

ANNUAL PICNIC FUN FOR ALL

Everybody bring your kids and grandkids! Come join us on **Sunday, June 26th** from noon to 4 pm at the Member's Annual Potluck Picnic, to be held on a TVCT easement property owned by Al and Mary Bruns, at 9693 Route 177, Camden, near Morning Sun. It should be



an afternoon of fun with a hay ride, creaking, canoe or kayak paddling and fishing on Al's large pond (but not at the same time!), woodland and prairie trails to explore, music and good food!



Amy Leedy will provide home-raised beef for sloppy Joes and everyone else will bring their favorite dish to share! Also bring your own table service and utensils, please. **We encourage members to bring friends** who might be interested in

what TVCT does – or who just might enjoy an afternoon at a wonderful place. Children will be eligible to win a raffled “creaking kit” to take with them to their closest creek! ☘

A GLIMPSE OF SOME NEW PROJECTS COMING SOON!

Other events to keep on your radar are a few new activities – look for more information as details become available in the next few weeks.

First, a new **Puzzle Project** will help us pass along the message that everyone has a part in conservation, as we send puzzle pieces to members and ask them to support TVCT.

Second, join us for one or more of our soon-to-be-announced **Educational Programs** highlighting natural history and critters on our easement properties.

Third, a day of service at the **Ruder Preserve**, to begin reclaiming that honeysuckle-infested woodland toward its earlier glory (dates TBA).

Fourth and Finally, we are asking any photographers to be a part of a **Local Lands**

COME TO THE FAIR WITH US!

We were at Earth Day in Hamilton and Earthfest in Oxford (see Pg. 3), but we still have more chances to get out into the community and talk about the exciting conservation work we do. We'll be at:

The Oxford Museum Association Arts and Crafts Fair on **June 11th and 12th** at the Pioneer Barn near Hueston Woods.

The Butler County Fair **July 24th through July 30th** at the Butler County Fairgrounds.

The Preble County Fair **July 30th through August 6th** at the Preble County Fairgrounds.



We could use lots of help and we always pair new volunteers with a board member, staff member or seasoned volunteer. If you're interested in helping, please contact Donna McCollum (mccollds@miamioh.edu) or Liz Woedl (lwoedl@3vct.org). Come to the fair! ☘

SAVE THESE FUTURE DATES!

9/24/2016, 11/12/2016 AND 1/28/2017

— SEE PAGE 6 FOR ALL THE FUN DETAILS! —

Photo Contest, submitting their best photos that capture the mission of TVCT, “To conserve natural habitats, waterways and agricultural lands in Southwestern Ohio, for the benefit



of present and future generations, through partnerships with people and communities.”

For all of these - Look for more details on our website (<http://www.3vct.org>) in the coming weeks. ☘

WANNA GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY?

— SEE PAGE 6 FOR SRP WORK DAYS IN JUNE! —

APRIL'S OVER, BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REDESIGNATE!

Every April, all supporters must redesignate their desire to support Three Valley with their Kroger Plus Shopper's Card. ***You may find that you no longer support us!*** Please:

1. Change your account settings at www.kroger.com; or
2. View complete instructions at www.3vct.org; or
3. If you have any questions, please call Bonnie at (513) 524-2150.



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TVCT members should be particularly proud because, in addition to “conservation,” your efforts are securing another basic part of our mission: the part about “for the benefit of present and future generations.” Through easements and ownership of preserves, TVCT provides

TO CONSERVE NATURAL HABITATS, WATERWAYS AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN SOUTHWESTERN OHIO, FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS, THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES.

southwestern Ohio with places for a pleasant walk in the woods, or a child's exploration of a stream, or a search for salamanders or an indigo bunting. Preserves such as Silvoor, Ruder, Mill Race, Salamander Run, Fossil Creek,

and Five Rivers Metroparks are public places to enjoy the spectacular beauty and majesty of nature - and they will provide this opportunity in perpetuity. The practical decisions being made today in the arena of conservation are benefiting us today and also will benefit millions in the future. It is something we should all feel good about.

I hope you will take advantage of some of the outdoor opportunities that your Trust is organizing this year: the photo contest, restoration projects, picnic, and scheduled hikes with expert naturalists will provide real (not virtual) engagements with your conserved neighborhood. Feel good about what you are creating. ☘

MARK'S MESSAGE



MARK BOARDMAN, BOARD CHAIR

CONSERVATION is in our name and is the principle point of our mission statement. It really is what your donations and your volunteer efforts are all about. Because of you, Three Valley Conservation Trust (TVCT) has been hugely successful in acquiring easements and conserving acres of farmland, riparian lands, and preserves.



