



ONAPA NEWS

Dedicated to promoting, protecting, and improving Ohio natural areas and preserves.

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SUMMER — 2017

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The Columbus Foundation Ohio Natural Areas Endowment Fund (0953) - An Investment in Ohio's Future

In 1996 an anonymous benefactor and his wife made a significant donation to The Columbus Foundation establishing Fund #0953 for the sole purpose of providing a dedicated, non-state funding source, administered by a private entity beyond control of State Government. This fund will ultimately supplement or ideally replace state tax dollars as an outside reliable stream of funding to operate the ODNR state nature preserve system. No distribution of funds can ever be made from principal. Payments or distributions shall be made only from annual interest income and shall be made only upon formal request to the Governing Committee of The Columbus Foundation from a simple majority of the Ohio Natural Areas Endowment Fund Advisory Committee. All net interest income earned during a calendar year and not distributed to ODNR is automatically transferred back into principal.



Irwin Prairie State Nature Preserve
 Photo by Ian Adams

The Columbus Foundation based in Columbus, Ohio, one of the most prestigious such foundations in America, oversees the endowment fund to guarantee that funds generated are spent in strict accordance with donor's wishes and expectations. To date, no distributions of interest income have



Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve
 Photo by Ian Adams

been made from Fund #0953, nor is there a willingness to make a recommendation to do so by the Endowment Fund Advisory Committee until sometime in the distant future

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Members of the Ohio Endowment Fund Advisory Committee must be trained or experienced in the biological sciences, and/or active or experienced in natural areas management. No current paid employee of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources may serve on this committee. Current members of the Endowment Fund Advisory Committee are former ODNR Directors, Frances Buchholzer and Joseph Sommer, ONAPA President Guy Denny and ONAPA Vice President Jennifer Windus, Naturalist Jim Davidson MD, Dr. James K. Bissell, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's Curator of Botany and Director of Natural Areas, and John Watts, Naturalist and Land Manager for Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks.

Wild Plum (*Prunus americana*)

In early spring the white flower clusters of wild plums erupt from leafless, black branches. The snowy blossoms stand out in stark contrast to the naked twigs. Although conspicuous in the spring, wild plums are easy to overlook in the summer. The leaves are nondescript and the shrubs blend into the overall greenery on roadsides and the bushy edges of fields. It's easy to underestimate how frequent wild plums are in Ohio.

Plums belong to the genus *Prunus* in the rose family. The genus is a large and diverse one, including cherries, peaches and almonds, among other fruits. Several species of wild plums and cherries occur in Ohio. Peaches also spring up on roadsides but are not naturalized in the state. Plums are distinguished from cherries and other members of *Prunus* by the stones or pits within the fleshy fruit. Plum stones are two-edged, often flattened, with a shallow groove running along the edge. Cherry stones are rounded, without a groove. The branches of plums also lack a terminal bud; cherry twigs have terminal buds.

Seven species of wild plums grow in Ohio. Five of these are native, two exotic. *Prunus americana* is the most common native plum by far, having been recorded from nearly all Ohio counties. This species is a low shrub or small tree, occasionally with spiny branches. *Prunus americana* forms thickets from sucker shoots produced by the extensive root system. Wild plum blooms from mid-April in the Ohio River Valley to mid-May in the northern counties. The fruit of *Prunus americana* is dark red when ripe and rather small, about 1 1/2 x 1 inches. The juicy flesh is sweet and delicious. It's difficult for us to enjoy this natural treat, however. The plums fall from the branches as soon as they're ripe and are quickly scavenged by small animals.



"The flowers of wild plum bloom from mid-April in the Ohio River Valley to mid-May in the northern counties."



"The fruit of *Prunus americana* is dark red when ripe and rather small."



"The juicy flesh is sweet and delicious."

