

Discovering the B-W Greenway





“Ohio’s Largest Honeysuckle Removal,” held April 1, 2006 at Estel Wenrick Wetlands, brought out one-hundred and sixty participants. Volunteer teams of cutters, painters, and stackers removed massive amounts of honeysuckle to make room for more native plants to emerge (photo by Weir McBride).

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you to the many B-W Greenway volunteers who have given their time, talent, and treasure and to the following organizations for their invaluable contributions to preserving and protecting the B-W Greenway:

- Beaver Creek Wetlands Association
- Beavercreek Township
- Bethel and Mad River Townships
- B-W Greenway Community Land Trust
- Cities of Beavercreek and Fairborn
- Clark and Greene County Park Districts
- Fairborn Park District
- Grassroots Greater Dayton
- Greenways of Greater Dayton
- Marianist Environmental Education Center
- The Nature Conservancy
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Public Works Commission
- Tecumseh Land Trust



GLOSSARY OF WETLAND TERMS

BOG - a wetland that receives moisture from rainwater and has acidic waters. Since bogs are fed by rainwater, they are low in nutrients. They form peat, and are typically dominated by sphagnum moss. They are widely distributed in cool temperate climates. Kettle bogs eventually fill in and become a terrestrial community, such as a woodland. *Brown's Lake Bog in Wayne County, a kettle bog formed by glaciation, is the closest Ohio bog to the B-W Greenway.*

FEN - a wetland that receives moisture from mineral-rich groundwater, and has nearly neutral water. Fens are usually dominated by sedges. *Siebenthaler Fen, Anderson Fen, Pearl's Fen, and Estel Wenrick Wetlands are examples of fens in the B-W Greenway.*

MARSH - a wetland characterized by shallow waters, and low-growing and emergent herbaceous plants, such as grasses, forbs, rushes, reeds, typhas, sedges, and cattails. Marshes provide critical habitat for migratory birds and wildlife. *Fairborn Marsh and the Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve at Phillips Park have marshes.*

MEADOW - a small, grassy area with abundant wildflowers. *Koogler Wetland Preserve has a meadow.*

PRAIRIE - a land area in temperate climates that supports primarily grasses and some herbs, and has very few trees. Fire is an important part of their maintenance. *Cold Springs Reserve, Fairborn Marsh, Koogler Wetland Preserve, and the Beaver Creek Wetlands Wildlife Area have prairies.*

SAVANNAH - a grassland with widely spaced trees. Typically, grasses and trees are codominant, but will alternate dominance over time. They are maintained by fire, and their trees are fire-resistant. *Some of the higher ground on the Fairborn Marsh property is being developed into a savannah.*

SEDGE MEADOW - a wetland often found in fens that is dominated by sedges, which resemble grasses or rushes, but have triangular stems. Sedges tend to grow in wet places with few available plant nutrients. Waterfowl and small birds feed on their seeds. An easy and fun identification tip is to remember that "sedges have edges." *Siebenthaler Fen has a sedge meadow.*

SWAMP - a wetland with woody vegetation. Swamps, like other wetlands, help in the prevention of floods and in the build-up of nutrient-rich soils. They support a wealth of biological diversity and provide important habitat for specialized organisms. *Siebenthaler Fen and the Beaver Creek Wetlands Wildlife Area have swamps.*

WET MEADOW, WET PRAIRIE, WET WOODS - meadows, prairies, and woodlands that are inundated or saturated with surface water during a portion of the growing season. *Koogler Wetland Preserve has a wet meadow. Cemex Reserve has a wet prairie. Fairborn Community Park has wet woods.*

WETLAND - a land area characterized by hydric soil and hydrophytic vegetation, and that is saturated or inundated with water for at least 12.5 percent of the growing season. Wetlands help clean water and air, help prevent flooding, support an immense amount of plant and animal diversity, provide space for education and recreation, and are beautiful in their own right.

VERNAL POOLS - pools found in shallow depressions, usually without a permanent above-ground outlet. Vernal pools may fill with a rising water table or with meltwater and runoff from snow and rain. They are dry during extended periods without precipitation (usually summer and fall). Since typically they do not contain fish that prey on other living things, they support a great variety of wildlife. They provide essential amphibian habitat, and Fairy Shrimp and Clam Shrimp go through their whole life cycle while the pools are full.

A Great Blue Heron looks for fish in the pond at Community Park (photo by Julie Sommer).

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This publication is available due to a grant from the Turner Foundation, Springfield, Ohio. Proceeds from the sale of this guidebook benefit the B-W Greenway conservation easement fund.

1st Edition December 2006
2nd Edition February 2007

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A FEW MORE SPECIAL PLACES...



Cold Springs Reserve in Fairborn shows off its striking fall colors (photos by Julie Sommer).