Hays Cummins took this shot of his Edge of the Farm Conservation Area. We at Three Valley are proud to hold an easement on this beautiful land.



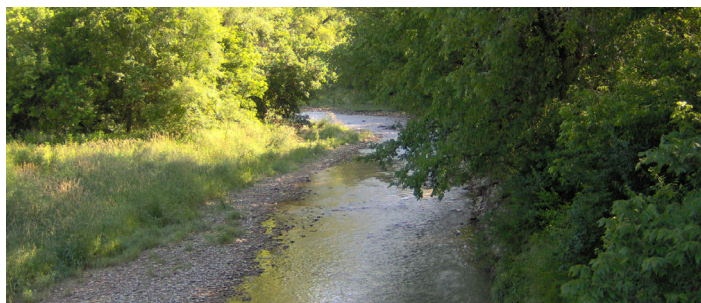
From the Desk of...

Liz Woedl
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My love for Ohio land conservation was seeded in my first explorations in the part of the Four Mile Creek near Darrrtown. The shallow water of the creek reminded me of ocean tide pools of my youth because of the algae that made walking so slippery.

Full of life, the creek hosted a variety of creatures: birds, insects, fish, snakes, turtles, salamander and crawfish. Once I found the fossils that lay on the creek bottom, I was hooked. Ohio creeks, already home for today's wildlife, also displayed the creatures of a long ago ocean floor.

I'd very much would like to know about your peak experiences that awakened the love of open land in your life. Fields, woodlands, ponds, streams, rivers, hills and valleys gave shape to our memories and are part of our community today.



Can you share with me the story of how those places become a prominent part of your life's experience?

Your story or quote from 25 – 200 words can help inspire others to become supporters of conservation and may be printed later in our newsletter, on our website or in other publications. Please send your submissions to lwoedl@3vct.org. Thank you!. ☘

SPRING SPRUNG AND IT WAS FUN!

Sandi Woy Hazelton led the effort in tabling at the area's Earth Day Events, with help from Ed Teets, Amy Weber, Liz Woedl and Donna McCollum. At both the Oxford Earth Fest and Hamilton Earth Day Festival we talked to lots of interesting people who shared their stories and passions. We hope they will lend their energy to support our efforts.



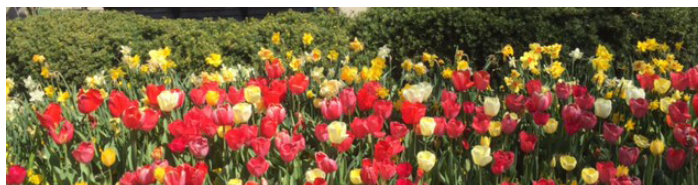
Many thanks to all who attended and to our volunteer bartenders (left to right: Karen Ferrario, Mel Bussey Silverman and Syd Ferrario - front: Steve Townsend)!

Erika Nelson organized a fun and fabulous fundraising event at Kona. It was great fun and people's tips contributed over \$600 to the TVCT pot. Thanks everybody!



Hays Cummins & Donna McCollum at their Edge of the Farm Conservation Area.

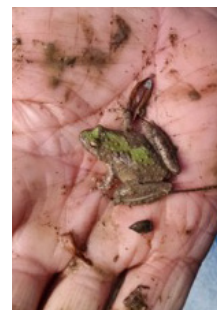
Also in association with Earth Day, we enjoyed an Eco Cache and Potluck at Edge of the Farm Conservation Area, an easement property owned by Hays Cummins and Donna McCollum. As people hiked along the route to find answers to ecological questions, the spring wildflowers



Some spring color was spotted at EarthFest in Uptown Oxford!

were a real highlight - the prairie and wetlands were coming to life as spring turns toward summer. This will hopefully be an annual Earth Day event, so come join us next year.

Lastly, folks got a chance to enjoy the Salamander Run Preserve on May 5th during a birding outing - part of Metroparks Great Week of Birding 2016. Yes, that's what all those folks are doing, looking for a bird! Of course, we saw a few other things, too, like this northern cricket frog (*Acris crepitans*) and the emerging prairie plants. ☘



Above Right: A cricket frog found at the Salamander Run Preserve Big Week of Birding Event. Below: Birdwatchers at Slamander Run Preserve on May 5th.



