



NATURE CENTER  
AT SHAKER LAKES

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS  
OF THE NATURE CENTER AT SHAKER LAKES

# ROOKERY



Nick Mikash works with a team of volunteers to remove invasive species.

## NATURE CENTER HABITAT RESTORATION EFFORTS GROW

Nick Mikash, *Natural Resources Specialist*

Early this winter, the natural resources team embarked upon the largest habitat restoration endeavor since the marsh restoration project nearly a decade ago. Our exciting, long-term goal is to re-establish a more biodiverse and functional ecosystem by bringing back and showcasing more native plants than ever before! A healthier, more diverse ecosystem will provide additional habitat and resources for wildlife, and our hope is that it will attract species that have not visited the Nature Center in decades.

To accomplish this goal, my team and I have removed approximately 100 invasive trees, shrubs, and perennials, including European privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) and Japanese bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), which are aggressive, non-native plants that have taken over areas around our trails. To prevent further seed dispersal, the plants will be chipped and hauled away from our property. After the invasive shrubs have been removed, native plants will continue to be introduced through 2021. Native plants and trees provide food and shelter for native pollinators like the monarch butterfly and

migratory songbirds. To date, over 150 native plants such as buttonbush, dogwood, elderberry, American elm and sycamore have been replanted.

This spring as you walk our trails, look for potted shrubs, live stakes (which look like sticks, but will grow into shrubs), and some perennials. Studies have shown that removing invasive plants will allow native species to re-establish over time, but we plan to do this gradually to ensure there is usable habitat for animals who need it now. It is a delicate balance!

As the new native trees and shrubs establish and take root, we hope that you notice an increase in insects, birds, amphibians, and more with each visit! Perhaps you can find a great location in your own yard for these same types of native plants.

Shop our 38th Annual Plant Sale at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on May 9 to find beautiful, easy-to-grow native plants of your own. To learn more about our native habitats, or to volunteer to restore habitats with us, visit [shakerlakes.org](http://shakerlakes.org).

grey dogwood

## DISCOVER NATIVE PLANTS AND WILDLIFE!

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Happy 2020! I want to start by expressing my gratitude to everyone who has supported and watched as our new and improved ADA-accessible All People’s Trail come to life and hosted our first few events—the Grand Opening on November 9 and the Winter Solstice Luminary Walk on December 20. Over 600 guests bundled up on a beautiful winter evening to walk the illuminated trail, sipped hot cider or mulled wine, and enjoyed a Friday evening in nature with us. This was merely a small taste of what will be many more exciting programs and events to come!

Behind the scenes, we have been thoughtfully preparing for the next phase of enhancements to our 20-acres which will focus on the Stearns Trail. This plan has many facets, including something I am very passionate about—a treehouse! We are thrilled to announce our new treehouse will be designed by Nelson Treehouse & Supply Company of Treehouse Masters fame and built by local builders. This new structure along the Stearns Trail will allow children to experience a first-hand view of the floodplain forest from a ‘tree’s perspective.’ Please visit our website for more information on this and the other changes planned this spring.

The more time I spend in cold weather the more I seem to anticipate seeing bright pops of green peeking up through the ground—a sign that warmer weather and gardening is on the way! This year, keep your eyes open for more big changes coming to the Nature Center. As we continue to move forward with Enhancing Your Outdoor Classroom: The Campaign for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes,

we will be focusing on an extensive habitat restoration project throughout our grounds. While habitat restoration may not be apparent at first, or it may even look like we are removing or reducing habitat, you will notice the changes with every passing season as the plants take root in their new home. The improvements to the Nature Center and surrounding 20-acres are planned, thoughtful, intentional, and will take time. As the new native plants take root, a more diverse, robust, and healthy ecosystem will grow for our native living beings, and in return, will create a better educational experience for our school groups and visitors.

This May, we hope you will join us as we celebrate the 38th Annual Plant Sale—one of the largest native plant sales in Northeast Ohio. If you are new to the world of gardening with native plants, we hope this issue of The Rookery inspires you to take action, even if it is in small steps.

I deeply understand that the changes, enhancements, and excitement would not be possible without the support from our community. It is because of you we have been able to build a sustainable organization that values the importance of environmental education and nature access for all—for generations to come.

See you on the trails!