Organizations and volunteers continue to investigate and pursue land purchases in the B-W Greenway for protection, conservation, restoration, and continued public enjoyment. The list keeps growing! Other special places in the B-W Greenway include:

- *Cold Springs Reserve* in Fairborn, hiking trail entrances on Armstrong Road and Black Lane, near Black Lane Elementary School (City of Fairborn; 38.6 acres; woods and restored prairie; no facilities)

- *Community Park* on Factory Road between SR 35 and Dayton-Xenia Road (Beavercreek Township; 14 acres; Angels Park Memorial; large parking lot with access to Creekside Trail bike path; facilities)

- *Fairborn Community Park*, 691 East Dayton-Yellow Springs Road (City of Fairborn; 171.5 acres; Fairborn High School land lab; prairie; wet woods; fishing; recreation; facilities)

- *Glenn Thompson Reserve/Jacob's Landing* at SR 35 and Trebein Road (Greene County Park District; 61 acres; Little Miami

River canoe launch; picnic area; hiking; no facilities)

- *Pearl's Fen* in Bath Township is a research site containing many rare plants (Greene County Park District; 14.7 acres; no public access)

- *Rotary Park*, 2260 Dayton-Xenia Road, two blocks east of Beaver Valley Road (City of Beavercreek; 66 acre park adjacent to the Beaver Creek with baseball diamonds, playing fields, picnic shelters, facilities)

- *Spring Run Farm* on Haddix Road, near Spangler Road (private, membership-supported farm with trout fishing, planted prairie, and alpacas; 286 acres)

No matter what special place you choose to visit in the B-W Greenway, the chances are good you will find something beautiful ... or at least interesting ... or maybe even a little bit of both!



Enjoy discovering the B-W Greenway!

LOWER VALLEY PIKE SCENIC BYWAY

The Lower Valley Pike Scenic Byway forms the northern boundary of the B-W Greenway and follows the contours of the Mad River through limestone cliffs and riparian woodlands. It was dedicated in 2004 as Ohio's eighteenth scenic byway. It is dotted with cemeteries, livestock and grain farms, and elegant churches. It features historic farmsteads, barns, and homes.

Natural attractions include dense woodlands, parks, wetlands, limestone cliffs, waterfalls, and the Mad River. The byway covers eleven miles. It begins at Route 40 in Springfield (near the Masonic home), passes through the charming town of Medway, and continues to Route 235/Route 4 in eastern Montgomery County, just south of the I-70 interchange.

A stop just off the eastern part of the byway that should not be missed is George Rogers Clark Park, located at 930 South Tecumseh Road in Clark County. The park covers 248 acres. Available recreational activities include boating, fishing, hiking, or visiting the historic pioneer home of Daniel and Catherine Hertzler, built in 1854. The park hosts festivals and events throughout the year, including historical reenactments of colonial times.

Just west of George Rogers Clark Park, on 5638 Lower Valley Pike, is the Davidson Interpretive Center and Prairie. The center features interpretive displays and educational programs about the Revolutionary War's battle of Peckuwe (August 8, 1780) and the Shawnee Village of Peckuwe. The Center also hosts historical, educational, and arts-and-crafts programs at various times throughout the year. Call 328-PARK for more information on educational programs for either site or to reserve a picnic shelter.

Visitor Notes

- Byway park activities include fishing, boating, hiking, picnics, and festivals
- Pets on leash permitted in designated areas
- Natural attractions include prairies, dense woodlands, waterfalls, and the Mad River
- Length: 11 miles



While enjoying a drive along the Lower Valley Pike Scenic Byway, don't forget to stop for hiking, fishing, or a picnic at George Rogers Clark Park (photo by Julie Sommer).

MISSION

Incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1998, the mission of the B-W Greenway Community Land Trust is to "promote sustainable land use while balancing human and wildlife needs by connecting the Beaver Creek Wetlands and Wenrick Wetlands with a greenway."



The B-W Greenway Community Land Trust has helped protect almost 600 acres of land in Clark and Greene counties. This guide contains photographs, information, and maps to help you learn about some of the beautiful places in the greenway. All are under protection, and some are in different stages of restoration or enhancement. A few cannot be visited or can only be visited on a guided tour. Directions are included to properties which are publicly accessible. Please enjoy this guide, and your discovery of the B-W Greenway -- and of course, you are more than welcome to get involved!

Opposite: prairie grass blowing in the wind at Cold Springs Reserve in Fairborn. Right: a Monarch butterfly comes in for landing at Koogler Wetland Preserve in Beavercreek. Front cover: the boardwalk at Siebenthaler Fen in spring. Back cover: the hiking trail at Estel Wenrick Wetlands in winter. (photos by Julie Sommer)



WELCOME TO THE B-W GREENWAY!

The B-W Greenway Community Land Trust as a non-profit organization

The B-W Greenway refers to both an organization and a place. Part of the organization's work is to engage people in conservation issues. This includes connecting citizens of all ages more directly with local farms and food, researching and supporting sustainable business and industry practices, hosting seed saving gatherings, and bringing community residents together to discuss everything from renewable energy to conservation subdivisions.

The B-W Greenway Community Land Trust uses a variety of means to preserve and protect land. This includes acquiring conservation easements that legally determine how a piece of land can be used in the future, partnering with other organizations to preserve family farms, and directly obtaining grants to purchase lands and protect valuable habitat.