Wild plums today are found in a variety of sunny, marginal habitats, such as along fencerows, road banks and the bushy edges of woods and fields. In western Ohio, however, fencerows are disappearing as modern agriculture stress "clean" farming and the enlargement of fields. Fortunately, wild plums can survive all but the most severe disturbances. We may never again see the mile-long thickets of pioneer days, but wild plums will continue to brighten Ohio roadsides with wreaths of white in early spring.

~ Allison W. Cusick
Retired ODNR Chief Botanist

American Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)

I have fond memories as a youth gathering the fruiting heads of elderberry from along fencerows in my rural neighborhood in Northwestern Ohio. The fruits are not very tasty raw, but when cooked and sugar added, they make a delicious pie filling and jelly. The small purple-black berries reportedly are exceptionally rich in vitamin A, calcium, thiamine and niacin. They also are supposed to have nearly twice as many calories as cranberries and three times more protein than blueberries. Both berries and flowers are well known for their use in making elderberry wine. The flat-topped clusters of attractive, fragrant, small white flowers make an appearance in early summer followed by the berries that ripen around the last of August or first of September. These fruits are excellent wildlife food. They are relished by more than 45 species of birds as well as a number of mammals. I have noticed that Cedar Waxwings (*Bombus cedrorum*) seem to be especially fond of these berries.



American elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis*



American elderberry fruit is relished by wildlife.

American elderberry or common elderberry typically occurs as a tall, multiple-stemmed shrub in rich, moist or wet soils throughout the eastern half of the United States. The seeds are rapidly spread by birds. Consequently, elderberry can be found growing in full sunlight in just about every county in Ohio. The genus *Sambucus* is thought to have originated from the Greek *sambuce* an ancient musical instrument. The fragile large stems are largely comprised of a soft white pith that can be easily removed leaving a hollow stem. American Indians and latter early white settlers fashioned hollow elder stems into flutes, whistles and even into maple syrup spiles for collecting sap from Sugar Maple trees.

The European Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) is almost identical in appearance to its American counterpart. There is evidence that European Elderberry is being cultivated at Stone Age village sites in Switzerland and Italy. Elder is steeped in ancient folklore. In ancient times it was planted around houses to ward off evil spirits and divert lightning. European Elder

was also used medicinally by Europeans to cure a variety of ailments. The folklore and medicinal uses were then applied to the American Elder when European immigrants encountered it growing in the New World. A syrup from the juice was used for treating coughs and earaches; tea made from the flowers was taken as a mild laxative, diuretic and to promote sweating. The bark was simmered in lard to make a soothing ointment for skin abrasions and burns. The flowers and fruits were made into a poultice for treating rheumatism, sores and burns. The leaves were crushed and used as a poultice for treating headaches and the berries were fermented into a tonic wine and cooling lotion for feverish patients. In spite of its reputed medicinal values, the leaves, bark and roots are said to contain poisonous alkaloids and therefore should not be used internally. It is probably enough just to admire the beauty of this summer shrub gracing our Ohio landscape.

~ Guy Denny,
ONAPA President

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Stewardship in Action for 2017

You can find project details at www.onapa.org by selecting STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS under VOLUNTEER. In order to properly prepare, we ask that you preregister for projects.

Saturday, June 10 (Rain Date: June 17) - 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Teasel Control at Daughmer Savannah State Nature Preserve
786 Marion-Melmore Road, Bucyrus, Ohio, Crawford County

Daughmer Prairie Savannah is one of the finest prairie savannas in the country. It is a state nature preserve managed by Crawford Park District. We will be cutting the flower heads off any plants getting ready to flower, then using a shovel to cut down on an angle about 4-5 inches below the base of the plant to sever the tap root, and then pulling the mature plant or rosette out of the ground. We will also control other invasive plants as encountered in the savanna.