*Kay Carlson*

Kay Carlson, President & CEO



INVESTING IN THE RESTORATION OF OUR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM



The reconstruction and subsequent completion of the enhancements to our All People’s Trail in the Fall of 2019 was an exceptional time as our neighbors and visitors witnessed its breathtaking transformation. As we celebrate the creativity and craftsmanship that has expanded and transformed nature access for all, we are excited to turn our attention to another equally important piece of our 20-acres where memories of nature and experiences with loved ones are made daily: the Stearns Trail.

A thoughtful and exciting plan is coming that will continue to bring nature, science, and environmental education to life in new and exciting ways for our visitors, classes, and community. Construction of this exciting phase of enhancements could begin as early as this April. We look forward to sharing more detailed information and construction timelines as plans are finalized.

THE NEW STEARNS TRAIL WILL INCLUDE:

- A nature play area, featuring natural structure and materials for creative play in nature
- A treehouse for imaginative play, giving a birds-eye view to the surrounding forest canopy
- A wetland observation deck with increases seating alongside our south marsh
- New bridges and trail infrastructure as well as restored surrounding native habitats

BIRDING PROGRAMS



AUDUBON BIRD WALKS

Select Sundays, March 8, April 12, April 19, April 26, May 3, May 10, May 17 | 7:30AM

Take a guided stroll through the Shaker Parklands looking and listening for migratory birds with expert birder Julie West. No previous birding experience necessary. Binoculars are available for use in exchange for ID. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot. **FREE. Registration not required.**

SPRING BIRD BANDING

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, April 20–May 29 | 7:30–11:30AM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

It’s back! Join expert birder Julie West near the right side of the driveway to observe as her team safely captures, bands, and records valuable data about migratory birds in Northeast Ohio. **FREE. Weather permitting.**

FAMILY PROGRAMS



DOAN BROOK ANNUAL STREAM SWEEP & WEED PULL  
Sunday, April 19 | 1–3PM

Celebrate Earth Day with Doan Brook Watershed Partnership and the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes 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! Meet at the Corner of Fairhill and E. 127th. **FREE.** Register at <https://doanbrookpartnership.org>.

TREE PLANTING AND MARSH RESTORATION  
Saturday, April 25 | Time TBD

Save the date for a combined Arbor Day event with tree planting around Lower Lake and at the Nature Center. **FREE.**

38TH ANNUAL PLANT SALE  
Saturday, May 9 | 9:30AM–1:30PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

See page 5. **FREE.**  
Plants available for purchase.

NATURE CONNECTION

If you live in Cleveland, you are probably aware that we share our city with coyotes! Coyotes are an often misunderstood native species that are part of a healthy ecosystem. While it is rare to see coyotes during the day, as they are nocturnal, our trail cameras capture sightings of them at night when they are most active. Their characteristic bushy tail gives them away even in the blurriest of images.

Coyotes are not a danger to humans and stay true to a more natural diet. A study by Urban Coyote Research Program analyzed over 1,400 scats and found the most common food items were small rodents (42%), fruit (23%), deer (22%), and rabbit (18%). Only 2% of scat had human garbage and just 1.3% showed evidence of cats. That said, it is a good idea to keep cats and dogs safely indoors due to other dangers.

FUN FACTS

- Coyotes mate for life and are monogamous—they are 100% faithful to their mate.
- As humans take over more and more countryside, coyotes are adapting to living in cities to find food.
- Breeding season is February through March. In spring, females build dens for their young.
- Coyotes may live in a pack of 5–6 relatives or as solitary individuals.



For more information on urban coyotes, visit [urbancoyoteinitiative.com](http://urbancoyoteinitiative.com).

EVERGREEN SOCIETY GIVING: NANCY KING SMITH

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes was one of the first places I gravitated toward when we arrived in Shaker Heights with our two young daughters many years ago. The trails and native habitats were a perfect setting for me to volunteer and introduce my daughters to the importance of our environment. Little did I know that a decade later, I would have the opportunity and privilege to serve at its Executive Director for 10 years.



I have now been retired for nearly 15 years, but the Nature Center remains in my blood. Kemp and I are very pleased, not only to support the current capital campaign, but to also join the Evergreen Society with a planned gift during this crucial time for the organization. We are excited about current efforts to upgrade the outdoor classroom and the continuing commitment to provide outdoor environmental education to children of all ages. Our hope is that the Nature Center will continue to be a vibrant part of our community for generations to come and that our planned gift will have an impact in continuing that legacy.

