

Brown Family Environmental Center

at Kenyon College

Field Notes



April 2017 *Issue* Vol. 21 / No.2

April, May, June

Keep It Wild: Earth Day at the BFEC

by Noelle Jordan



Get ready for a “wild” time at the BFEC. This year, we have re-designed our earth day celebration in hopes of creating a family fun day that will keep everyone mesmerized. April 22, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., this free event is open to the public.

Mission-Based Event

We re-invented our earth day event in an effort to more closely align the event to our mission, to connect people to nature. We also wanted to honor the objectives of the Earth Day Network (the creators of Earth Day). One of their goals is to inspire people to take action. As a result, we have moved the location of the event to the BFEC, making extensive use of the outdoors. We have also built-in opportunities for

our guests to connect to nature and fun ways for everyone to take action.

Up-Close Wildlife Encounters

The highlight of this year’s event will be the live animals brought to us by the Columbus Zoo, the Ohio Wildlife Center, the Ohio Bird Sanctuary, and the Midwest Biodiversity Institute. The Columbus Zoo will be here from 2:00—3:00pm to share 6 to 8 different animals. They will be under a tent that will be set up for guests to walk through and observe the animals up-close. Ohio Wildlife Center will be here the entire time, from 2-5pm, in a tent that will be set-up for guests to flow through and “meet” 3 or 4 animals. The Ohio Bird Sanctuary will have 2 sit-down shows to see and learn about live raptors. Finally, the Midwest Biodiversity Institute will be here the entire time with lots of live crayfish. Personally, I hope I can hold one (or several) throughout the day!



Make and Take

After examining the wildlife up-close, we hope our guests will take the time to build a bluebird box, a bat house, or a bug hotel. Parents will need to help little ones, but we will supply all materials and tools, as well as instructions for proper installation after you get it home.



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Lots of Hands-On Activities

We have many partners that have pitched in to make this a fun, exciting, family event. They will each bring hands-on, interactive opportunities for children of all ages! These partners include Knox County Parks, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Master Gardeners, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists, Knox County Recycling and Litter Prevention, Public Library of Mt. Vernon and Knox County, Knox Head Start, Gambier Child Care, Knox County Health Department, City of Mount Vernon, and SPI, Where Science and Play Intersect.

There will also be a few local vendors selling local, organic food. The Kenyon Farm will have eggs and trees for sale, and Doug Daniels will be here with local cheese. Fresh veggies and herbs will be sold by John and Bonnie Snyder, DJ Bower, and Dawn Seymour.

Stories and More

Yellow Flower, a Native American storyteller, will be here to share native stories about animals. These engaging stories will include drumming and dancing.

Food & Music

Trucking Delicious, a local food truck, will have tasty treats for sale. Matt Sullivan and Mark Sims will keep our toes tapping with bluegrass-y tunes from 2:00 – 4:00pm. Then a student band, Mitch, will follow with some folksy music from 4:00 – 5:00pm.

And last but not least – WMVO will be broadcasting onsite during the event.

See You There!

WHAT: Keep It Wild: Earth Day

DATE: April 22, 2017

TIME: 2:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

LOCATION: at the BFEC

Event Sponsors

Keep It Wild: Earth Day at the BFEC would not be possible without the support of our dedicated event sponsors. Please support these businesses and organizations:

Budget Dumpster of Columbus



First Knox National Bank



Printing Arts Press



Keim Lumber in Charm, OH



Knox County Recycling & Litter Prevention



WMVO and Q93

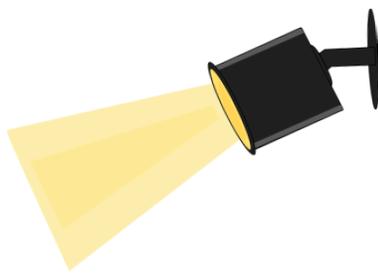


Robert Renee Uniforms

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



By Shane McGuire

Since 2014, Brian Miller has been a dedicated volunteer at the BFEC. He spends his time working with elementary children and bluebirds. In the past 3 years, Brian has served approximately 100 hours making the world a better place.

I had the honor of a recent interview with Brian. Here's what he had to say....

What do you do as a volunteer at the BFEC?

I am one of several volunteers who leads elementary field trips during the spring and fall. I am also a bluebird monitor, which means I check the 35 bluebird boxes (located on trails within BFEC) during the bluebird breeding season. Also, this past summer, I assisted with activities at a three-day BFEC summer camp for kids.