Wednesday, June 21 (Rain Date: June 22) - 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Bush Honeysuckle Removal at Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve
2381 State Route 343, Yellow Springs, Ohio, Greene County

Clifton Gorge protects one of the best examples of post-glacial and inter-glacial canyon cutting. The Silurian limestone and dolomite bedrock supports an abundance of plant life, including at least 347 species of wildflowers and 105 species of trees and shrubs. This stewardship project will focus on removal of invasive shrubs in sensitive areas. We will be working on the south side of the river which is the Scientific side and usually requires an access permit to visit. We will be cutting shrubs and treating stumps with herbicide to prevent re-sprouting. Smaller shrubs may be pulled and removed from the site.

Saturday, July 8 (No Rain Date) - 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Teasel Control at Daughmer Savannah State Nature Preserve
786 Marion-Melmore Road, Bucyrus, Ohio, Crawford County

Daughmer Prairie Savannah is one of the finest prairie savannas in the country. It is a state nature preserve managed by Crawford Park District. We will be cutting the flower heads off any plants getting ready to flower, then using a shovel to cut down on an angle about 4-5 inches below the base of the plant to sever the tap root, and then pulling the mature plant or rosette out of the ground. We will also control other invasive plants as encountered in the savanna.

Saturday, July 22 (Rain Date: August 16) - 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Invasive Species Control at Jackson Bog State Nature Preserve
7984 Fulton Drive NW, Massillon, Ohio, Stark County

Jackson Bog, which is actually a fen, or alkaline wetland, lies at the foot of a dry, sandy kame (a glacially deposited hill or ridge). We will be removing invasive plant species such as narrow-leaved and hybrid cattail, glossy buckthorn, privet, and purple loosestrife which are encroaching in the fen meadows. We will be cutting, treating stems with herbicide, and removing the cut stems from the fen meadows.

Volunteer Field Notes: Christmas Rocks State Nature Preserve

We, the volunteers of ONAPA are putting a dent in Ohio's run away problem with invasive plant species. It's not too late to improve our beautiful preserves by pulling out non-native plant species, week after week, bucket by bucket, and 20-gallon black bag at a time!

For my husband and I, this is our second year attending the Stewardship Projects with ONAPA periodically throughout the spring and summer months. (We also really welcome the informative

hikes after a few hours of invasive plant control while we are there...) Honestly, the work isn't hard and it's amazing how much even a small group can pull in a 4 to 6 hour period. We've worked on hillsides, in prairies, bogs and fens. Both of us agree that the paid personnel cannot get all the invasive plants out in time to prevent encroachment. ONAPA needs all the help they can get! We have



The volunteer group taking a break.
 Photo by Levi Miller.

former veterans who work with strategy to make the greatest

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Member Field Trips for 2017: June to November

ONAPA members must preregister for each field trip.

Field trip details and registration can be found at www.onapa.org by selecting ONAPA FIELD TRIPS under ACTIVITIES.

Monday, June 12, 10 a.m.

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northeastern Ohio

Singer Lake & Jackson Bog

Leaders: Judy Semroc and Larry Rosche two of the foremost experts on identifying odonates in Ohio.



Saturday, July 15, 10 a.m.

Ferns That Rock

Leader: Steve McKee, Naturalist and retired Director of the Gorman Nature Center.

Limited to the first 20 members who register.

A field trip to see the ferns that grow on cliffs and slump blocks.

Saturday, July 29, 10 a.m.

I Phone Landscape and Nature Photography

Fredericktown, Ohio

Leader: Ian Adams, Naturalist and Professional Photographer.

Fee: \$20

Meet at Guy Denny's 6021 Mt. Gilead Road, Fredericktown, Ohio residence.

Saturday, September 23, 10 a.m.

Prairie Seed Collecting Event at Denny's Tallgrass Prairie

Fredericktown, Ohio

Host: Guy Denny, retired DNAP Chief & ONAPA president

Meet at Guy Denny's at 6021 Mt. Gilead Road, Fredericktown, Ohio.

Saturday September 30, 10 a.m.