Interested in creating a legacy of conservation and environmental education? To learn more about making a legacy gift and joining the Evergreen Society, or making a gift to the capital campaign, please contact Rob Sikora at [sikora@shakerlakes.org](mailto:sikora@shakerlakes.org).



NATIVE PLANT PROGRAMS

APRIL IS OHIO NATIVE PLANT MONTH

SMALL SCALE NATIVE PLANT GARDENS FOR POLLINATORS  
Wednesday, April 1 | 5:30–6:30PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

Discover 20 native plants that can be used to establish a beautiful flower-rich native garden that will attract the most pollinators. Learn how to establish nesting sites in your garden, how tall varying species grow, which plants tend to flop or stay erect, and which plants are good for border edges. Once your native garden is created you will be amazed at the insect play that unfolds on its floral stage! Bring your plant sale catalog! Presented by Ann Cicarella at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.  
**FREE. Registration at shakerlakes.org.**

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE  
Saturday, April 4 | 1–2:30PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

We all have that spot in our yards where nothing seems happy: wet, part wet, dry, part dry, shady, part shady, sunny, part sunny, clay-rich, acidic, or all of the above. Learn which native plants at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes 38th annual Plant Sale will be best for your difficult yard. Stick around for the end of this session to hear about the Pollinator Path Challenge! Did you know that neighbors on Bradford Road in Cleveland Heights have started a tree lawn pollinator path? Hear the simple steps they took to provide bees, butterflies, and other insects with a rich diet of pollen and nectar down their neighborhood street. Presented by Nick Mikash, Natural Resources Specialist at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and Friends of Lower Lake co-chair Peggy Spaeth. **FREE. More information at friendsoflowerlake@gmail.com or call 216.406.9135.**

IF YOU PLANT IT, THEY WILL COME

Ann Cicarella, Landscape Designer

It really is true—plant it and they (native insects and pollinators) will come! Yet many in our community stray from native gardening simply because they believe a native garden is not as easy or beautiful as the typical popularized gardens we tend to see.

The motivation for my native garden began with bee keeping. Eight years ago, I sought to keep the honeybees not only alive, but healthy, and this led me to researching plants that provided high quality nectar and pollen. I decided to convert my existing gardens and front lawn into a beautiful, floral rich habitat. I simply ordered a myriad of plants I had never grown before from native plant nurseries and started planting!

Even though my garden began with the goal of improving honeybee health, I soon discovered the amazing world of native plant and pollinator interactions—native bees, wasps, caterpillars, beetles, flies, moths, butterflies and birds all dancing daily in my gardens. Join one of the Nature Center’s upcoming programs on native gardening and you will be sure to find joy while creating new habitats for our dwindling pollinator populations.

Photos: Ann Cicarella’s native garden at her home



CREATE YOUR OWN POLLINATOR PATH

Peggy Spaeth, Native Gardener

Love the feeling of walking on Nature Center trails amidst blooming flowers? Imagine recreating this feeling on your own street! How can you and your neighborhood work together to plant more native plants? The Bradford Pollinator Path started in 2019 when a resident emailed Bradford Road neighbors asking if anyone was interested in replacing a patch of tree lawn with native plants to help native pollinators. Before we knew it, residents had a meeting, ordered Pollinator Packs from the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes’ plant sale, and the Bradford Pollinator Path was founded!

Planting a garden from scratch can be daunting for busy people, so starting small was key. Helping native pollinators is as simple as choosing the right plants. Don’t know where to begin? Check out the native plant Pollinator Packs from the 38th Annual Plant Sale at shakerlakes.org/plant-sale!



YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR NATIVE PLANTS!

Pre-assembled “Go Native Plant Packs” will return!  
Select vegetables & herbs now available in gallon size pots!

38th ANNUAL PLANT SALE

• MOTHERS DAY KIDS CRAFT • MUSIC • PLANT EXPERTS •

Welcome spring with the 38th 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.