How long have you been volunteering at the BFEC?

I began volunteering three years ago, shortly after retiring.

Why do you volunteer at the BFEC?

I have enjoyed hiking, camping and otherwise spending time in the outdoors since I was a child. My years as a Boy Scout in Northern California implanted the value of conservation, which has been amplified by the climate change crisis. Volunteering for BFEC is one way I can use my knowledge — albeit rather limited — of plants and animals to promote appreciation and enjoyment of nature among today's youth.

Have you learned any new skills volunteering at the BFEC?

Every new elementary field trip is a learning experience. Discovering the richness of the BFEC habitats— a hornets' nest perched in a young oak, a tiny backswimmer scooped from a pond — is one of the big rewards I get from volunteering. As I learn more, I have more to pass onto the students. I've always enjoyed being around kids, and as field trip

leader I am learning how to engage them and spark their curiosity about their surroundings. Once, I led an activity for students — they had to sit quietly, observe nature, and write down their observations. After that, I began doing it on my own, finding much relaxation and joy.

Also, as a bluebird monitor, I've gradually come to think of myself as an emerging scientist of sorts, identifying bird types by egg, tracking the cycle of egg-to-infant-to-fledgling, observing hazards like invading sparrows, and even on occasion replacing bug-infested nests.

Do you have a favorite BFEC story?

Intrigued by salamanders -- those colorful, cute amphibians -- I attended a BFEC lecture on them, a prelude to an early spring visit to a vernal pool on BFEC land where we hoped to see some. But during our visit to the vernal pool, we had no such luck. For several months, I had given up hope of ever seeing one. Then, months later during summer camp, while poking around in Wolf Run, I spotted one as I turned over a rock! Serendipity triumphed!

Tell us a bit about your background.

After getting married on the East Coast, my wife and I have lived almost 40 years in Ohio, in two college towns: first Oberlin, and now, for the last 30 years in Gambier. As a reporter for community papers in Oberlin, Mount Vernon, Newark, and Granville, I have been a jack of all trades, covering city hall, concert hall, and college campus.

What do you like to do when you're not at the BFEC?

My interests are spread out between playing the trumpet in the Mount Vernon Community Band, volunteering at the local homeless shelter, and writing for an online visual arts magazine.

Are you reading anything right now? If so, what?

I'm planning a trip to Russia next year with my family and doing a lot of reading to prepare myself. I'm working my way through a history of Siberia called "The Conquest of a Continent" chronicling the Russians' eastward exploration and settlement of this huge land mass.

What else would you like to share with everyone?

Since I have the floor, I would invite anyone who appreciates nature and likes working with kids to consider volunteering for the school field trip program. It's up to you how much time you donate. The smiles on the faces of kids as they use their senses and stretch their imaginations is more than ample reward.



**If you would like to
BECOME A VOLUNTEER
call Noelle at 740-427-5052.**

**This time of year, we could use
help answering the phones,
helping guests who walk in,
and doing data entry.**



The Green Corner

*News from the
Office of Green Initiatives*

Academic Meets Agrarian

by Ryan Hottle, Director, Kenyon Farm

At the Kenyon Farm, academic meets agrarian. Students operate the 10-acre farm, living in a passive solar house on the property and managing the care of the animals including goats and chickens, as well as the growing and harvesting of field crops and fruit and nut trees.

Located at 20245 Zion Road, the farm was purchased in August 2012 with gifts from the Philander Chase Corporation, AVI, and alumna Diane Elam ('80) for the purpose of creating an educational working farm run by Kenyon students to complement and expand Kenyon and AVI's farm to table program.

The 10.79 acre property was originally owned by William Hogg as part of a larger 8,000 acre parcel after the forced resettlement of native tribes. Since 1826, the farm has remained largely in tact. A row of large trees along the fence line adorn the eastern side of the property, while the rear and western sides are secondary growth forests. The farm includes approximately 2.5 acres of forested land which adjoins Quarry Chapel Road.

The farm house was constructed in 1870 and was substantially remodeled in 1989, to include the addition of a passive solar wing on the west side of the house. In 2011, a barn was added to the property which now holds the 19.1 kilowatt solar array — a collaboration of students and instructors in CHEM 108 Solar Energy, the Office of Green Initiatives, and Third Sun Solar out of Athens, Ohio.

