

SPRING 2019

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Natural Resources Specialist Nick Mikash removes invasive species with a group of Laurel School alumni volunteers.

STEWARDSHIP IN OUR BACKYARD: THE IMPORTANCE OF LAND MANAGEMENT AT THE NATURE CENTER

Nick Mikash, *Natural Resources Specialist*

Caring for a natural area situated in an urban environment brings with it a unique set of challenges. In our modern age, leaving nature “to take its course” isn’t enough to preserve healthy habitats. Mother Nature often needs a little help from her friends. As the Natural Resources Specialist for the Nature Center, I employ a variety of knowledge, tools and techniques to achieve that. Concerns such as invasive species, disease, pollution, stormwater and human-introduced threats are always top of mind.

As our habitats were historically altered by human disturbance and invasive plants, promoting native plants often requires supplemental planting. Last year, we planted hundreds of new native plants on the grounds the Nature Center to ensure each of our habitats continues to thrive. Partners at local schools including Ruffing Montessori and Positive Education Program help to grow native plants from seeds collected here, which are then replanted on our grounds each spring. Often, our plants require protection from the highly abundant white-tailed deer. With limited predators and the ability to adapt to suburban life, deer numbers are higher than historical averages, which has a large impact on plant survival in our area. You may notice protective deer fencing or enclosures around plants that we are trying to protect or re-establish on our property.

Integrated Pest Management is a holistic ecosystem-based strategy that uses active monitoring of the habitat to help spot a new threat before it can become established. If a new invasive pest is identified on the property, a series of steps to identify the scale of the threat and address it are formulated. These can include mechanical removal, such as cutting and pulling; or cultural changes, such as taking steps to reduce new plant introduction. When other techniques are ineffective or inefficient, we may require chemical control. At the Nature Center we strive to minimize the use of pesticides; when needed we use the minimum quantity to achieve results and apply it conscientiously.

Trail and grounds maintenance include a variety of activities, such as weeding and trimming our demonstration gardens and keeping trails clear of debris. Trees are monitored for health and storm damage, and unsafe trees are removed as needed.

Stewardship is a critical four-season endeavor at the Nature Center as we protect and improve our important ecosystems and habitats that service our Great Lakes, including a functioning flood plain, which filters pollutants and controls storm water. Protecting these trails and habitats used by visitors, students, and educators is an important part of fulfilling our mission.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

One of my favorite places to sit when I am at work is the Nature Center’s downstairs conference room. There is a bird feeder outside the conference room window, and it is a pleasant distraction to watch the many birds (and the occasional squirrel!) come and go—some by the minute, others each day or each season. It is difficult to tell which birds are the same, but we know from our bird banding data that the same birds do come through the Nature Center’s property season after season and year after year. Through many miles of migration, or after a harsh winter storm when snow or ice can coat natural food sources like seeds and berries, the Nature Center remains a familiar place. We are home.

Over 50 years ago, the National Audubon Society was commissioned to conduct a study as part of the Freeway Fight and concluded that the quality of habitats throughout the Shaker Parklands provide an excellent refuge for migrating birds, as well as a superb educational platform—literally an outdoor classroom—for children in and around the Cleveland area to learn about

nature and the importance of protecting the habitats here. These habitats are home to a diversity of birds and other species that rely on the forests, streams, marshes and lakes to provide food, water, and shelter for their survival.

Each time I look out the conference room window, I am reminded that the Nature Center is also a home for our neighbors and community members to enjoy, to connect with self and nature, and to learn in an environment that isn’t constrained by walls, doors, windows, or the concrete and pavement that our make up our cityscapes. As a home, it is ours to nurture. Whether a repair or renovation, perhaps a bit of maintenance, or an extensive transformation or addition, it is important to take care of home. Our region’s current and future generations deserve a place where connections to nature and our environment can come to life in new and exciting ways.

As spring warms our home and lengthens our days, and the melting of winter snow makes way for renewal and regeneration, we too welcome a new season—a time of restoration and transformation. The legacy

created by the ‘Freeway Fighters’ lives on here today as we activate our space through exciting restoration and enhancement of our trails and habitats.

As birds return from their migration this spring, we too return our focus to home and look forward to sharing more of our exciting plans for the future of the Nature Center with each of you. I hope to see you at our 37th Annual Plant Sale on May 11, which offers the areas greatest selection of native plants to help you take care of your own home and local habitats. We also have a wonderful benefit planned for June 1, which will showcase our outdoor classroom and upcoming renovations, and help raise the critical funds that sustain it year over year. Please consider joining us at this important benefit to celebrate our work and our mission.

See you on the trails!

