



A non-profit Ohio organization

Ohio Wetlands Association

Newsletter - May 2016

Our Mission

Ohio Wetlands Association is dedicated to the protection, restoration and enjoyment of Ohio's wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education and advocacy.

2016 EVENTS

Garden Party,
Plant Sale &
Annual Meeting
May 28, Amherst, OH

25th Anniversary
Summit
September 8, 9, & 10

Inside this issue:

Annual Garden Party	1
Rain Barrel Workshop	1
Could Mosquitos Found in Ohio Carry the Zika Virus?	2
Oberlin School Explores Wetland Site for New K-12 Building	3
Wetland-ease, a Call for Conservation	4
Summer Events	5
Ohio's Hidden Wonders A Guide to Animals and Plants of Vernal Pools	5
You Shop. Amazon Gives	5
Time to Renew Your Membership	6
Wetland Trumpeter Sponsorship Program	6
National Wetlands Condition Assessment	7

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www.Scoop.it/t/ohio-wetlands

Ohio Wetlands Association
P. O. Box 3
Amherst, Ohio 44001

Annual Garden Party & Plant Sale



"Bring Wetlands Home with Wetland Gardens in Your landscape."

The Ohio Wetlands Association (OWA) is hosting a garden party and plant sale on Saturday, May 28, 2016 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 190 Sipple Avenue, Amherst, Ohio. Pot luck RSVP at www.OHWetlands.org.

Meet OWA directors, explore wetland gardens and see how native plants are used for landscaping. This free annual event features wetland garden tours, a rain barrel workshop, wetland and native plant information, silent auction, free plant seed packets and posters, musical entertainment and a hand-painted rain barrel raffle. The evening concludes with a pot-luck dinner and live music. Join us for part or all of the day. All are welcome!

Plants for sale include swamp milkweed, wild ginger, brown-eyed susan, thimbleweed, sawtooth sunflower, winterberry holly and many others. Event sponsors include [Natives in Harmony](#), [Cardno Native Plant Nursery](#), and [Scioto Gardens Nursery](#). For event details visit www.OHWetlands.org.

Rain Barrel Workshop, May 28th @ 12:30 p.m. in Amherst, OH

Rain barrels are a great way to conserve water, to supply non-chlorinated water for gardening, and to keep excess water out of the stormwater system, thus alleviating some of the stormwater issues plaguing many areas. Workshop attendees will learn about the problems associated with stormwater runoff, ways to conserve water in their homes, and watershed friendly landscaping techniques.

A rain barrel is a system that connects to your downspout to collect and store rain water from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains, streams and rivers. Participants will learn how to retrofit a 55-gallon drum into a rain barrel.

What you will receive: Participants will receive a 55-gallon drum, the connection hardware needed to create a rain barrel, and instructions for the assembly. Space is limited. Register at www.OHWetlands.org.

Sponsored by Coca Cola through River Network.



Could Mosquitoes Found in Ohio Carry the Zika Virus?

Ray Stewart



Although there are no reports of Zika virus transmission in the continental U.S. many people are concerned that it could happen, and soon. Whenever a mosquito transmitted illness makes the news, there is added pressure to spray, drain and fill wetlands, wherever they may be. Common knowledge says that mosquitoes breed and proliferate in wetlands. If nothing else, the general public who undervalue wetlands may see them as a source of pain, suffering, illness and even death.

Common knowledge usually has some basis in fact, but not necessarily a strong foundation in science. There is no disputing that mosquitoes can be found in wetlands. In some cases, they are thick at certain times of year. Humanity has a long history of bad relationships with the mosquito. The settlement of Cleveland, for example, was stalled by outbreaks of malaria (transmitted by mosquitoes), making the Cuyahoga River valley almost uninhabitable. Worse than the deadliest predator, greater than warfare and other human violence, mosquitoes are the deadliest creatures on earth today. Over one hundred years has passed since science revealed that mosquitos were carriers (vectors) of truly devastating diseases like dengue, West Nile virus and yellow fever.

Zeka virus disease is spread primarily through the bite of an Aedes species mosquito infected with Zika virus.