EXOTIC PLANTS: TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

By Steve Gordon, Subcontractor, Paddys Run Conservation Project

Early this spring, while chatting with a retired Miami University professor, I pointed out a large population of *lesser celandine* *Ficaria verna* spreading over his back yard. Given how diligent this individual is in maintaining his yard, combined with his knowledge of earth sciences, I was taken aback by his quick response. “I like the plant because it blooms.”

Our exchange prompted me to ask myself: what does the science tell us about non-native, exotic plant species and what are the impacts on native habitats? Research and field studies gathered over several years are telling. In Miami’s Bachelor Reserve, exotics such as garlic mustard and honeysuckle have invaded the herbaceous layer and suppressed native plants such as Miami mist, waterleaf and other ephemerals. More recently, celandine has gained a foothold in the Reserve due to residential encroachment and footwear hitchhiking. Over time, celandine forms a nearly solid herbaceous layer that suffocates ephemerals and tree seed germination. And let’s not forget what may become the biggest alien invader – callery pears.

So what are the impacts of native species decline? Doug Tallamy, noted author and professor of wildlife ecology, documents how most exotic species provide minimal food source to birds, insects and many mammals. His findings show there is an unbreakable link between native plant species and native wildlife -- native insects cannot, or will not, eat alien plants. When native plants disappear, the insects disappear, impoverishing the food source for birds and other animals. *Bush honeysuckle*, *Lonicera maackii*, is an invasive Asian shrub naturalized in North America that has negative effects on forest understory



Woods following cutting and spraying honeysuckle at Salamander Run Preserve.

vegetation. It has also been documented that birds nesting in honeysuckle suffer greater nest predation than those nesting in native shrubs. Since honeysuckle leafs out earlier in the spring and drops its leaves later in the fall than native plants, it reduces growth and fecundity of perennial forest herbs and tree seedlings. While the most



A native forest floor cover of Trillium, benefitting from the lack of honeysuckle.

important impacts of *Lonicera maackii* in the field are undoubtedly due to competition for light and moisture, evidence for allelopathic effects of this plant is growing. Many invasive plants contain chemicals that are distasteful or toxic to native consumers, but invasive plants may also reduce the overall quality of native habitats by causing more general changes to the chemical environment.

Extensive observation and empirical science are increasingly in agreement about the impacts of exotics. The challenge, as evidenced by the esteemed professor’s perspective, is how best to inform landowners and habitat stewards about exotic’s hidden dangers. We need to be careful that



Hays Cummins took this lovely photo of budding sessile trillium or wakerobin (*Trillium sessile*).

as advocates we do not become too invasive ourselves. Many landowners are aware of the non-native plants but are unsure what to do about them. Staff at the Three Valley Conservation Trust is expanding conversations with easement owners about how best to control and reduce invasive populations. The emerging consensus indicates fall foliar applications are the most effective for bush honeysuckle. This fall, Three Valley Conservation Trust is tentatively planning an invasive plant field demonstration workshop at Salamander Run Preserve. Information on upcoming workshops can be found on the Trust’s website. In the meantime, go native. ☘

Sources:

“Amur, Morrow’s & Tatarian Honeysuckle.” 2010. *Invasive Plants of Ohio*. Ohio Invasive Plants Council. Fact Sheet 1.

Cipollini, Don, and Dorning, Monica. September 2008. “Direct and Indirect Effects of Conditioned Soils and Tissue Extracts of the Invasive Shrub, *Lonicera maackii*, on Target Plant Performance” *Castanea*.

Miller, Kara and Gorchov, David. March 2004. “The Invasive Shrub, *Lonicera maackii*, reduces growth and fecundity of perennial forest herbs.” *Population Ecology*.

Hickman, Caleb B., and Watling, James I. 2014. “Leachates from an invasive shrub causes risk-prone behavior in a larval amphibian” **Behavioral Ecology**.

Tallamy, Doug. 2009. *Bringing Nature Home. How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. Timber Press.

WANNA GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY?

— SEE PAGE 6 FOR SRP WORK DAYS IN JUNE! —

MONITOR TRAINING, JULY 16TH

By Randy Evans
Stewardship Specialist

As summer approaches, our minds at Three Valley start to turn to thoughts of going outside, enjoying ourselves in nature, and of course monitoring the lands we protect.



Monitoring is a vital part of the mission at Three Valley Conservation Trust. Each and every one of easement properties are annually monitored by a well-trained and dedicated group of volunteers and our stewardship specialist. We love our monitors and we invite you to count yourself among them. The next opportunity to join the team will be on Saturday, July 16, 2016 in Oxford, Ohio. Training will start at 1:30 pm and take approximately 2 hours.