Kay Carlson
Kay Carlson,
President & CEO



MEET THE BOARD CHAIR:
JIM DIXON

Jim Dixon officially took office as the Chair of the Nature Center Board of Trustees on September 12, 2018 after serving on the board for six years. Jim’s passion for the Nature Center stems from growing up in his childhood home in Lexington, Ohio where tadpoles, minnows, birds, muskrats, white tailed deer, snakes, turtles, oaks, elms, willows, and wildflowers were readily found. “The Nature Center is the region’s leading provider of nature-based education for children. Children who should all be exposed to a setting such as the Nature Center in order to gain a better understanding and appreciation for their place in our region, and in the world,” said Jim. In fact, the thing he loves the most about the Nature Center is our Applied Science for Kids (ASK!) program with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Jim currently practices law and is a Partner at Brouse McDowell, LPA. To live our mission at home, Jim can be found riding his bike to work year-round, raising backyard chickens, advocating for sustainability, and setting an example of good stewardship around our community. We couldn’t be more thrilled to have Jim leading the charge for the next two years!



Can you guess this tree from it's bark?
It's a COTTONWOOD.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NURTURING OUR ALL PEOPLE'S TRAIL

If you have been to the Nature Center and taken a walk on our All People’s Trail, you know that it is an elevated boardwalk enjoyed and beloved by thousands due in large part to its accessibility, as well as its picturesque landing into our signature marsh. The All People’s Trail has been key to fulfilling our mission and we are proud of the joy and connections with nature it brings to anyone. It is for this reason that we are thrilled to embark on an exciting renovation and enhancement of this iconic trail.



The All People’s Trail plans include new features such as:

- A MORE WELCOMING ENTRANCE with increased gathering spaces
- A WHIMSICAL, NATURE-INSPIRED GAZEBO for class discussions and experiences, relaxation, or events
- RESTORATION of surrounding native habitats
- INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE for increased connections and learning in nature

NATURE CONNECTION

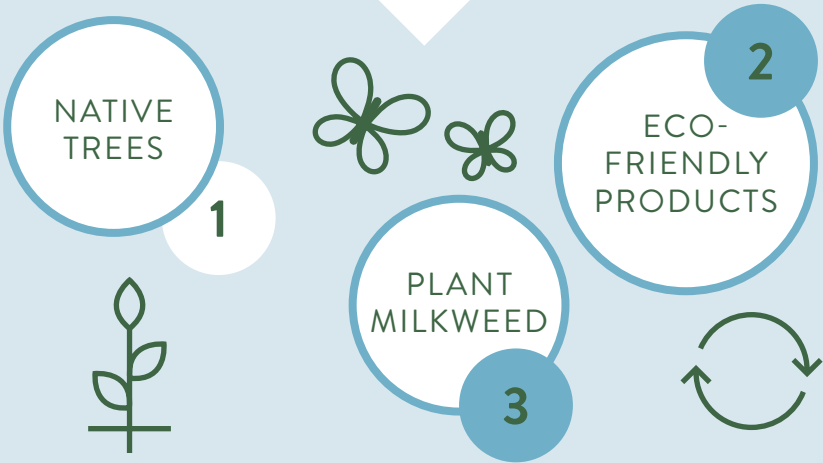
ECO-TIPS:
WELCOME SPRING WITH
EARTH DAY AND ARBOR DAY

Earth Day and Arbor Day are right around the corner, so it’s a good time to think green and help bring their meaning into your life. Here are three easy ways to go greener this month:

BUY AND PLANT A NATIVE TREE!
Our annual plant sale is a great place to find native trees and plants.

START YOUR SPRING CLEANING WITH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS
Mix your own all-purpose cleaner:
Vinegar ½ cup, baking soda ¼ cup and water ½ gallon.

PLANT MILKWEED TO PROVIDE A MONARCH BUTTERFLY HABITAT
It’s easy to grow and necessary for the monarch life cycle. Different species of milkweed are available at our Annual Plant Sale on May 11.



WILDLIFE FEATURE:
IDENTIFYING TREES WITHOUT THEIR LEAVES

While leaves are generally the starting point to identify any plant, there are other features that can help us make an identification. Certainly bark is one way, but twigs hold a lot of information and are the place to start when leaves are scarce. Look closer and you will notice the buds that hold next year’s growth. Are the buds opposite (Maple, Ash, Dogwood, Buckeye, etc.) or alternate (Hickory, Oak, Sycamore, Poplar, etc.)?

Buds come in a variety of colors, shapes and textures; they may be knobby and reddish brown like Red Oak; long and velvety brown like Paw Paw; or golden yellow like the Bitternut Hickory. Each is unique and can help you identify that leafless tree. Take a walk outside this spring and look at the variety of buds as they emerge at the Nature Center to see if you can make your own identification.