Shouldn't we fill in all the wetlands and make the world safe once and for all? Well, no. Other details that science has revealed tell us that wetlands are not deserving of the level of blame that they receive. In contrast to common knowledge, many wetlands harbor very few mosquitos. But, more to the point, the mosquitos that carry Zika and many other afflictions do not breed in Ohio's wetlands. There are 2,500 different species of mosquitos in the world. Two of those species are Zika disease vector mosquitos that are known to occur in Ohio. *Aedes aegypti* is a southern U.S. mosquito species that has sometimes been found in parts of southern Ohio. *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian Tiger mosquito, is rare but could show up anywhere in Ohio. If a traveler gets infected with Zika over seas and returns to Ohio carrying the virus, it would be feasible to think that a mosquito might bite this person, contract the virus and transmit it to another individual.

This scenario relieves wetlands from any blame in the disease cycle except that we still, too often, point to wetlands as the source of the vector. In the case of *Aedes Aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, we will completely exonerate wetlands from any culpability. They are cavity breeders, not surface water breeders. Any small knot hole in a tree with a cup of water perched upon it will make a perfect breeding ground. These mosquitos also find breeding opportunities in man-made environments. Disease vector specialists identify the *Aedes* type mosquito as an urban mosquito because of its adaptability and preference for small isolated divots of water in which to lay their eggs. A birdbath, gutter, discarded items, swimming pool covers and any large or small water trap are used by many species of mosquitos, including many nuisance species as well as the disease vector species discussed here.

If you are concerned for your health and well-being and the excitement over Zika carrying mosquitos makes you ready to drain the swamp, step back and take a breath. Clean your gutters, flush your birdbath, encourage your neighbors to do the same and relax. Take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites and enjoy being outside.

Oberlin Schools Explore Wetland Site for New K-12 Building

Ray Stewart

The Oberlin School District has obtained a purchase option for approximately 9 acres of property near E. Lorain St. owned by Oberlin College. Oberlin school buildings have aged and maintenance costs rise steadily. A new proposed K-12 building would be more efficient and save the district money once completed. The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission has made money available for Oberlin, but the city will have to pass a levy to match outside dollars.



The school board would like the new building to be certified LEED Platinum. This is the highest rating for a green building with consideration in the following categories: Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Energy and Atmosphere, Materials and Resources, Indoor Environmental Quality, plus consideration for Innovation in Design and Regional Priority.

In April, as OWA President, I was invited by the Oberlin School Board to look at the proposed property. The Board wanted to know if there were wetlands on the property and what consequences that would entail. In preparation for the visit I looked at the property using Google Earth and a soils map overlay. Although the soils type did not provide conclusive evidence of wetlands, there were other clues that indicated the presence of wetlands. First, an urban property with a mature stand of trees had not been developed even though significant development surrounded the property in all directions. There would possibly be a habitat reason

that it has been avoided in the past. Second, property was nearly flat with silty clay (poorly drained) soil typical of northern Lorain County where most woodlots contain vernal pools. And finally, one Google Earth image from April 2006 provided a winter view without a leaf canopy revealing some large dark surface features typical of standing water.

Four board members and Superintendent Dr. David Hall met me at the board office where we booted up and headed to the proposed building site. The tall second growth trees were mostly a mix of Silver Maple, Tulip Tree, American Elm and Cottonwood. The understory was dominated by spice bush, all typical of northern Ohio lake plain wet woods. Nearly half of the surface was flooded or had the matted, black leaf litter typical of standing water.

The conversation quickly turned to the challenges associated with building in a wetland. Since a permit would be required from the Army Corps of Engineers and/or the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, some time would be required before a final decision could be made to proceed. A consultant would be needed to delineate and evaluate the quality of the wetlands. A mitigation would be required. Most likely, the purchase of mitigation credits would be needed. If it were determined that the woods contained five acres of high quality wetland, 10 to 15 acres of credits might need to be purchased. The final cost of acquiring permission to build on the property could easily triple.

Knowing I was talking with leaders in education, I changed the topic to the notion that this property would make an excellent land lab, a place for students to explore, enquire and connect their classroom curriculum with a segment of the natural world. A small investment in a boardwalk and shelter could make it safe and easy to visit. Since the adjacent property is school grounds, a new building could be just seconds away.



Students could walk to the woods efficiently even within the rigid bell schedule of a normal school day.