PLANT SALE DAY  
SATURDAY, MAY 9 | 9:30AM–1PM  
NATURE CENTER AT SHAKER LAKES

Stop in and choose from a beautiful variety of affordable herbs, vegetables, perennials, annuals, natives and hanging baskets. The sale includes the always popular homegrowns section featuring plants grown and donated by local gardeners. Experts will be available throughout the day offering selection guidance. A fun day for the whole family! Parking is available on nearby streets and curbside assistance with purchases is provided.

ORDER PLANTS ONLINE AT SHAKERLAKES.ORG  
MARCH 18–APRIL 17  
Enjoy online viewing and secure ordering on the Plant Sale website.

Watch for the Plant Sale Catalog mid-March. Place your orders early for home delivery (20-mile radius).

MEMBERS ONLY PLANT SALE PREVIEW  
Saturday May 9 | 8:30AM – 9:30AM

We invite Nature Center members to join Plant Sale Day ahead of the crowd. Get a jump start on selecting sought-after container assortments, ready-to-go pots, and homegrowns. Grab a complimentary cup of coffee and a pastry while you enjoy a preview of the Plant Sale offerings and mingle with fellow garden enthusiasts and staff.



THE STONE OVEN  
BAKERY • CAFE

MEET THE STAFF:



WITH JULIA WILLIAMS,  
WELCOME DESK ASSOCIATE



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN  
AT THE NATURE CENTER?  
8 months!

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST  
ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I love all of the amazing people I get to meet! Whether it is our staff, volunteers or visitors, connecting with individuals who want to enjoy and protect our natural environment is a great perk.

HOW DO YOU PRACTICE  
SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME?

My two biggest home sustainability goals are to reduce my plastic waste and my carbon footprint. A fun way to do both is upcycling! I love finding creative new uses for “trash” to help organize my home or create decorative art. Did you know you can make a bird feeder from a plastic bottle? Added bonus—keeping plastic out of the waste stream reduces carbon emissions! I work to educate and organize my community to contact our representatives, testify at hearings, and advocate for climate justice. Ask me your climate change questions!

WHAT’S YOUR TYPICAL DAY LIKE  
AT THE NATURE CENTER?

My main responsibility at the front desk is ensuring anyone who comes through our doors has a positive experience! Whether it is your first or fiftieth visit, I am happy to answer questions, recommend upcoming events and programs, facilitate crafts, and even introduce you to our resident animals. I also help answer phones and oversee our Duck Pond Gift Shop.



VOLUNTEER NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

We would like to thank all our volunteers—individuals and groups—for their continued support of the Nature Center. Volunteers assist with education, land management, and special events. Upcoming volunteer opportunities are listed below.

**DOAN BROOK ANNUAL STREAM SWEEP**  
Sunday, April 19 | 12:30–1:00 PM  
See page 3 for more details.

**PLANT SALE VOLUNTEERS**  
**Pick Day | Wednesday, May 6 | 7:00AM–1:30PM**  
(Minimum 3-hour shift assembling orders)  
**Sale Day | Saturday, May 9 | 6:30AM–1:30PM**  
(Minimum 3-hour shift)

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS

Mar 28, Apr 25, May 16, Jun 27, Jul 25,  
Aug 29, Sep 26, Oct 31 | 10:00AM–12:00PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes Pavilion  
Calling all volunteers 8 years (with a guardian) and up. Help with land maintenance activities across our 20 acres. Individuals and groups are welcome! Gloves, tools, marsh boots (if needed), water and a light snack provided.  
**FREE. Register at shakerlakes.org/volunteer.**

YOUTH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Perfect for teens 13–17.

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP (OAC) ASSISTANTS**  
Spring Break Camps & Extended Care | March 23–27  
(Minimum commitment of 2 days)

**Summer Camps | June 15–August 13**  
(Minimum commitment of 2 weeks)  
**YOUTH STEWARDSHIP ASSISTANTS**  
June 16–August 6  
(Minimum commitment of 10 days)

More information at shakerlakes.org/volunteer or to sign up for any of these opportunities, please email volunteer@shakerlakes.org.