SPRING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

• BIRDING HIKES •

SEASONAL BIRD WALK

Sunday, March 3 | 8–10:30AM

Meet in the Nature Center parking lot to learn about upcoming spring migrants. Walk through different parts of the Shaker Parklands looking for birds. **Free. Binoculars available for use with ID.**

AUDUBON BIRD WALKS

Sunday, April 14, 21, 28 and May 5, 12, 19 | 7:30AM

Meet in the Nature Center parking lot to begin a walk through the Shaker Parklands looking for birds. **Free. Binoculars available for use with ID.**

• FAMILY PUBLIC PROGRAMS •

DOAN BROOK ANNUAL STREAM SWEEP & WEED PULL

Sunday, April 28 | 1–3PM | Meet at Fairhill and E. 127th Street

Celebrate Earth Day with Doan Brook Watershed Partnership and the Nature Center as we take care of our urban environment by cleaning up winter trash and pulling invasive plants in the Doan Brook corridor and surrounding parklands. Volunteer as an individual or a group—all ages welcome! Register online at doanbrookpartnership.org or call the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership at 216.325.7781 ext. 6783. **Free.** If you are unable to attend on April 28 but are still interested in volunteering, a second option is available on Saturday, April 27 from 1:00–3:00PM. Meet at Rockefeller Park Lagoon gazebo.

37TH ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 11 | 9:30AM–1:30PM

See page 6.

• ADULT PROGRAMS •

USING PERVIOUS PAVERS IN PATIOS & DRIVEWAYS TO REDUCE STORMWATER RUNOFF

March 20 | 7PM

Join Tom Hornberger, Facilities Director of the Nature Center and Jeff Jowett, Senior Watershed Team Leader from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for an informative presentation on the use of permeable pavers in constructing driveways, patios and more. The new Lavelle Family Amphitheater will be used to show how key placement of pavers can save money and help divert runoff. You will also learn about the Regional Stormwater Management program and the credits offered by the Sewer District. **\$10 members \$15 non-members. Register at shakerlakes.org.**

CONSERVING NATURE'S STAGE – IDENTIFYING RESILIENT LANDSCAPES FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE

Wednesday, April 10 | 7–8:30PM

A new study by The Nature Conservancy has identified a series of landscapes across Ohio that are predicted to withstand the growing impacts of climate change. As climate impacts threaten to destabilize natural areas across the world, scientists believe resilient landscapes will continue to serve as stable habitats to a wide variety of plants and animals, while also providing drinking water, fertile soil, and other important natural services on which people rely. Join us for this presentation by Ohio Nature Conservancy staff: Bill Stanley, State Director, and August Froehlich, GIS Analyst. **\$10 members, \$15 non-members. Register at shakerlakes.org.**

STEWARDSHIP IN OUR BACKYARDS

Earth Day, Monday, April 22 | 7–8:30PM

In our modern day, leaving nature to “take its course” isn’t enough to preserve healthy habitats. Mother Nature needs a little help from her friends. We’ll share how the Nature Center maintains its natural areas in this urban environment, including the challenges, tools and techniques used to keep our habitats healthy, and upcoming habitat restoration projects at the Nature Center. You’ll have the opportunity to ask our Natural Resources Specialist, Nick Mikash, your native planting, land conservation and stewardship questions. A short hike will follow the presentation. **Free. Register at shakerlakes.org.**

DIY RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 21 | 6:30–8PM | Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

Make your own rain barrel, and you’ll save more than water! We’ll supply the barrel, parts and tools and show you how to construct a closed, 55 gallon rain barrel system. Barrels can be attached to any standard downspout to collect and conserve rain water for your plants and yard. **Workshop fee, including barrel and parts, is \$60. Space is limited and advance registration is required by May 6 online at shakerlakes.org.** This event is in collaboration with Doan Brook Watershed Partnership.

FLYWAYS NOT HIGHWAYS SUMMER BENEFIT

June 1 | 6:30–11PM

Stroll into the first party of the summer in Shaker Heights. An evening of mingling, food and crafted cocktails by local chefs. See page 8.

COMMON GROUND #FREDWALKSCLE

Stewarding the Beauty of Nature and History

June 15 | 1:30–3:30PM

Stewarding the beauty of nature and history is the theme of a half-day exploratory hike around Lower Lake in the Doan Brook Watershed. We will start our journey at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and then hike around Lower Lake. You will learn about the history of the lake and how removing invasive plants and planting natives is improving habitats. Co-hosted by Kim Smith from Journey on Yonder (JOY), Friends of Lower Lake, The Doan Brook Watershed Partnership and the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. Refreshments available following the hike. Supported by the Cleveland Foundation as a part of Common Ground and #FredWalksCLE, a neighborhood event series exploring the natural environments that nourish and sustain Northeast Ohio.