If you think you might be interested in becoming a monitor (or for current monitors who would like a refresher course) please let us know! RSVP with our stewardship specialist, Randy, at (513) 524-2150 or email revans@3vct.org.



Please check our website often for details about this training and upcoming events.

Lastly, we want to extend our sincere appreciation to all our monitors – past, present, and future! ☘

FOOD FOR FLIGHT 2016

By Randy Evans
Stewardship Specialist

We have milkweed packets available for anyone interested in establishing habitat for pollinators. Contact Randy at (513) 524-2150 to find out more about this program and receive your free seed packets.



Our Food for Flight initiative continues to grow. If you have a free weekend, take a canoe trip down the Little Miami with Morgan's Canoe Rentals and enjoy their newly created Monarch Waystations.

Also, we are continuing our partnership with the Cincinnati Nature Center and again have milkweed packets available for landowners interested in establishing habitat for pollinators.



Contact Randy at (513) 524-2150 to find out more about this program and receive your free seed packets. Finally, we are seeking out additional sources for plants and funding... check our website for those updates. ☘

THANK YOU MIAMI GIS INTERNS!

By Randy Evans
Stewardship Specialist

GIS Interns from Miami University continue to provide vital support in preparing maps for property easement applications and assisting with fieldwork for Three Valley Conservation Trust.

We offer our sincere thanks to the following spring 2016 GIS interns: Cole Cottingim, Kristina Straub, and Thomas Drought.

We hope that this time with us has given you some valuable experience that will serve you well. We know that you have provided invaluable help to us. Thank you for a job well done and good luck with your future pursuits.

We also want to welcome our incoming summer GIS interns from Miami University:

Maria Fagin and Catherine Kennedy.

We are excited to work with you and thankful that you have chosen to help us this summer!



Spring 2016 GIS Interns Cole Cottingim (top) and Thomas Drought (left). Thank-you for your hard work!

LAND PROTECTION: IT'S FIELDWORK TIME!

By Agnes Marchlewska
Land Protection Technician

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the Land Protection responsibilities is meeting with landowners and getting to know them, their land and its history.

After successfully completing the ODA's LAEPP 2016 round application process, it is time to go back to the field and once again visit landowners whose properties were awarded funding in the previous year. Closing easements is a lengthy process requiring many steps that take on average 2 years to complete.



One of the milestones for the finalization of a property easement is the preparation of the Present Condition Report (PCR), also called the Baseline Report. This document describes the land use, conservation values

WANNA GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY?

Explore the Salamander Run Preserve! It's an easement in the headwaters of the Paddy's Run watershed and has more than 130 acres of woodland, prairie, and vernal pools being restored to a more natural state. Restoration is time and energy intensive... so come get your hands dirty while helping preserve our natural habitats and their inhabitants. Courtesy of the Ohio EPA and Metroparks of Butler County, four woodland and wetland plantings dates are planned for this summer:

- **Friday, June 10th, 5 to 8 pm**
- **Saturday, June 11th, 9 am to noon**
- **Wednesday, June 22nd, 5 to 8 pm**
- **Saturday, June 25th, 9 am to noon**

Come in sturdy boots! You will get wet and muddy. Tools and refreshments provided. RSVP to Zach Marcum at: zmarcum@yourmetroparks.net.

SAVE THESE FOUR FUTURE DATES!

On **September 24th**, join us for a Hike and Pie. Hike to the Ruder Preserve, learn some natural history along the way, and have a slice of pie on us just for getting out and taking a hike!

On **November 12th** we will hold our Auction for Acres at the Fitton Center in Hamilton. We'll have exciting items to be auctioned, the judging of our **new photo contest**, music and excellent food by Silver Spoon Catering. It's shaping up to be a fun way to support our work at Three Valley Conservation Trust!

This fall (date TBA), come join us to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Salamander Run Preserve as a new MetroPark in Butler County!

On **January 28th, 2017** we'll hold our Annual Meeting! Check out www.3vct.org for details.

and general condition of the property just prior to the closing of the easement. It includes maps and pictures documenting property boundary lines and existing building structures. It also pinpoints areas with a potential for encroachment issues in the future. The PCR provides Three Valley Conservation Trust (TVCT) with the baseline documentation needed for future monitoring of the properties to ensure that they are managed in conformance with the easement restrictions.



