

PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

You Can Go Back Home

By Tim Sisson



When I was a boy, my father would take me blackberry picking at an abandoned golf course in Cleves. The fairways there had evolved into meadows and the meadows into blackberry patches. We would literally fill buckets with the largest, juiciest blackberries you will ever see. These blackberries now are gone.

The old golf course has now been developed and in its place you will find houses, yards and roads.

I was reminded of those "good old days" recently when I took my grandsons blackberry picking at a Western Wildlife Corridor Preserve. We didn't fill buckets, but I did fill a good sized container with the biggest, juiciest blackberries I've seen since those days with my father. It was a very enjoyable day, and the type of day that can be repeated way into the future. You see, if my grandsons want to take their children blackberry picking years from now, they will be able to go to the same place they went to as boys because, unlike the former golf course, it is protected by Western Wildlife Corridor.

So, if you ever long to visit a place to pick blackberries or take a hike or enjoy wildflowers as you did when you were young, you will be able to find just such a place in the beautiful Ohio valley. Some of their names are Delshire Preserve, Buckeye Trace Preserve, Bender Mountain Preserve, Kirby Preserve - and there will be more to come in the future. I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, September 26, 9:30 am and 10 am *Great Outdoor Weekend at Bender Mountain*



For this annual fall event, WWC is hosting two hikes at Bender Mountain – strenuous and moderate.

The ***strenuous hike*** will start at 9:30 am with a climb through a beautiful forest on our Eagle Scout Trail. At the top we will be treated to a spectacular view of the Ohio River Valley. We will then hike along the ridge top trail to Paw Paw Gap for the return to the trailhead.

The ***moderate hike*** will start at 10 am and will meander along the slope of Bender Mountain through an equally beautiful forest. We will also hike at Paw Paw Gap and with a little luck will be able to sample that delectable fruit.

For both hikes meet at the gravel parking area on Bender Road about ½ mile from Hillside.

Contact Tim 922.2104 for details.

Saturday, October 10, 2 pm *Memorial walk at Fernbank Park*

This walk will be in memory of Carol Herzog, an enthusiastic member of Western Wildlife Corridor who accompanied us on many WWC walks. We are saddened by her untimely death and are holding this walk in honor of her. Donations to WWC in her honor will be used to maintain and improve our preserves so that people who enjoy walking, as Carol did, will have beautiful places to enjoy in the Ohio River valley. Please contact Maureen Mohr at maureenmohr@msn.com for additional information.

Saturday, October 10, 10am to 5pm *Sayler Park Harvest Festival*



Sunday, October 25, 2 pm *Fall Color Hike at our Delshire Preserve*



The trees should be at their peak of color, so this will be an enjoyable hike.

Contact Tim 922.2104 for details.

This spectacular fungus was found on the Bender Mountain Trail last year.



Tom Malone

Great Outdoor Weekend at Bender Mtn.



Tom Malone

In Memory of Carol Herzog



Habitat Restoration and Trail Work

Saturday, September 5, 9am – noon

Project leader training at the Kirby Nature Preserve

We will be offering training for new project leaders, but everyone is invited to attend to learn how we do habitat restoration and trail construction. Leaders Tim 922.2104, John 941.4877 and Bruce 451.5549.

Saturday, September 12, 9am – noon

Dismantling at the Kirby Nature Center

We'll be removing the old kitchen and bathroom components to get ready for new construction. Leaders Bruce 451.5549 and Robert 859.572.9661.

Saturday, September 19, 9am – noon

Trail work at Bender Mountain to get ready for the Great Outdoor Weekend hikes

Leaders Tim 922.2104, John 941.4877 and Gary 941.5414.

Saturday, October 3, 9am – noon

Habitat restoration at Whitetail Woods

Leaders John 941.4877, Robert 859.572.9661 and Ed 919.5186.

Saturday, October 17, 9am – noon

Habitat restoration at Shady Lane

Leaders Ed 919.5186 and John 941.4877.

Saturday, October 31, 9am – noon

Habitat restoration at Buckeye Trace

Leaders Tim 922.2104 and Ed 919.5186.

Saturday, November 14, 9am – noon

Trail work at Kirby Nature Preserve

Leader John 941.4877, Gary 941.5414 and Bruce 451.5549.

Saturday, November 21, 9am – noon

Trail work at Buckeye Trace

Leader Tim 922.2104 and Ed 919.5186.

Why habitat restoration? Many times the biggest threat to our preserves is invasion by alien plant species. Plants such as Amur (or bush) honeysuckle, euonymus and garlic mustard can produce such a dense cover of foliage that native plants cannot survive. We've been told that Amur honeysuckle even secretes a toxin that kills native plants! When we restore the habitat in one of our preserves, we remove these invasive alien plants so that native plants and animals can thrive. Contact Tim at 922.2104 or tsisson@fuse.net for more information.