ADULT PROGRAMS

**SLOW FLOW YOGA**  
Tuesday, March 10 | 5:30–6:30PM  
Overlook the sun setting across the forest from the warmth inside the Nature Center. Explore various yoga postures with your breath, adding meditation to movement with grounded meditation. All levels of experience are welcome. Please bring a yoga mat, a water bottle and wear comfortable clothing. If you have a block or strap (even an old neck-tie), bring those along too. Presented by Ilene Friedman. **\$10 per member/\$15 per non-member. Register at shakerlakes.org.**

**Cleveland Museum of Natural History Explorer Lecture Series**  
**DARWIN COMES TO TOWN: HOW THE URBAN JUNGLE DRIVES EVOLUTION**  
Friday, April 10 | Doors at 5:30PM  
Lecture at 7:00PM  
Cleveland Museum of Natural History  
The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes is a proud sponsor of this Explorer Lecture. **Information, pricing, and registration at cmnh.org.**

**RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP**  
Tuesday, May 19 | 6:30–8PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes  
Make your own rain barrel and save more than water! We 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 rainwater for your plants and yard. This event is in collaboration with Doan Brook Watershed Partnership. **Workshop fee, including barrel and parts, is \$60. Space is limited and advance registration is required by May 1 at shakerlakes.org.**

**NATURE AT NIGHT ANNUAL BENEFIT**  
Saturday, May 30 | 6:30–11PM  
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes  
New name, same event! Conserve, Connect, and Celebrate at an evening outdoors under our nature canopy as we enjoy mingling, food, cocktails, and giving to support your outdoor classroom. **See page 8 for details.**

Bird banding

Doan Brook Stream Sweep

38th Annual Plant Sale Day

Rain barrel workshop

Nature at Night Annual Benefit



How can you help bees, butterflies, and other pollinators survive and thrive?  
**PLANT NATIVE PLANTS!**

BEES need native plants!

Lauren Schmidt, Camps & School Program Coordinator

What is a native plant? Native plants have been here for thousands of years and have grown to love the weather and soil around them. Over the years, people have brought in plants from other states or countries because they are ‘pretty.’ Sometimes, these plants can be bullies and take water and space from our native plants, making it hard for them to live.

Over thousands of years, wildlife, such as bees, have grown to depend on these native plants for food and shelter. Not only do bees and other pollinators help native plants live and reproduce by transferring pollen, but they pollinate many of the fruits and vegetables we eat. This includes apples, cherries, mangoes, tomatoes, watermelon, chocolate, and more!

Bees also depend on our native plants for food to feed their young, so they are always buzzing around us. This is why planting native trees, shrubs, and flowers so important.

invasive plant trivia

Not all plants are good for our ecosystem! Invasive, or “bully” plants, take the space of our native plants. Quiz yourself to see how much you know about invasive plants! **Circle your answers.**



1. This is one of the worst invasives found in forested areas. In spring, this plant produces a single stalk with white flowers. It has a distinct odor of garlic when crushed.

garlic mustard      multiflora rose      kudzu



2. This plant can spread quickly over wetlands causing ducks and geese to not nest near it. This plant was introduced in the 1800’s because of its beautiful purple flowers.

kudzu      garlic mustard      purple loosestrife



3. This plant can climb along other plants and structures to heights of over 90 feet! This plant was introduced in colonial times and is still widely planted today as an ornamental plant.

English ivy      multiflora rose      purple loosestrife

**SUMMER OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP 2020**  
**LESS SCREEN, MORE NATURE**  
**JUNE 15–AUGUST 13**

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

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

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



**35%**  
of the food we eat depends on pollinators, like bees!

**DID YOU KNOW**  
**OVER 80%**  
of all flowering plants on Earth need pollinators?!

Visit  
shakerlakes.org/jrnat to find your naturalist activity! Bring your completed activity to the Nature Center Duck Pond Gift Shop.

**10%**  
off any purchase!





# NATURE CENTER AT SHAKER LAKES

2600 South Park Boulevard  
Cleveland, Ohio 44120

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

SHAKERLAKES.ORG

216.321.5935 • naturecenter@shakerlakes.org



## ART ON VIEW: WILLIAM E. SCHEELE

Opening reception Thursday, April 16 | 5:30PM-7:30PM | Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

"A Passion for Nature" highlights the artistic legacy of the late William E. Scheele. Scheele's artwork includes drawings, paintings and illustrated books. His works reflect his love of nature, from detailed studies of plants and animals to images of prehistoric life and wilderness landscapes. Artwork in the exhibition is arranged chronologically and recounts his life's story.

"A Passion for Nature" is on view April 16 through June 21 at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

