the event's coveted Golden Trillium Award.

Contact Joan Key at (513)451-6756 for more information, or to register your team.

**Habitat Restoration  
May 19, 9 a.m.— noon  
Delshire Preserve**

Spring will be in full swing and so will the remaining invasive plants, especially the garlic mustard. Bring loppers and saws if you have them and wear sturdy footwear for hills. Call Mona at (513)941-6307 to find out where to meet.



*View from top of Bender Mountain*

**Explore  
Bender Mountain Up Close  
June 2, 9 a.m.  
Hillside Ave., near American  
Discovery Trail Route**

Experience Bender Mountain's rugged terrain on June 2, for National Trail Day. This strenuous hike will start at 9 a.m. on Hillside Avenue near the American Discovery Trail route and will climb the steep slope to the top of Bender Mountain and back down again.

Call Tim Sisson (513)922-2104 for exact starting point location and details.

**Ohio River Way  
Paddlefest 2007  
Friday & Saturday, July 6 & 7  
Four Seasons Marina  
4609 Kellogg Ave.**

Celebrate, promote and protect the beauty of the Ohio River at the 6th Annual Ohio River Way Paddlefest. Enjoy two days of paddling, education, entertainment, competition and camaraderie.

Stop by and say hello at the WWC booth at Four Seasons Marina on Friday!

Visit [www.ohioriverway.org/paddlefest](http://www.ohioriverway.org/paddlefest) for more information and to register for the paddling event on Saturday.



*Katie Scudder enjoys Paddlefest 2006*



**2007 Wild Ones Annual Mtg  
August 17-19  
Dayton, Ohio**

Our own WWC president, Tim Sisson will be a guest speaker at the 2007 Wild Ones Annual Meeting in Dayton Ohio on Saturday, August 18th. His topic is "Community Action: Protecting Habitat for Native Plants" and will teach about effective techniques for small scale volunteer efforts in restoring native habitat through the removal of invasive plant species.

Tim chairs the WWC Stewardship Committee, which has planned many successful habitat restoration events the past few years.

The Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the Wild Ones is hosting this weekend event, and the theme is "Rejuvenate, Restore, Rebalance Your Yard... Your Community... Your Spirit."

The Ohio Wild Ones brochure and event information can be found at <http://www.cincinnatibirds.com/wildones/Conference2007.htm>

**A Walk on the Wild Side  
Date & Location TBD, October**

Experienced animal tracker, Bill Reichling, will make a presentation on the all-but-forgotten art of animal tracking. The skills of track casting, aging, and track identification will be taught and discussed. These skills are useful for taking wildlife photos or knowing what's in your attic, chimney, or woodpile.

Take up the challenge! Slow down. Step back into the skill of our Daniel Boone days. You won't believe what's out there!

The exact date and location is still to be determined, probably in October, but watch for the next WWC newsletter or check our website.

**Natural Treasures in WWC**

A riveted audience of 29 from various parts of the Tri-State, attended the Natural Treasures Program at EarthConnection on Feb. 10.

John Klein showed many unique creatures we didn't know were in our area forests, such as the tube spider. We also learned about some that we WISH weren't there, such as the gypsy moth. Tim Sisson discussed how everyone can help land preservation by keeping an eye out for land that owners may want to sell or protect with a conservation easement. Now is the time to be thinking of this issue, before it is too late, as so much of the local greenspace is disappearing rapidly.

Call Tim Sisson (513)922-2104 if you know a landowner of property that would be good to protect.



*Winter eases its grip on Delshire Preserve*



## Invasive Species Monitoring Expanding to Bender Mountain

Please help us monitor the regrowth of invasive species on Bender Mountain.

We have cleared primarily honeysuckle off about one third of the 39 acres of Bender Mountain property, but we need volunteers to walk through the property on a regular basis to remove honeysuckle sprouts, an occasional garlic mustard, and euonymus that is looking to get a foothold. If we don't keep an eye on them, these invasive plants will grow back stronger than ever. Do not be fooled by the attractiveness of the honeysuckle plant. It smells sweet in the summer and it has pretty red berries in the winter, but it is a nature preserve's number one adversary.