Kirby Nature Center Kitchen



Tim Sisson

Bender Mountain Trail Work



Tim Sisson

Turtles on Buckeye Trace Trail



Tim Sisson

May 5, 2015

**Four turtles were found
on the Buckeye Trace Trail.
One female and
three male turtles gathered close by.**

BUR OAK

By Sally Sisson Anderson

There used to be a huge bur oak tree (*Quercus macrocarpa*) beside my grandmother's house. It was a beautiful tree. My brothers and sisters and I used to play under it, and gather the large acorns. The bur oak has the largest acorns of all the native oaks. The small inconspicuous flowers appear right after the leaves start coming out in late April to June. Male and female flowers are found on the same tree.

The Delshire Preserve is the best place to see bur oak trees. You will find several trees there. Bur oaks grow very tall (up to 60 or 80 feet). They can have a diameter of five feet. The bur oak is also known as the mossy overcup oak, the scrub oak, the cross oak, and the blue oak.

Native Americans used the inner bark of the bur oak to make an astringent to treat cramps, diarrhea, wounds, sores, heart trouble, poison oak rashes, and insect bites. The large acorns were roasted in ashes or boiled to remove the bitter taste, then eaten as food. Young growths of bur oak were used by several tribes for carving.

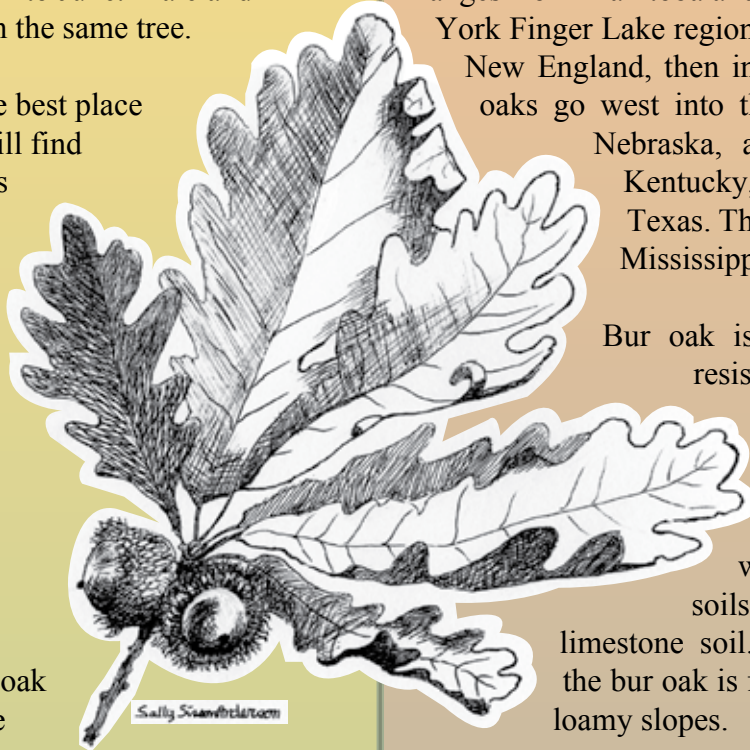
The acorns are an important source of food to wildlife including many birds and mammals, like squirrels, rabbits, mice, black bear, wild turkey, wood ducks and

flickers. Red-tailed hawks, screech owls, fox squirrels, and flying squirrels nest in large bur oak trees. The bur oak is also browsed by elk, moose, deer, and cattle.

The bur oak is widely distributed through much of eastern United States, Great Plains, and Canada. It ranges from Manitoba and parts of Ontario to the New York Finger Lake region and into Maine and most of New England, then into Michigan and Ohio. Bur oaks go west into the Dakotas, and Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas, then south to Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas. They also range into Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Bur oak is one of the most drought resistant of all oak trees; it does not handle flooding well. The species holds up to urban pollution better than most oaks. This oak will tolerate many types of soils. In Kentucky it is found in limestone soil. Throughout the mid-west, the bur oak is found in sandy plains and on loamy slopes.

Bur oak wood is commercially valuable today and sold as white oak. It is used for railroad ties, cabinetry, barrels, flooring and fence posts. The main sources of timber are Iowa and Illinois. The tree is probably too big for the average home, but it is excellent for large areas, road sides, and parks.



Fascinating Flying Squirrels

By John Klein

There seems to be no end to the variety of plants and animals found in the Corridor. In fact, the more you learn about each species, the more interesting they become. My latest fascination has been with flying squirrels.