During past weeks, Randy Evans and I have visited several properties and collected all the information necessary to write the PCRs. More visits are planned during the next several weeks. One of the PCRs has been completed and approved by ODA which brings the property a step closer to becoming our newest easement. I am looking forward to closing my first agricultural easement with TVCT by the end of this summer!

On a related note, we at TVCT would like to thank Sam Fitton for generously sharing his time and expertise by leading the work on a required biological survey to be included in one of the PCRs we have been working on. We look forward to working with him in the future! ☘

VALLEY NEWS NATURE SHOT

...because nature is beautiful and worthy of celebration.



Hays Cummins snapped this picture of an American Toad at the Edge of the Farm Conservation Area, catching ripples in the water from the toad's call. Do you have an interesting Nature Shot you'd like to share? Please submit your nature shot (interesting plant or animal photo) to bkretschmer@3vct.org. Thank you!



"How can I help?"

There are many ways to support the Trust! Aside from cash donations (or Kroger Card - see page 2), you just might have a skill or some time we can use.

Call Bonnie at (513) 524-2150 or
Email Bonnie at bkretschmer@3vct.org.

ARE YOU DETAIL-ORIENTED?

Do you want to help us take chaos and make it simple and accessible? We're looking for you! We need a volunteer who can help us for a significant length of time with our easement files. Interested? Contact Bonnie at (513) 524-2150 or bkretschmer@3vct.org.

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS ARE CRUCIAL TO OUR CORE MISSION!

WE ARE OBLIGATED TO PROTECT PROPERTIES, IN PERPETUITY. TWO CRUCIAL, PERPETUAL PARTS OF THIS ARE MONITORING AND EASEMENT FILE MAINTENANCE. MONITOR TRAININGS ARE HELD REGULARLY AND FILING ORIENTATION WILL BE SCHEDULED INDIVIDUALLY, DURING BUSINESS HOURS. TO BECOME A REGULAR VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT RANDY (REVANS@3VCT.ORG) OR BONNIE (ABOVE). THANK YOU!

THREE VALLEY CONSERVATION TRUST



CONSERVING THE NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE OF SOUTHWEST OHIO

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- ☐ MAILING ASSEMBLY
- ☐ TABLING
- ☐ ON-SITE EVENT SETUP

LONG TERM:

- ☐ MONITORING
- ☐ EASEMENT FILE ORGANIZATION
- ☐ COMMITTEE WORK
- ☐ GRANT WRITING

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- ☐ \$20/mo Sustaining Membership (on a Credit Card)
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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Founded in 1994, Three Valley Conservation Trust conserves natural habitats, waterways and agricultural lands in Southwestern Ohio, for the benefit of present and future generations, through partnerships with people and communities.

"Valley Trust News," the newsletter for members of the Three Valley Conservation Trust, is published four times per year.

Editors: Bonnie Kretschmer, Liz Woedl; Proofreader: Lois Nelson

SUPPORT TVCT THROUGH PAYROLL DEDUCTION!

<http://earthshareohio.org>

Make contributions to TVCT via payroll deduction.
Contact your Human Resources or Payroll Departments.



CALENDAR

MAY

30 MEMORIAL DAY, OFFICE CLOSED

JUNE

- 1 BOARD MEETING, 7PM LOCATION TBD
- 10 SRP WORK DAY, 5 TO 8 PM (SEE PG. 6)
- 11 SRP WORK DAY, 9 AM TO NOON (SEE PG. 6)
- 22 SRP WORK DAY, 5 TO 8 PM (SEE PG. 6)
- 23 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MTG., 5:30PM
- 25 SRP WORK DAY, 9 AM TO NOON (SEE PG. 6)
- 26 TVCT ANNUAL PICNIC, NOON TO 4PM (SEE PG. 1)
- 29 LAND PROTECTION STEWARDSHIP MTG, 7PM

JULY

- 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY, OFFICE CLOSED
- 6 BOARD MEETING, 7PM LOCATION TBD
- 16 MONITOR TRAINING, 1:30PM (SEE PG. 5)
- 21 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MTG., 5:30PM
- 27 LAND PROTECTION STEWARDSHIP MTG, 7PM

WANT TO BE IN THE KNOW?

Our new online Community Calendar lists not only Three Valley events, but outdoor events sponsored by groups in our community! Go to www.3vct.org and look under the "Events" menu. Something missing? Please submit your event to Bonnie at: bkretschmer@3vct.org.



THREE VALLEY CONSERVATION TRUST

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Liz Woedl, *Executive Director* • Bonnie Kretschmer, *Office Manager* • Randy Evans, *Stewardship Specialist*

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