Lichens Identification Field Trip

Leader: Ray Showman, Ohio's leading lichen expert.

Limited to 12 preregistered members.

Saturday, October 28, 10 a.m.

Clifton Gorge Geology Tour

Leader: Tim Snyder, Retired Regional Preserve Manager and ONAPA Board Member.

Limited to the first 25 members who register.

Saturday, November 11, 10 a.m.

Winter Twig Tour

Leader: Steve McKee, Naturalist and retired Director of the Gorman Nature Center.

Limited to 20 preregistered members.

A field trip to identify winter trees.

Mark Your Calendar!

ONAPA Annual Meeting - August 19th in Plain City

This year the ONAPA Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, August 19th at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Plain City, northwest of Columbus. The event will feature 3 speakers in the morning - Guy Denny (fens of west-central Ohio), John Watts (prairies & savannas of the Darby Plains), and Mitch Magdich (bumblebees & other pollinators of the Oak Openings). Instead of an evening banquet, we will have a lunch buffet at Der Dutchman with our annual business meeting. After lunch, there will be 3 field trips to choose from: Darby Plains prairies, Columbus Metro Parks' prairies & savannas, and west-central Ohio fens. This meeting is for ONAPA members and registration is expected to begin on the ONAPA website sometime in June. Be sure to save the date on your calendar now for another great ONAPA Annual Meeting!



The Columbus Foundation Ohio Natural Areas Endowment Fund

(Continued from page 1)



Rockbridge State Nature Preserve
Photo by Ian Adams

when the fund has grown large enough to generate enough annual interest income to provide a reliable stream of funding to operate the ODNR state nature preserve system and specifically a re-established Division of Natural Areas & Preserves.

Unfortunately, GRF (tax dollar) funding for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources has often been a lower priority even though its funding represents a very small percentage of



Blazing star in bloom
Prairie Road Fen State Nature Preserve
Photo by Ian Adams

the overall state budget and its many and varied programs benefit a very large number of Ohioans. Furthermore, funding for the ODNR's Natural Areas Program represents only a tiny fraction of the Department's overall budget allocations as provided by the Ohio General Assembly. As we have seen, there is a willingness on the part of a growing number of Ohioans to reach into their pockets to help fund, at a higher level than their tax dollars alone, those government programs near and dear to their hearts including preserving and managing the best remaining natural areas in Ohio. To that end,

state income tax checkoff programs and specialty auto license plate programs were established to provide opportunities for private giving to state government. Private donors who are already paying for state services as taxpayers, expect their private donations to be used to supplement, not replace their tax dollars. Unfortunately, what typically happens is for GRF funding allocations to be reduced during the budget process forcing the use of private donations to make up the difference in lost GRF funding. To replace tax dollars with private donations



Lakeside Daisy
Photo by Ian Adams

defeats the purpose for private giving and is clearly contrary to the donor's wishes. Without some kind of a reliable dedicated funding source, the ODNR Natural Areas Program will continue to be vulnerable which is why it is so critical to grow the endowment fund as rapidly as possible.

A significant feature of the Ohio Natural Areas Endowment Fund is that it provides a wide variety of planned giving opportunities including estate planning. The professional staff of The Columbus Foundation are available to work with perspective donors and their financial advisors. Yet, even small, end-of-the-year donations can add up quickly and make a big difference.

~ Guy Denny
ONAPA President

For more information about the Ohio Natural Areas Endowment Fund #0953, or to make a donation, contact Steven S. Moore, Director of Donor Services and Development, The Columbus Foundation, 1234 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43205-1453; phone (614) 251-4000; www.columbusfoundation.org.