The B-W Greenway as a place

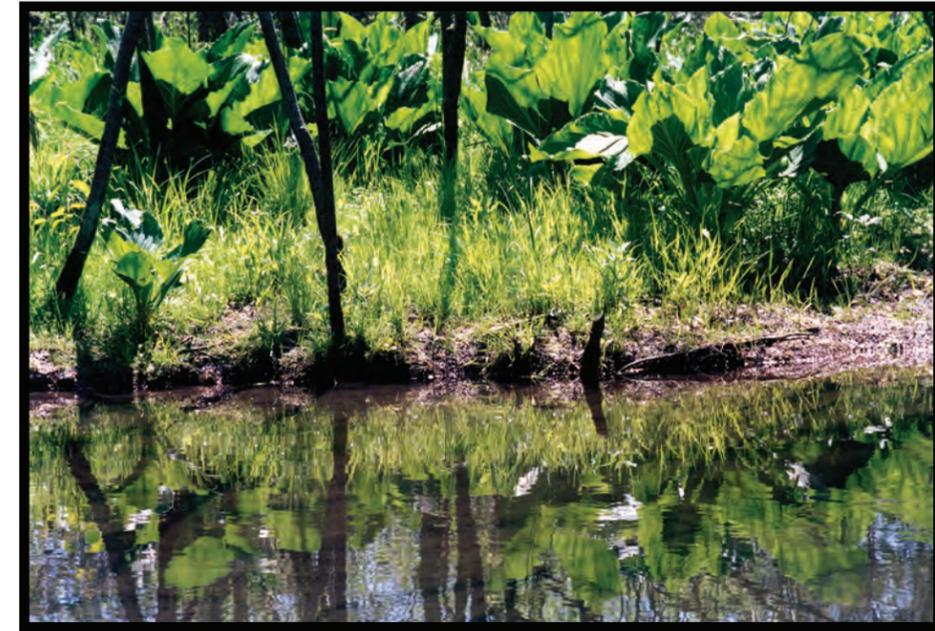
Greenways are corridors of natural areas located near urban settings. They are des-

ignated for recreational use and environmental protection. They link parks, nature reserves, cultural features, historic sites, and ecosystems to each other and to nearby populations.

The B-W Greenway corridor is part of an envisioned *Greater Dayton Greenbelt*. This collaborative community initiative aims to preserve and protect a circle of natural areas that create a kind of "emerald necklace" around greater Dayton. The B-W Greenway encompasses the northeastern section of this circle of natural areas.

Greater Dayton Greenbelt

- B = Beaver Creek Wetlands
- C = Crains Run Nature Park
- D = Dayton
- E = Englewood MetroPark
- G = Germantown MetroPark
- H = Honey Creek Preserve
- S = Sugarcreek MetroPark
- T = Taylorsville MetroPark
- W = Estel Wenrick Wetlands
- Y = Sycamore State Park



In late spring, the crystal clear waters of Estel Wenrick Wetlands reflect skunk cabbage and sedges growing along the stream bank (photo by Julie Sommer).

The sparkling clean water here supports abundant plant life and helps create attractive habitat for wildlife. While hiking at Wenrick Wetlands, you may catch a glimpse of a Great Blue Heron fishing, or you may spot a Red-Headed Woodpecker, the only Ohio woodpecker with an entirely red head.

Plans to restore native plants in the wetlands and on nearby stream banks will help attract Canada Geese, American Black Ducks, Mallards, and even Bald Eagles.

The master plan for the area includes continuing wetland restoration efforts, developing a main entry, installing interpretive signage, and connecting the east and west segments of the preserve currently separated by Spangler Road.

Public Access

The main parking area for the wetlands is at 2855 Union Road, just south of Lower Valley Pike. There is a sign at the road side. The area west of Spangler Road is currently accessible only by guided tour.

Visitor Notes

- Hiking, bird watching, photography, wildflowers
- Heron rookery site (accessible only by guided tour)
- Size: 167 acres
- Pets on leash permitted only on elevated hiking trail



An American Toad, Bufo americanus, finds home at Estel Wenrick Wetlands (photo by Julie Sommer).

ESTEL WENRICK WETLANDS

Estel Wenrick Wetlands is located at the northern end of the B-W Greenway, near Medway. Donated to Clark County Park District in 1994, the area is named in honor of donor Nelson Wenrick's mother, Estel.



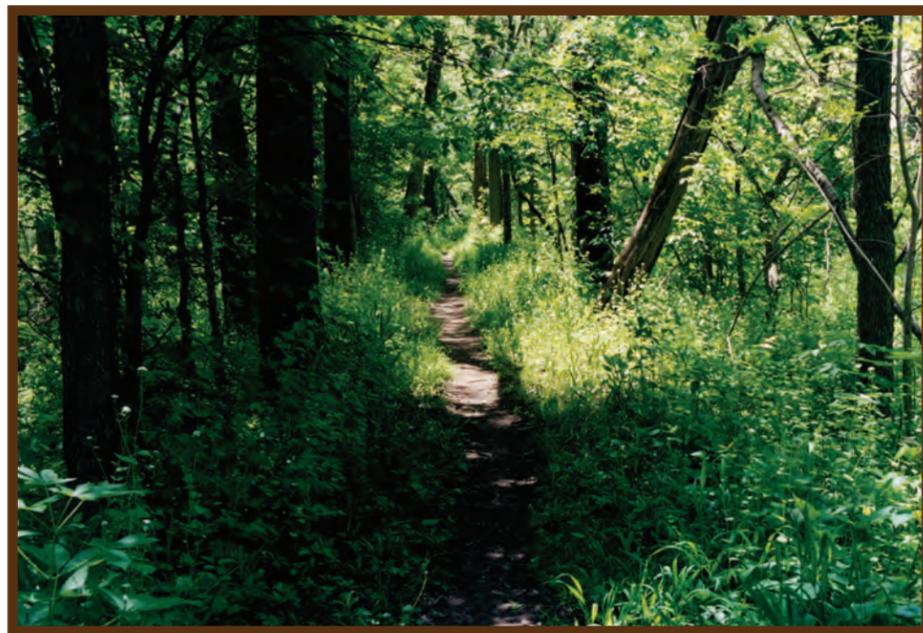
From spring through fall, you can enjoy viewing a variety of wildflowers at Estel Wenrick Wetlands. Here, Wild Geranium shows off its delicate lavender blossoms in May (photo by Julie Sommer).

In 2003, the B-W Greenway purchased an additional 19 acres between Wenrick Wetlands and the Mad River. The 167 acres now under protection feature pristine wetlands, a public hiking trail, and a heron rookery site that can be viewed by guided tour.