This spring, students are scaling up fruit and vegetable production, moving the laying hen operation onto pasture, and constructing an “outdoor classroom” which features extensive raised beds that will be accessible to youth, elderly, and people with disabilities.

Our volunteer days — open to all members of the public — are Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30-6:30 and Saturday 1:00-5:00.

My Favorite Spring Wildflowers

By Noelle Jordan



Bloodroot
(*Sanguinaria canadensis*)



Jack-in-the-pulpit
(*Arisaema triphyllum*)

With the help of an article that was printed in the 2012 spring issue of our newsletter, I'm going to share with you some information about a few of my favorite wildflowers...

My all time fave is Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*). This beautiful spring ephemeral is a member of the poppy family and has a waxy white flower with eight to twelve petals. The blooms of this plant last only two days. So, consider yourself lucky when you find one! The single, deeply lobed leaf wraps itself around the tender stem, but continues to grow taller as the bloom fades and the seeds ripen. The name “Bloodroot” refers to the reddish sap that can be found in the stem and rhizome (root).

Bloodroot does not produce nectar, but has ample amounts of pollen. While the flowers usually self-pollinate, the flower will also draw in pollen-collecting bees and syrphid flies. The fruit of bloodroot has a small tube attached to it, called an elaisome, that contains a sugary, oily substance irresistible to ants. Ants harvest the seeds, gorge themselves on the sweet elaisome, and discard the leftover seed within their tunnels, where it will germinate in subterranean safety. This wildflower's secret life is known as myrmecochory, or “ant-farming.”

Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) grows along damp hillsides, and can be identified by three-part leaves and a hooded spathe, or “pulpit.” Within the spathe is “Jack,” or the spadix, which contains the reproductive parts. Jack-in-the-Pulpit can produce either male or female flowers, depending on environmental conditions. A large plant with two compound leaves is almost invariably female. Small plants with only one leaf are usually male or asexual.

Jack in the Pulpit is another flower that does not produce nectar. Instead, the base of the spadix produces a fungus-like odor that attracts certain insects. These insects help with pollination.

Bloodroot is blooming now (early April) in our Woodland Garden and along the River Trail. Jack-in-the-Pulpit should be blooming by late April.

Thank You

Our Members October-December

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Is it time to renew your membership?

Use the enclosed envelope or donate online at support-bfec.kenyon.edu.

Membership level: Student ___ \$20 Individual ___ \$35 Name _____
 Family ___ \$50 Friend ___ \$100 Patron ___ \$250 Address _____
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 Amount enclosed: _____ State, Zip Code _____
 My check, payable to Kenyon College, is enclosed Telephone _____
 Please bill my ___ Visa or ___ MasterCard Email _____
 Card number _____ Exp. date _____

Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law. The Brown Family Environmental Center at Kenyon College is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization.

Currently Blooming in the Woodland Garden

April 10, 2017



Sharp-lobed Hepatica
(*Hepatica nobilis* var. *acuta*)



Sessile Trillium
(*Trillium sessile*)



Virginia Bluebells
(*Mertensia virginica*)

Programs & Events

*All events are free, open to the public, and start from the BFEC Resource Center unless stated otherwise.
9781 Laymon Road, Gambier Ohio | 740-427-5050 | jordan2@kenyon.edu | http://bfec.kenyon.edu*

Spring Event

New! Keep It Wild: Earth Day at the BFEC - Saturday, April 22, 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

You don't want to miss this **FREE** event! We'll have live raptors, mammals, and reptiles for you to "meet" up-close. Learn how to take care of our local wildlife by building bluebird boxes, bat boxes, and more! Everything you build, you can take home. Live music and food trucks will round out the afternoon.

Programs for Young Children & Caregivers

New! Oaks & Acorns - Every Thursday morning, April 20 through May 25, 10:00 am

This new program is designed for caregivers (moms, dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) with children ages 5 and younger. Caregivers and children will spend time together outside experiencing guided nature play, outdoor investigations, and hands-on discoveries. We will provide children and caregivers ideas to safely and comfortably spend time outside while encouraging creativity, curiosity, and imaginative play. Programs are scheduled for April 20, 27, May 4, 11, 18 and 25. Programs begin at 10:00am and end no later than 11:30. **Space is limited! Call now to register.** Payment due (cash or check) by April 17.