Thank You for Your Support! Newest Members & Donors

Kristin Aldridge
Jane Collins &
Russ Antel
Hubert & Jan Auburn
Catherine Tietz Boring
Jennifer Bowman
Kathryn Buster
Lee Casebere
Patricia Cooper
Cheryl S. Corney
Marcia Crim
Sarah Dalton
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Ron Geese
John & Elvina Ewing
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Janet James
Janet Johnsen
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Mary Ellen Nesham
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Janet Taylor-Lehman
Kathleen Tiller
James W. &
Kathy A. Tom
Susan Walker-Lampe
Susan Woolard
Linda Woolard
Angela Worley
Donn Young
Jan Carver Young

As of 05/03/2017

Volunteer Field Notes: Christmas Rocks State Nature Preserve (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)



Pulling Garlic mustard on the hillside.
Photo by Timothy Snyder.

impact. We have young people who are seeing the treasures uncovered and we have elderly people that remove the plants with ceaseless energy. I go because I really love the ephemeral spring flowering plants here in Ohio. I have great confidence that the work we are doing is really helping these exquisite plants thrive.

It was the first week of April when we gathered at Christmas Rocks, but only the brave and dedicated came out to pull garlic mustard that morning. I just remember the beginning portion of this project rained consistently. Thankfully, the soil was sandy and moist, so the earth gave up the garlic mustard

with ease, root and all. It was evident that we were getting the "Mother Plants" as there were a lot of small seedlings scattered all around the valley portion of the gorge. Some of the larger plants had developed the distinctive white flower heads.

It was about noon and the sun began to shimmer and we stopped for lunch. Most of us found seating on a large moss-covered tree that doubled as a natural bridge over a small steady stream. The glowing, white beauty of the quarter-size Rue

"I go because I really love the ephemeral spring flowering plants here in Ohio."

anemone nestled in the thick, dark spongy leaves and green mosses were spattered like tiny stars throughout the hillside of this magical place. Christmas ferns, wood ferns, lichens, and an array of mosses were lush from the rain and protected from the sun and wind by a tall canopy of trees overhead. Like a castle with its jagged parapet edge was the black-hand sandstone that traced the upper edges of this bowl-shaped holler.

Pulling garlic mustard and teasel is not for the faint-of-heart, but you may find it is somewhat therapeutic! On these projects, you get to meet a super group of people! I want my grandchildren to see the spring ephemerals, hear cerulean warblers, walk through fields of Lakeside daisy, and catch a hellbender or two, knowing that we were able to cultivate the beauty and splendor that was once prolific in these parts of Ohio. We will see an up-surge of life again and we won't need a machete just getting through our preserves again. I've seen Lake Erie improve, I've seen the Cuyahoga River get healthier, I have seen more people planting milkweed and insisting that they purchase wonderful native trees and plants - we can do this too!

~ Gary and Jenny Kubicki
ONAPA Volunteers

**Don't forget to
renew your
ONAPA
membership
today!**

ONAPA Welcomes Two New Stewardship Assistants for the 2017 Season

ONAPA will be contracting with two individuals starting in May as Stewardship Assistants to work in state nature preserves and natural areas for 6 months. Emily Powell and William Bonner will be assisting and coordinating ONAPA volunteers with stewardship projects, preserve monitoring, rare plant surveys, social media posts, and invasive plant control efforts, as directed by Jennifer Windus and Tim Snyder. ONAPA is excited to have two Stewardship Assistants this year after a very successful summer last year with one assistant, Brett Allerding. Emily Powell recently completed a 6-month environmental professional



Emily Powell



Will Bonner

position at Dawes Arboretum, after graduating from Ohio University in April 2016 with a degree in Environmental & Plant Biology. Will Bonner graduated from The Ohio State University in early May with a degree in Natural Resource Management. His previous work experience in the Eagle Cap Wilderness in Oregon in the summer of 2016 gave him a great background for working with ONAPA. ONAPA is using valuable membership funds to support these two positions and accomplish critical work on state nature preserves and rare plant surveys.

~ Jennifer Windus,
ONAPA Vice-President



Ohio Natural Areas & Preserves Association

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