Water finds its way to the wetlands through underground gravel deposits. There are a number of commercial gravel

pits in the area. Gravel plays a very important role in filtering water and helps provide a high level of water quality

with minimal maintenance or expense. The City of Dayton owns a 980 acre reserve aquifer east of the property.



An elevated path goes from the Union Road parking area to Medway near Lower Valley Pike and Spangler Road. Volunteers have removed massive amounts of invasive Amur Honeysuckle and Garlic Mustard, creating room for more native plants to emerge and thrive (photo by Julie Sommer).

Why protect the B-W Greenway?

The B-W Greenway offers a variety of opportunities for residents to learn about local cultural history and to enjoy natural beauty. It preserves unique places that support human and environmental health as well as biological diversity.

Scientists repeatedly find a greater number and variety of plant and animal species occurring inside larger natural areas rather than smaller ones. Despite being located near densely developed commercial and residential areas, the B-W Greenway contains

an amazing array of plants and animals. It provides habitat for numerous species, including the Peregrine Falcon, the Sandhill Crane, the Spotted Turtle, and the endangered Prairie White-Fringed Orchid.

Why protecting wetlands is important

Another very important reason for protecting the B-W Greenway is that it contains nearly continuous, high quality wetlands. Wetlands are areas of land saturated or inundated with water for at least 12.5 percent of the growing season. Over *ninety percent* of Ohio's original wetlands have been drained or filled in

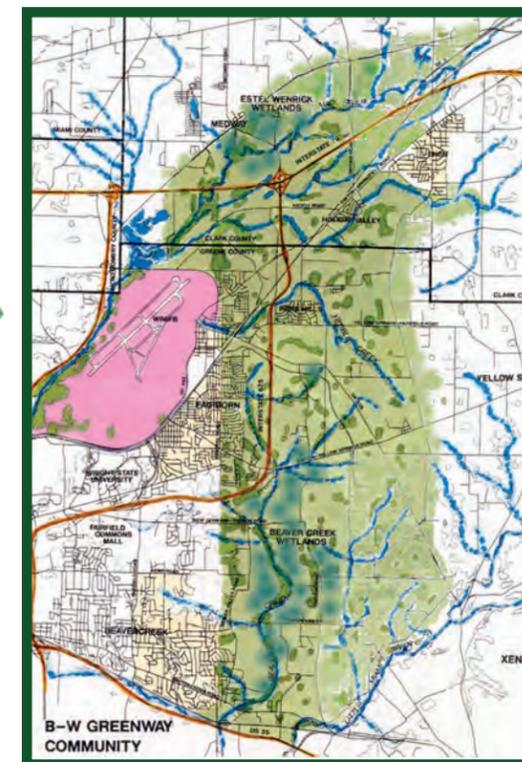
for other purposes, making the protection of the remaining ones much more critical.

Excessive waste - whether from humans, animals, agriculture, or industry - can negatively impact wetland health. Large amounts of impervious surfaces can also be harmful by inundating wetlands with too much water.

Wetlands support biological diversity. They can help filter pollutants, recharge groundwater, and prevent floods. Many of them also play a role in maintaining a healthy water supply. Finally, wetlands present an all-too-rare example of pristine and primitive beauty. They are a unique sight to behold in today's often fragmented, fast-paced world.

Ohio wetlands include marshes, swamps, bogs, and fens, most of which can be found in the B-W Greenway corridor. At the edges of wetlands, other interesting natural areas include wet woods, wet meadows, and wet prairies. These areas provide habitat for numerous species and act as buffer zones between wetland and upland areas.

As you read through this guide, please refer to the glossary on page 20 for definitions of various types of land.



Opposite page: the Greater Dayton Greenbelt is an envisioned circle of natural areas around greater Dayton that is sometimes referred to as an "emerald necklace."

Left: the B-W Greenway Community encompasses the northeastern segment of the Greater Dayton Greenbelt. For a more detailed road map of special places in the B-W Greenway, see page 21.

BEAVER CREEK WETLANDS CORRIDOR

On the southern end of the B-W Greenway, adjacent to the cities of Fairborn and Beaver-creek, lies the Beaver-creek Wetlands Corridor, a ten-mile area that includes Beaver Creek and Little Beaver Creek.

Nestled between glacial hills and fertile floodplains, the corridor encompasses one of the most important wetland areas in Ohio. It is home to over 470 species of plants and 190 species of birds!

The Beaver Creek Wetlands Association was incorporated in 1988. This non-profit land trust has partnered with numerous organizations and individuals to preserve and protect wetlands in the area.

A large corps of active volunteers works to create, maintain, and improve trails. They also restore natural areas and monitor the health of water and wildlife.

This southern corridor includes the Beaver Creek Wetlands Wildlife Area, Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve at Phillips Park, Koogler Wetland Preserve, Siebenthaler Fen (see page 7), and Fairborn Marsh (see page 8).