Free. Register at commongroundcle.org.

COMMON GROUND CONVERSATION: My Environment Was, My Environment Is, and My Environment Will Be

June 30 | 10AM–1:30PM

Unite at our region’s day of community conversation where residents meet, share a meal, and connect. FredWalksCLE starts the conversation this spring by highlighting the valuable resources we share, the ambitious projects that aim to improve and protect them, and the individuals doing the work that makes Greater Cleveland an amazing place to call home. This event is supported by the Cleveland Foundation as a part of Common Ground and #FredWalksCLE, a neighborhood event series exploring the natural environments that nourish and sustain Northeast Ohio. **Learn more at clevelandfoundation.org/commonground.**

BRINGING NATURE HOME

A Series of free talks about ecological gardening presented by Friends of Lower Lake and Doan Brook Watershed Partnership in collaboration with Gardenopolis, Gardenwalk Cleveland Heights, 2019 Cleveland Pollinator and Native Plant Symposium, and the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. **More information at friendsoflowerlake@gmail.com or call 216.406.9135**

Plant This, Not That | Thursday, March 21 | 7–8:30PM

Room A-B, Heights Library, 2345 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights

Not the Last Children in the Woods!

Thursday, April 4 | 7–8:30PM

Stephanie Tubbs Jones Community Center, Room 114, Shaker Heights. Please visit friendsoflowerlake.blogspot.com or call 216.406.9135.

The Powerful Partnerships of Plants and Pollinators

Thursday, April 11 | 7–8:30PM

Room 1-2, University Heights Library, 13866 Cedar Road.

• SAVE THE DATE •

FAMILY FISHING DAY | July 13

TAKE TO THE LAKE | August 17

VOLUNTEER NEWS

The volunteer program would like to thank the following groups for their continuing support of the Nature Center and all of its programs. These volunteers assisted with education, land management, and special event projects. A special thanks to all of our volunteers for their time:

Business Volunteers Unlimited, Greater Cleveland Volunteers, Ruffing Montessori, Jewish Family Services, Greenview School-PEP, Shaker Heights Environmental Club, Boy Scouts of America Troop 662

YOUTH VOLUNTEER EVENTS:

SPRING BREAK CAMP VOLUNTEERS

April 1–April 5 | 8–3:30PM | 3–5PM for Extended Care

Get outside this spring and help our campers explore the Nature Center. Volunteers ages 13 and up assist educators with games, crafts, and activities.



Annual Plant Sale



Flyways not Highways



Doan Brook Annual Stream Sweep



Weekend Birding Hikes

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMPS (OAC)

June 17–August 15

Spend your day exploring nature and assisting campers with activities, hikes, games and crafts under the direction of the education staff members. A minimum commitment of one day is required. Open to volunteers age 13 and up. For a position description please visit our website at shakerlakes.org/youth-opportunities/.

YOUTH STEWARDSHIP ASSISTANTS

June 25–August 15

Support our land management staff with stewardship projects throughout the summer. Open to students attending and entering high school. For a position description please visit our website at shakerlakes.org/youth-opportunities/.

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER EVENTS:

DOAN BROOK ANNUAL STREAM SWEEP WEEKEND

Saturday and/or Sunday | 12:30PM–3PM

Join the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership staff for a weekend of stewardship.

Saturday, April 27 | 7–8:30PM

Meet at Rockefeller Park Lagoon Gazebo in University Circle near Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and East 105th Street.

Sunday, April 28 | 7–8:30PM

Meet at the corner of Fairhill Rd and E. 127th Street. Take care of our urban environment by cleaning up winter’s accumulation of trash and pulling invasive plants in the Doan Brook’s parklands. Volunteer as an individual or a group—all ages welcome!

VOLUNTEER AT THE PLANT SALE

A long-standing volunteer tradition, the Plant Sale has a task for everyone. Shifts and opportunities include set-up, assembling orders, sale check-out, children’s craft support or assist with curbside pick-up. Opportunities available both May 8 and May 11.

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS

May 25, June 29, July 27, Aug 31, Sept 28, Oct 26 | 10AM–12PM

Nature Center at Shaker Lakes Pavilion

Open for volunteers 8 years old (with a guardian) and up. Individuals and groups are welcome! Gloves, tools, and marsh boots (if needed), water and light snacks provided.