To register for the entire series (all 6 programs): Members - \$20 Non-members - \$30

To register for select dates: Members - \$5 per day Non-members - \$10 per day

Native Plant Programs

Wildflower Walks - May 7, and June 3

Join us for two wildflower walks this spring. We recommend bringing your favorite Wildflower Field Guide and a 10x hand lens. See below for dates, times, and locations. No registration required.

May 7, 2:00pm, at Ramser Arboretum - Join us for the annual Ramser Arboretum Dogwood Hike. Flowering Dogwood is usually in peak bloom, there are plenty in the area and on the arboretum property. Early May is spectacular in Ohio, spring ephemeral wildflowers in the woods, neotropical migrant birds are passing through and those that nest in the area are establishing territories and singing consistently. Bring binoculars! Meet at the Ramser Arboretum parking lot.

June 3, 10:00am, at BFEC - Search for wildflowers along some of the BFEC trails. Meet at the BFEC Resource Center.

Surviving the Wild: Wild Edibles - May 6, 1:00pm

Common dandelions, reclusive wild leeks, and stinging nettle - join Shawn Dailey to find and sample these edible plants and so much more! We will hike approximately 2.5 miles of hilly terrain. A ***wild-foods tasting*** will follow the hike. Participants should bring a water bottle, hiking boots or other suitable footwear, appropriate outerwear for the weather, and most importantly, an adventurous spirit. Meet at the Miller Observatory parking lot. No registration required.

More Programs!

Wildlife Programs

Passport to Fishing - June 10, 10:00am - 2:00pm

For children ages 8 to 16 with their caregiver (mom, dad, grandparent, etc.).

Children ages 8 - 16 will learn how to cast, tie knots, handle fish, and identify good fish habitat. After a 2 hour hands-on class, we will break for lunch, and then spend about 1 1/2 hours fishing in the Kokosing River. All children will receive a free fishing pole to use during the class and to take home with them! Caregivers - please plan to stay and learn with your child. Bring a sack lunch. **Space is limited! Call now to register.** This program is offered in partnership with Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).

Summer Camps

SPI, Where Science & Play Intersect Summer Camps at the BFEC

June 5 - 9, 2017, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., ages 5-7, Nature "Play" Camp

June 12 - 16, 2017, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., ages 8-11, Nature "Play" Camp

June 19 - 23, 2017, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., ages 5-7, Concoction Camp

June 26 - 30, 2017, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., ages 8-11, River Camp

***For pricing and registration information, call SPI or go to their website at <http://www.spi-mountvernon.org/>.

Nature's Music Program at the BFEC

July 6 - 25, Tuesday and Thursday only, 10 - 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Rebecca Abbott will lead families with children ages 2 to 9 in songs and music activities about enjoying and exploring nature. ***Call (740) 324-1225 or email abbottmusiclab@gmail.com for more information or to register by Friday, June 23.

BFEC Summer Camp in Partnership with Master Gardeners (OSU Extension)

July 31 - August 4, 2017, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., ages 8-11, Garden Gurus

Call now register! Members — \$25 per child Non-members — \$30 per child

Program Listing by Date

Through April 28	Art Exhibit, <i>Aesthetic Zoology</i> , in the Resource Center
April 20	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
April 22	Keep It Wild: Earth Day at the BFEC, 2:00 p.m.
April 27	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
May 4	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
May 6	Surviving the Wild: Wild Edibles, 1:00 p.m.
May 7	Ramser Arboretum Dogwood Hike, 2:00 p.m.
May 11	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
May 18	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
May 25	Oaks & Acorns, 10:00 a.m.
June 3	Wildflower Walk at the BFEC, 10:00 a.m.
June 10	Passport to Fishing, 10:00 a.m.



**Brown Family
Environmental Center**
at Kenyon College

9781 Laymon Road, Gambier, Ohio 43022
(740) 427-5050 ~ <http://bfec.kenyon.edu>

Our Staff

Jill Kerkhoff, Facilities & Volunteer Coord.
Shane McGuire, Land Manager Naturalist
Noelle Jordan, Manager

To conserve natural diversity and connect people to nature.

Upcoming Programs & Events

Keep It Wild: Earth Day at the BFEC	Apr 22 Resource Center 2:00 p.m.
Wild Edibles	May 6 Resource Center 1:00 p.m.
Wildflower Hike	Jun 3 Resource Center 10:00 a.m.
Passport to Fishing	Jun 10 Resource Center 10:00 a.m.

P. O. Box 508, Gambier, Ohio 43022

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