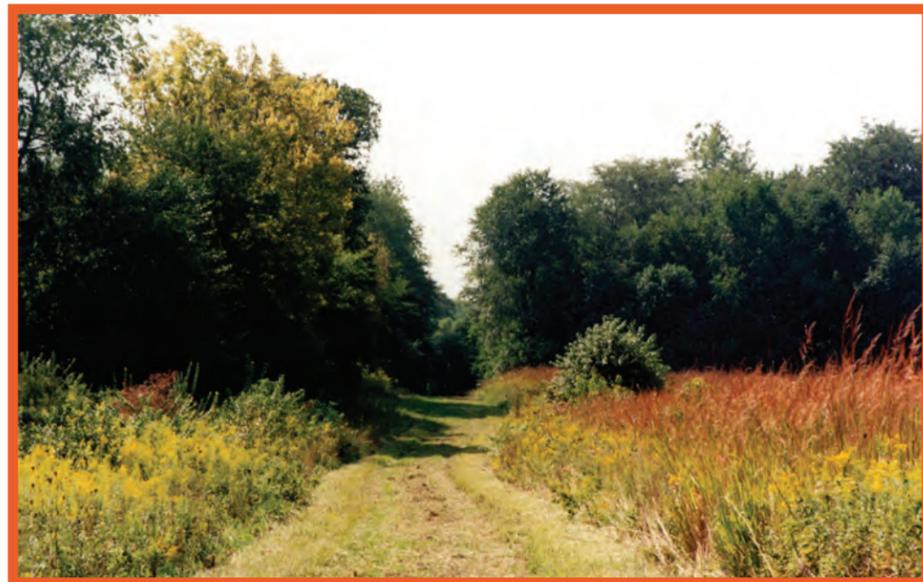
The corridor encompasses almost a thousand acres and includes an amazing variety of terrain that can be discovered and rediscovered, as sounds, colors, vegetation, and wildlife change throughout the seasons.

Public Access

• *Beaver Creek Wetlands Wildlife Area:* parking lot on New Germany-Trebein Road just east of Beaver Valley Road (managed by Ohio Department of Natural Resources; 374.7 acres; exercise caution in hunting season since hunting is permitted on premises; no facilities)

• *Beaver Creek Wetlands Nature Preserve:* parking lot at Phillips Park on Dayton-Xenia Road, just east of North Orchard Lane (below picnic shelter, a 1.7 mile trail follows Beaver Creek to a prairie slough, a wet prairie, and a marsh; portable toilets are available at Phillips Park)

• *Koogler Wetland Preserve:* parking lot on Beaver Valley Road, just south of New Germany-Trebein Road (65 acres; trail construction and enhancements underway; no facilities)



The New Germany-Trebein Road entrance to the Beaver Creek Wetlands Wildlife Area takes you to a primitive trail that meanders through a wet forest, a bottomland forest, a marsh, a fen, and a restored seasonal marsh (photo by Julie Sommer).

OAKES QUARRY PARK

In 2003, the Oakes family donated 190 acres of land on East Xenia Drive to the City of Fairborn. Formerly a limestone open pit mine, the land is undergoing restoration. Managed by the City of Fairborn Parks and Recreation Department, the property has a large parking lot and a two-mile hiking trail with interpretive signs.

The park contains unique geology characterized by fossil-rich limestone and functions as a marvelous outdoor classroom for teachers and students. It provides significant habitat for wildlife, including red fox, coyote, and white-tailed deer. Pooling water at the bottom of the quarry and

the plants emerging around it attract many loftier species as well. Sightings have included Red-Tailed Hawks, Spotted and Least Sandpipers, Blue Grosbeaks, and rare Lark Sparrows.

With assistance from a Clean Ohio Fund grant, many invasive plant species have been removed. A 20-acre prairie has been restored. Over 8000 trees have been planted. In early spring, a large bed of Snow Trillium blooms on the north slope of the quarry.

Oakes Quarry Park is sure to be a fascinating place to visit over time, as people and nature work together to gradually reclaim it.

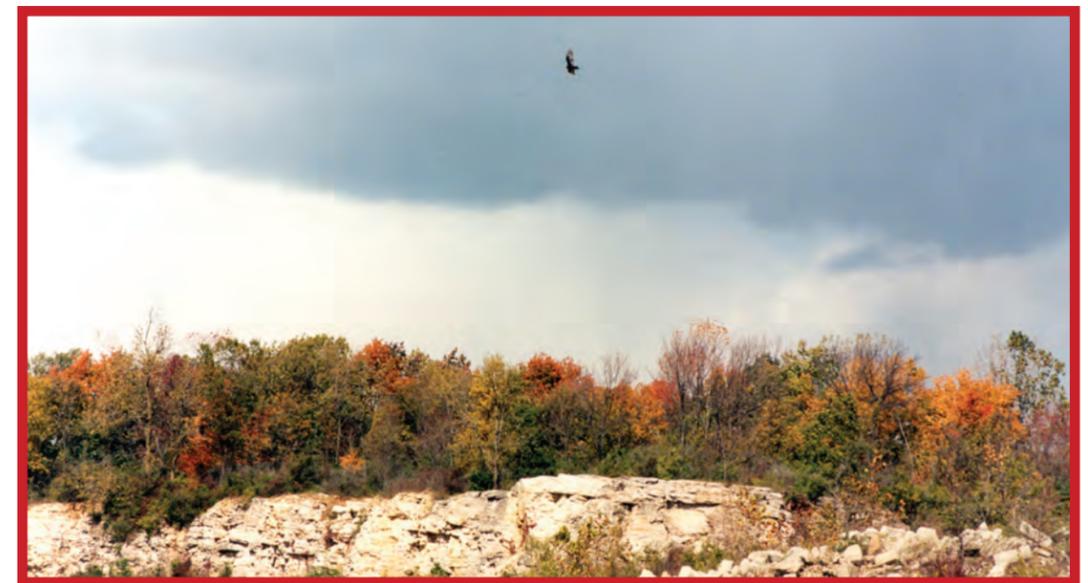


Public Access

A large parking lot is located on the north side of East Xenia Drive/Route 235, between the I-675 overpass and Trebein Road.