We are continuing to monitor the Delshire Preserve, so especially if you live near there, please consider helping us monitor. For more information or to volunteer, call Mona at (513) 941-6307.



*Volunteers showed their concern for native habitat restoration with a great turnout at Bender Mountain in November.*

### **Habitat Restoration**    ♡    **June 9, 9 a.m.-noon**

Pick up where the November crew left off! There will be plenty to do, and a whole "mountain" to work on. Call Mona at (513)941-6307 for exact meeting place and details.

### **WWC Wish List**

**Call Leesa Miller to help out! (513)941-1628**

#### **Grant Writers**

Do you have writing skills and time to write just one grant? Grants are the first crucial step in getting many projects off the ground.

#### **Publicity Help**

Contact press and various media to get events and WWC news published.

#### **Newsletter**

Personal experiences in the Corridor are wanted. Do you have a WWC story experience you'd like to share? Would you like to write an article for the newsletter?

#### **Website Design**

Help create and design this important "open window" to the public.

#### **Photos**

Many of you have taken photos on the hikes. Please share with our readers. We would love to include your photos in our materials.

#### **Business Sponsors**



## Elder Students and WWC Take Honeysuckle by (Snow) Storm

*By Tim Sisson*

What a day! When I left my house for Sister's Hill it was snowing like mad - it created a significant layer on my car and the road. I began to wonder if this should be our first "snow day."

But, never fear, the snow stopped and we had a pretty good day for the project - muddy and chilly, but since we were working hard, everybody kept warm.

And work we did, clearing a lot more of our property, clearing a lot of the Sister's property and chipping up the cut honeysuckle bushes from both areas (we had too many workers to efficiently do just ours—anyway, we like to help out the Sisters any time we can with restoration of their property).

Now the big thank yous:

Bruce Cortwright for getting the chipper, operating it and maneuvering it (backwards) down Sister's Hill.

Beth Cortwright for helping "feed" the chipper and cutting honeysuckle

Rhonda Cortwright for getting dozens of donuts and other assorted sweets along with a gallon of orange juice and a gallon of milk.

Greg Bishop for cutting honeysuckle and for helping supervise the Elder students.

Bill Edwards - ditto.

Patrick Gillespie - ditto.

Dustin Bishop for cutting honeysuckle.

Carl Ackerman for cutting honeysuckle.

Joyce Richter for arranging permission for us to cut honeysuckle on the Sisters property.

Mona Weiner for the making calls that produced such a turnout.

Leesa Miller for providing extra tools and signup sheets.

21 Elder High School students for coming out on such a threatening day and working hard to help WWC.

What a team effort!

Looking for your next opportunity to join one of our habitat restoration projects? Please call Mona at (513)941-6307 to get the latest habitat restoration schedule. ✓



*Bruce operates the chipper when not using his chainsaw*



*Elder students make a difference*

### Committee Chairpersons:

Land Stewardship: Tim Sisson 513 922-2104

Outreach & Newsletter: Leesa Miller 513 941-1628

Volunteer Coordinator: Mona Weiner 513 941-6307

Fundraising: Rebecca Sisson 859 746-8671

Thank you to Bob Nienaber for his help with our newsletters!!!





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Mark your  
calendar!

**April 27 & 28**  
**Wildflower Extravaganza!**

**Friday: Wildflower Festival**  
**at Delhi Township Lodge**  
**6-10 p.m.**

**Saturday: Flower-A-Thon, all day**  
**Breakfast at Embshoff Woods Park**  
**7-9 a.m.**  
**Awards Dinner**  
**5 p.m.**

Please help the Western Wildlife Corridor  
protect the Ohio River valley.

Enclosed is my tax deductible membership contribution  
at the following level:

\_\_\_ \$20 Individual                      \_\_\_ \$75 Supporting  
\_\_\_ \$30 Family                        \_\_\_ \$100 Patron  
\_\_\_ \$50 Organization                \_\_\_ \$500 Sponsoring  
    \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other donation

May we call you for active support? ☐ Yes

Would you consider donating land or a conservation  
easement? ☐ Yes

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

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