SATURDAY, MAY 11 | 9:30AM-1PM

Welcome Spring with the 37th Annual Plant Sale at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes featuring an ever-growing variety of hard-to-find native plants, perennials, edibles and annuals hand selected by a local team of experienced gardeners.

Shop and choose from a beautiful variety of affordable herbs, vegetables, perennials, annuals, natives and hanging baskets. The sale includes the always popular homegrown section featuring plants grown and donated by local gardeners. Experts will be available throughout the day offering selection guidance. Activities include a special Mother's Day kid's craft, refreshments and music. A fun day for the whole family! Parking is available on nearby streets and curbside assistance for purchases is provided.

Watch for the Plant Sale Catalog Mid-March. Place your orders early for home delivery (20-mile radius). Don't miss our new pre-assembled "Go Native Plant Packs."

Order online! Enjoy online viewing and secure ordering on the Plant Sale website, available mid-March at shakerlakes.org.

MEMBERS-ONLY PLANT SALE PREVIEW:

SATURDAY, MAY 11 | 8:30-9:30AM

We invite Nature Center members to join Plant Sale Day ahead of the crowd. Grab a cup of coffee and a pastry on us, and enjoy a preview of the Plant Sale offerings to get a jump start on selecting sought-after container assortments, ready-to-go pots, and homegrown.



CUYAHOGA ARTS AND CULTURE GRANT: CRITICAL FOR NATURE CENTER OPERATIONS



Since 2007, Cuyahoga Arts and Culture (CAC) has generously provided operating support to the Nature Center, accounting for 10% of our annual budget. Cuyahoga County residents created CAC in 2006 when they approved a tax on cigarettes to support arts and culture in our community. To find out more about upcoming cultural events, including Nature Center programs, please visit their event schedule at www.clevelandartsevents.com.

ART ON VIEW

NATURE'S EXPRESSIONS BY JULIE COOK

Julie is a self-taught artist from Madison Township who works in acrylics and mixed media. She enjoys experimenting with paint and products to see what new textures and techniques she can create. Julie uses traditional tools, as well as unique items like scraps of wood, plastic, and recycled packaging material. Julie is deeply inspired by God's creation and is thankful for the ability He has given her.



Nature's Expressions opens on Friday, March 29 and continues through August 4.

SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP 2019

SCREEN-FREE SUMMER ADVENTURES

Visit SHAKERLAKES.ORG/CAMP to register today. Don't delay, camps sell out quickly.

CAN'T GET ENOUGH NATURE?
Join us this summer and become inspired by the outdoor world!

LOOKING FOR SPRING BREAK PLANS?
We offer a spring break camp, too! Register for one day, or up to all five.

THE MAJESTIC OWL

Lauren Schmidt, *Camps and School Program Coordinator*

Owls are birds with mysterious, lovable and sometimes spooky characteristics—depending who you ask. They have puzzled people for a long time due to their secretive and nocturnal habits, fierce predatory behavior and interesting, yet majestic appearance.

The effort to find one is worthwhile, as they are truly fascinating to see and hear. Their super-powered hearing allows them to listen for prey under leaves, plants, dirt and snow. Because they have ears at different heights on their heads, they can find prey with the slightest change in sound waves. Prey never knows an owl is coming, for their specially designed feathers-of-flight allow them to fly in absolute silence.

These creatures typically prey on rodents, birds, amphibians, insects and sometimes even other owls!

NATURALIST ACTIVITY

MATCH THE CATERPILLAR WITH ITS BUTTERFLY

Run, don't walk over to our website to find your spring naturalist activity! Visit shakerlakes.org/junior-naturalist-web-activities/ and bring your completed activity to the Nature Center Duck Pond Shop to check your answers and receive 10% off.

CREATURE FEATURE:



CAN YOU GUESS?

- My nuts help a variety of mammals survive throughout the winter
- I help support insect biodiversity with 557 different caterpillar species relying on me for food and shelter
- Whether red or white my name is mighty

Answer: Oak Trees



RECYCLED
FPO

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



#SHAKERLAKES

*Conserving a natural area, **connecting** people with nature, and **inspiring** environmental stewardship*

SHAKERLAKES.ORG

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save the date

STROLL INTO THE FIRST PARTY OF THE SUMMER
IN SHAKER HEIGHTS

FLYWAYS

not HIGHWAYS

AN EVENING OF MINGLING, FOOD
AND CRAFTED COCKTAILS BY LOCAL CHEFS

SATURDAY
JUNE 1, 2019 | 6:30PM-11PM

benefit co-chairs Katy Nagel, Meredyth Ralph, Carrie Shelfer, and Ingrid Tolentino