Visitor Notes

- Hiking, photography, bird watching, unique geology
- Fossil collecting in *designated areas only*
- Open from dawn to dusk
- Horses on designated paths
- Pets on leash permitted



Oakes Quarry Park attracts many species of birds, ranging from rare Lark Sparrows to the common Canada Goose (top of page). Although Canada Geese are sometimes considered a suburban nuisance, their eggs are food for a wide range of species, from crows to raccoons, and their goslings are preyed upon by owls and hawks. Above, a hawk soars high over the quarry on a cloudy fall day (photos by Julie Sommer).

CEMEX RESERVE

Located in Fairborn near Garland Avenue and I-675, this property was used for many years to mine soil for the production of portland cement. Much of the area's surface was scraped clean anywhere from several inches to as much as five feet deep.

Since 1993, Dr. Jim Amon at Wright State University has been leading restoration efforts of the once barren landscape. Greene County Park District assumed ownership of the 180 acre reserve in 2000.

The poor condition of the land required bringing in hundreds of native wetland and prairie

plants gathered from other sites. Although it will take decades to form fully functional hydric soil and the plant life it can support, the site is already beginning its transformation.

Hiking trails offer visitors opportunities to see a wet prairie and a restored marsh (pictured right). More than 120 species of birds have been sighted here, including the Connecticut Warbler, the Least Bittern, and the American Woodcock.

Public Access: entry at the end of Sanctuary Drive, north of the section of Garland Avenue near the I-675 overpass



ANDERSON FEN

In 2005, the B-W Greenway purchased eight acres on Enon Xenia Pike with money from a Clean Ohio Fund grant. The rear of the property contains a nearly pristine five acre fen where sedges and wetland flowers thrive. Plans to enhance the land include removing invasive plants and installing low impact trails that will not disturb vegetation.

The previous owner of the property, Jo Anderson, describes the fen's vibrant beauty in full color:

"Heat rises from the open meadow. At first all I can think of is how hot it is. Humid and close, but it is the middle of August and the meadow dances with life. Clusters of butterflies in white, yellow, and pale blue. Solitary swallowtails and monarchs. Darning needles in neon green and electric blue - almost

too blue to be real. Dragonflies hovering like miniature helicopters, then moving on.



New England Aster is one of many flowers thriving at Anderson Fen (photos by Julie Sommer).

Birds in the grass, darting, soaring, tree swallows, the most amazing fliers, skimming and dodging across the tops of goldenrod. Bees of several shapes, sizes and colors, working Queen Anne's Lace and tiny white and purple asters.

I notice daisies, chicory, and brown-eyed susans. At my feet, a ribbon snake slides out of sight. When we walk out here in the early morning hours, it is damp and cool. Some of the coolness lingers in the woods, under shady trees. At the edge of the taller trees, we once found an oriole's nest. Thorny underbrush reaches for our clothing, but I entertain the notion that it is simply protecting what lies beyond.

The log across the creek is slippery with moss. We notice shelf-like fungi growing from trees, and bright orange flowers of jewel weed contrasting with the surrounding profusion of green. Later we see hummingbirds. This place is more than soil, water and trees. It is moments of incredible beauty we hold close and want to protect."

Public Access: guided tour



An immense variety of plants can be discovered and enjoyed throughout the B-W Greenway, including cattails (pictured below) and the graceful, delicate blossoms of Jewel Weed (pictured above). These beautiful blooms were growing right along the boardwalk at Siebenthaler Fen (photos by Julie Sommer).

SIEBENTHALER FEN

Siebenthaler Fen is at the heart of the Beaver Creek Wetlands Corridor. The fen continuously brings cool water to its surface from an underground aquifer. Its source is a water-bearing gravel deposit left behind when the Wisconsin Glacier receded 15,000 years ago.

Volunteers built a mile-long wheelchair accessible boardwalk through the fen with recycled plastic and fiberglass lumber. The walkway passes through a sedge meadow and a wet, bottom land forest of cottonwood, sycamore, box elder, and green ash. Trail guides are available at the entrance.

A walk here at any time of the year is sure to reveal some-

thing interesting. In late winter or early spring, skunk cabbage blooms through the snow. Later in spring, marsh marigolds appear, accompanied by a raucous chorus of frogs and toads. Early June marks the arrival of beautifully adorned Baltimore checkerspots. These small orange and black butterflies depend on white turtlehead plants for nourishment and as a safe place to lay their eggs.

Hundreds of species of flowers grow at Siebenthaler Fen. A July visit will be rewarded with Queen of the Prairie's showy pink plumes, followed by the late summer blooms of sunflowers, Joe Pye Weed and Jewel Weed. September brings with it fields of goldenrod and asters.

Climbing Nan's Tower, a staircase and platform connected to the boardwalk, offers unobstructed views of the area and a chance to look for animal trails through the cattails and sedges.



Public Access: parking lot on Fairground Road .5 miles east of Beaver Valley Road (accessible boardwalk, no facilities)



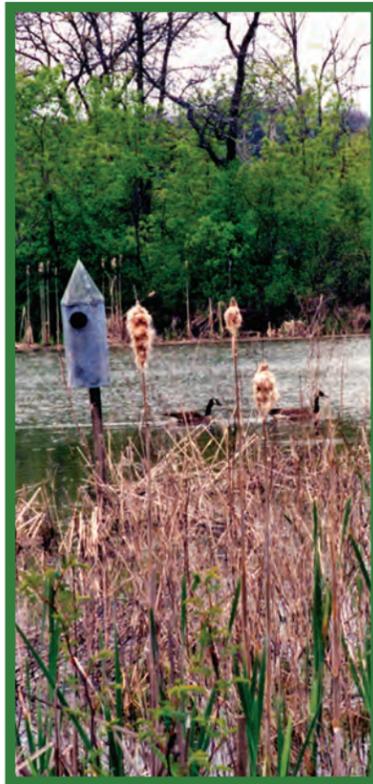
The clean, rich summer colors of Fairborn Marsh (photo by Dr. Jim Amon).