For the past year or so, I have been watching, feeding and learning about our most common local squirrel. Yes, I too was surprised to learn that the flying squirrel is our most common squirrel. However, due to their nocturnal habits most of us never get to see them. They are the most nocturnal of all the tree squirrels and the most arboreal of our native squirrels. They are rather slow and clumsy on the ground, but in the trees (where they spend almost all of their time) they are amazingly fast and agile! Being cavity nesters, they live in hollow trees and old woodpecker holes (and sometimes your attic), but readily utilize nest boxes with 1 1/2" entrance holes (like those used by bluebirds). It has been fun building various boxes and monitoring their use.

Flying squirrels are our oldest living line of modern squirrels. Their fossil records go back 30 million years! There are two species of flying squirrels in the U.S. - the northern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*), with a total length of about 12 inches, and the southern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*), which is about 9 inches long. We have the smaller southern species here. (Article continued on next page.)

Fascinating Flying Squirrels Continued...

Flying squirrels get their name from the way they soar between trees by stretching their legs to expand a furry flap of skin between their front and rear ankles called a patagium. They don't actually fly, but glide by forming a square kite with their body. It is amazing to see how well they can float on air! Because they are gliding, they always have to start from a higher position than where they land. They can quickly climb up a tree, glide down to the trunk of another tree and repeat that process over and over again until they reach their destination. The average glide is around 30 ft., but glides of up to 270 ft. have been observed! This ability to glide is unique among rodents. They have extra sensitive whiskers on their cheeks, chin and ankles that allow them to find their way in total darkness and use scent glands in their cheeks to mark their routes. They also have very soft foot pads for landing silently on the trunk of a tree. As soon as they land, they race to the other side of the tree in case an owl or other predator has followed them. Their main predators are owls, domestic cats, raccoons, bobcats, weasels and snakes.

Like us, they are omnivores and consume a wide variety of foods. During the spring and summer, their diet consists of insects, fruits, seeds, inner bark, leaf buds, fungi and occasionally even bird eggs and young. During the fall and winter months their diet changes mostly to nuts and other seeds. They are especially fond of oak and hickory forests.

The mother is very protective of her babies and will move her young several times during a season to alternate nests when disturbed. A mother was once seen moving her babies during a forest fire, getting singed in the process! The young can glide at 8 weeks of age and usually become independent in 4 months.

I first noticed them coming to corn in a feeder I have in the backyard of my rental house in North Bend and have been observing them there ever since. After going through a lot of corn and nuts, I constructed a feeder for them that excludes all other larger animals. To learn more about them, stay tuned. I plan to present programs about them next fall or winter at the Fernald Preserve. Flying squirrels are just one of the many fascinating animals that call the Corridor home!

We'll Miss Roz

We could always count on Roselyn Schloss to speak up at Board meetings. She had good suggestions and was not afraid to tell us what they were. Roz (as we know her) is leaving the Board, and we will miss her. However, the good news is that she will continue to help us with the other jobs she has been taking care of.

Roz is the keeper of our membership list, one of the most important jobs in any organization. We can always count on her to pick up the mail regularly at the Post Office, and to enter the data in the list without fail. Speaking of the Post Office, Roz is also the person who takes our mailings to the bulk mail facility on Dalton Street. She is a wiz at sorting through the postal regulations and making sure that our newsletters and membership mailings go out. Roz also helps out at events. The picture with this article shows her with our table full of artifacts at a Great Outdoor Weekend event.

Thank you Roz for your sage input all these years at our Board meetings. Thank you also for helping to keep Western Wildlife Corridor ticking along so smoothly. We really appreciate it!



Tim Sisson

Artist in Residence:

Sally Sisson Anderson

Constant Contact Administrator:

Joyce Richter

Facebook Administrator:

Mary Perkins

Events:

Roselyn Schloss

Rebecca Sisson

Fundraising:

Tim Sisson

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Please indicate how you would like to help!

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☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$30 Family ☐ \$75 Supporting
☐ \$50 Organization ☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$500 Sponsoring
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***NEW!! BECOME A MEMBER ONLINE! www.westernwildlifecorridor.org**

DONATE TO THE LAND ACQUISITION FUND

☐ Enclosed is my tax deductible donation for the land acquisition fund \$ _____

VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES

May we contact you with volunteer opportunities? ☐ Yes

☐ Help with Habitat Restoration ☐ Help with Outreach and other needs

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

☐ I would like to know more about including the WWC in my estate plans.

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

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Please mail to:

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Thank you for supporting the Western Wildlife Corridor's mission to preserve the scenic beauty and natural resources of the Ohio River Valley!

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Take a look at these spectacular red and yellow maple trees from the Delshire Preserve!