FAIRBORN MARSH

Surrounded by Autumn Creek and Fawn Ridge subdivisions, the Fairborn Marsh property contains a 1.5-mile primitive hiking trail. There are plans for more trail development and viewing platforms.

With help from The Nature Conservancy, the Beaver Creek Wetlands Association purchased this 56-acre strip of land in January 2000. This land purchase protects a key part of the Beaver Creek Wetlands Corridor. Fairborn Marsh contains fifteen acres of marsh, including a restored marsh.

The area is very attractive to migrating waterfowl and shore birds. Along the east side of the site, there are also some fens, which have a greater variety of vegetation than marshes. The



Nesting boxes at Fairborn Marsh were built to help attract wood ducks to the area (photo by Julie Sommer).

fens consistently exude water to the marsh.

Both the marsh and the fens get their water from ground water. To the east, there is high, gravelly land that was once used for agricultural purposes. This high ground soaks up precipitation into an aquifer, providing the wetlands their water supply.

Volunteers continue to work on replacing invasive honeysuckles with native plants, such as spice bush, hazelnut, and oak. They are also in the process of developing some of the higher ground areas into forest, prairie, and savannah.

Public Access

Park at the parking lot on New Germany-Trebein Road, just east of Beaver Valley Road. Fairborn Marsh is on the opposite side of the street, north of the parking lot.



Cattle still roam and graze freely at Juanita Morgan's farm in the middle of Fairborn. Neighbors can purchase straw, hay, eggs, and some vegetables directly from the 60-acre farm on South Maple Avenue. In 2006, Ms. Morgan received the Green Heart award, given annually to a community member exemplifying the values of the B-W Greenway. She was born on the farm. Her sons work on the farm. She promises it will remain a farm as long as she lives (photo by Julie Sommer).

Having the opportunity to learn where food comes from is another important reason to support local farmers. Children and adults alike really enjoy being able to reconnect to the amazing process of growing and harvesting food.

Local food is fresh, nutritious, and delicious. One of the perennial joys of summer remains being able to sink your teeth into an ear of sweet corn, freshly roasted, and picked just that morning or tasting a peach from a tree grown in a neighbor's yard or on a farm just a few blocks down the road.

Ways to purchase local food include directly from farms, at farmers' markets, and through community supported agriculture subscriptions (CSAs). With CSAs, members pay in advance for a season-long regular pick-

up or delivery of that farm's harvest. This system gives a farmer money for seeds and upfront costs, gives subscribers access to a long season of fresh fruits and vegetables, and lets community members share both the risks and the rewards of farming.

The B-W Greenway publishes an annual directory of local food sources, covering mainly Clark, Greene, and Montgomery counties. To obtain a copy, call (937) 878-6060, e-mail info@bwgreenway.org, or visit www.bwgreenway.org.



Local harvests are fresh, nutritious, and delicious, offering a rich experience of the vibrant colors, tastes, and textures of nature's bounty (photo by Julie Sommer).

FOOD AND FARMING IN THE B-W GREENWAY

Ohio is blessed with an abundance of deep, fertile topsoils and a rich agricultural history. One of only five states in the country to have almost half of its land classified as prime farmland, it is among the nation's top ten producers of corn, soybeans, oats, tobacco, pork, eggs, Swiss cheese, ice cream, grapes, strawberries, tomatoes, maple syrup, and flowers.

Since the end of World War II, Ohio has lost over *seven million* acres (or about thirty percent) of its farmland. Today, in Clark and Greene counties, about 377,000 acres of land continue to be farmed. Because much of this land is located near large populations and urban areas, it is critical to provide incentives and support to help preserve it. Farmland preservation protects

not only the land itself, but also the knowledge of farming, the cultural heritage of farms, and the food farms produce for our tables.

As a community land trust, the B-W Greenway provides support to local farmers in several different ways. One way is to help secure conservation easements that stipulate by law a farm will stay a farm in perpetuity. Other ways include sponsoring educational forums about food and farming and encouraging residents to directly support local farms with their food dollar.

Since the mid-1940s, it has become very easy for people to depend on the abundance and convenience of the supermarket. Even so, there are plenty

of good reasons to make a little extra time and effort to purchase some food locally.

One reason is energy consumption. Many of the meals we eat today travel anywhere from 1500 to 2500 miles from the farm to our table! That means a tremendous amount of non-renewable energy is used in transporting that food.

Another reason to buy food locally is to help strengthen the local economy. More money goes to the farmer who grows the food, rather than being spent elsewhere on packaging, transporting, and advertising that same food. Buying locally can help create and sustain jobs and increase the number of economic exchanges taking place within a community.



This inviting scene shows off a vibrant field of corn growing at Heider's Farm on Yellow Springs-Fairfield Road. The 160-acre farm has been in the family for over 125 years and has been awarded Century Farm status by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (photo by Bob Jurick).

HEBBLE CREEK WETLAND

Beavers helped form the Hebble Creek Wetland by felling trees that trap water from Hebble Creek. The headwaters of the creek originate in an aquifer under a soybean field in Bath Township. From these humble beginnings, the Hebble Creek flows into the Mad River, which in turn flows into the Great Miami River. The Great Miami River flows into the Ohio River, which eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico!

The B-W Greenway's 2003 purchase of the Hebble Creek Wetland plays a very important role in protecting the Hebble Creek Watershed. Watersheds are areas of land that drain into bodies of water. The wetland area encom-

passes eighty acres near the intersection of Spangler Road and Yellow Springs-Fairfield Road in Fairborn. The B-W Greenway transferred ownership of the property to the Greene County Park District in 2004 and holds a conservation easement on it.

After the wetland was purchased, *forty-five truckloads* of trash were removed from the area! Prairie plantings are included in the area's restoration plans.

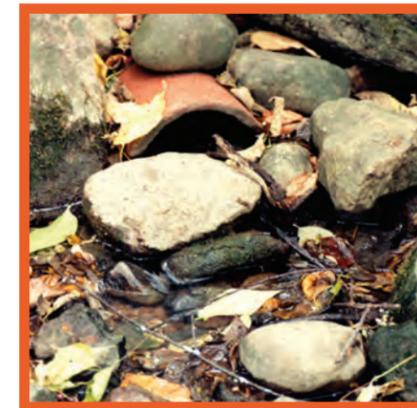
One exciting find here has been the Clam Shrimp. These tiny critters are adapted to vernal pools, which they need for reproduction. The eggs that the Clam Shrimp lay in these pools are able to survive when

the pools dry up, and then are able to hatch when the pools refill with rainwater. Adults can live for several months or until the water is gone.

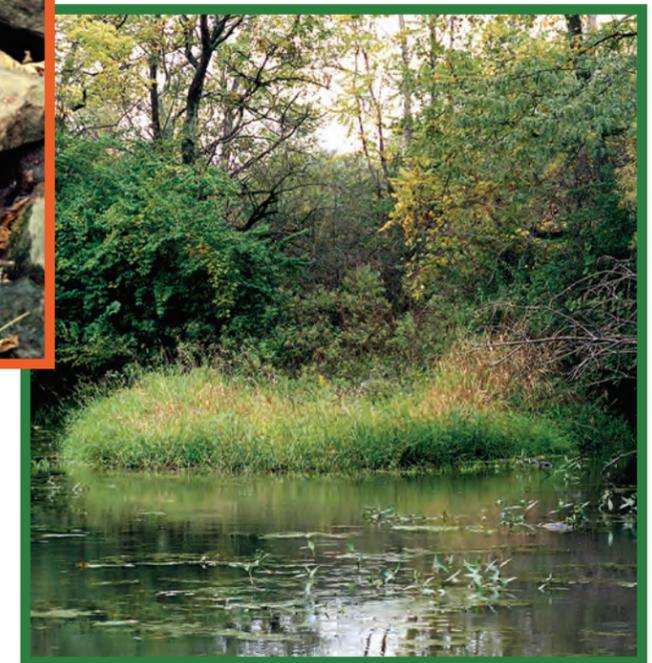
Clam Shrimp play a special role in the wetlands food chain by providing an important source of nutrition for migrating birds. Birds feed at the vernal pools to quickly gather protein they need for flying long distances, growing new feathers, and laying their eggs.

Bird sightings here include the Great Blue Heron, the Green Heron, the Great White Egret, and many species of ducks. Mink and beaver have also been spotted.

Public Access: *guided tour*



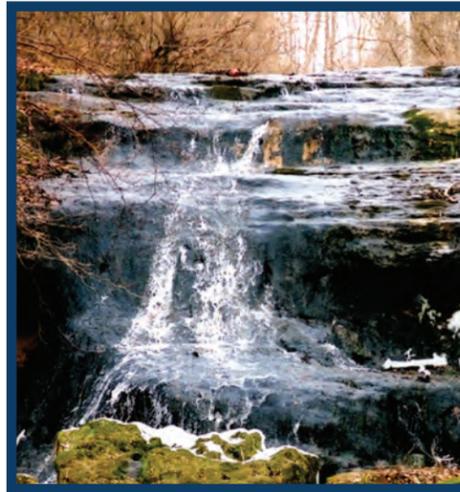
The waters of Hebble Creek first surface from this drain tile (red pipe among rocks pictured above) near a soybean field in Bath Township and eventually end up in the Gulf of Mexico! The conservation easement the B-W Greenway holds on Hebble Creek Wetland (pictured right) helps ensure protection of the Hebble Creek Watershed (photos by Julie Sommer).



BEAUTY TO DISCOVER IN EVERY SEASON...



A monarch butterfly feasts on the late summer blooms of Joe Pye Weed, a native plant which can grow six to eight feet tall.



A winter waterfall scene is one of many sights visitors can enjoy at George Rogers Clark Park.



Katie Conrad learns how to seine in the Mud Run near Holiday Valley. She was excited to find a creek full of living creatures, including darters, mollusks, crayfish, minnows, and many different types of insects (photo by Bob Jurick).



At Siebenthaler Fen, flowing water creates important edge habitat that supports diverse plants and wildlife.

The velvety crimson fruit of Staghorn Sumac adds to the fall palette at Oakes Quarry Park. This fast-growing shrub provides nesting and cover for wildlife and helps stabilize the soil bank (photos by Julie Sommer).



A skunk cabbage emerging at Estel Wenrick Wetlands is one of the first signs of the end of winter (photo by Julie Sommer).



Students from Fairborn's Black Lane Elementary School collect prairie seeds at Spring Run Farm on Haddix Road (photo by Bob Jurick).