The notion was well received. Some members and Superintendent Hall seemed to appreciate that the highest purpose of this wet woods for education would be to leave it in its natural state. The value of wetlands for water management and biodiversity was fundamentally understood. Having many considerations and new information to weigh, the Oberlin Schools decision makers went on their way. Still wanting to keep the prospect of clearing the woods, draining the wetlands, incurring the permitting and mitigation expenses, they would look for a consultant to provide a proper delineation and verify the bottom line cost of developing on wetlands. While these considerations are understandable, particularly when land is conveniently located or already owned, it raises many questions about the seemingly contradictory environmental ethic: What about the education bottom line? What would be the message if a new LEED Certified 'Green' building were constructed at the expense of 'Green' space? What should students learn from the experience? If we are focused on improving the next generation's knowledge and awareness of the environment, preserving and making wise use of wetlands in close proximity to schools should be an important part of our educational strategy. I hope that Oberlin Schools will continue to seek capable guidance and support to develop creative ways to make this a reality.

2016 Summer Events

Vernal Pool Expedition

Gahanna Woods State Nature Preserve

Saturday, May 14, 2016, 10 a.m. - Noon
Gahanna Woods State Nature Preserve
Taylor Station Rd, Gahanna, OH 43230
Franklin County

Edison Woods MetroPark

Saturday, June 11, 2016, 10 a.m. - Noon
10186 Ceylon Rd (SR 61)
Berlin Heights, Ohio 44814
Erie County

OWA Garden Party & Plant Sale

Saturday, May 28, 2016, 2 p.m. - 8 p.m.
190 Sipple Ave., Amherst, OH
Native Plant Sale, Silent Auction, Musical
Entertainment, Meet OWA Board Members, &
Potluck Dinner. All are welcome!

25th Anniversary Wetlands Summit

September 8, 9, 10, 2016
Joint meeting with Society of Wetland Scientists,
North Central Chapter and CMNH's Conservation
Symposium. Details coming soon.

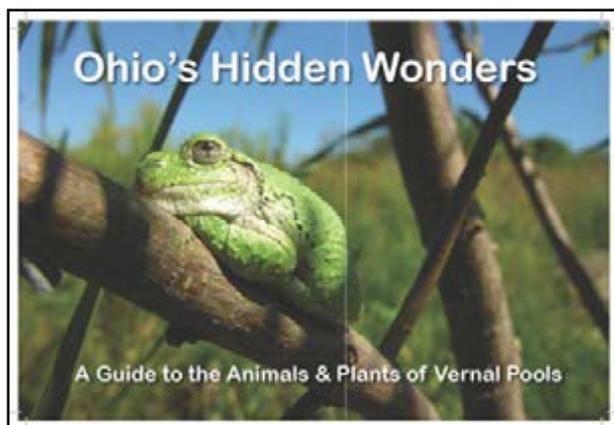
2016 OHIO WETLANDS HABITAT STAMP

Proceeds from stamp sales help fund vital wetland habitat restoration projects in Ohio. Such habitats are important to many resident wildlife species including several that are state-endangered. Ordering instructions can be found at www.OHwetlands.org/ohio-wetlands-habitat-stamp.html



Ohio's Hidden Wonders

A Guide to the Animals & Plants of Vernal Pools



Published by the Ohio Wetlands Association, this full color guide contains 132 pages. It reveals the hidden wonders of Ohio's vernal pools and includes chapters on frogs and toads, salamanders, snakes, dragonflies and damselflies, macroinvertebrates, turtles, spiders, and plants.

The 4th edition is hot off the press and available by mail for \$25 plus shipping and handling.

Orders yours today online at www.OHwetlands.org

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Wetland-ease, a Call for Conservation (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

storage, reducing the rush of water downstream following a heavy rain event. As water velocity is reduced, so are erosion and the threat of flash floods. Wetlands create habitat for wildlife and migratory birds. Because of the mobility of many species, these conservation areas increase the abundance and diversity of wildlife across the region. In many cases, the farmland that is not in production was abandoned because it was difficult to drain or produced irregularly.

The public benefits and watershed services offered freely by wetlands are widely considered to have high value. Although flood control, nutrient loading and biodiversity are not commodities that are bought and sold, they have value and add to our quality of life and may even prevent harmful and potentially costly events downstream. So when the

public (taxpayer) strikes a deal, via the USDA, with a landowner for conservation, it should be a win/win. Marginal, low productivity and highly erodible land finds a different calling, one that serves the greater good. And the landowner is provided a stipend for the public service. If one chooses to break the terms of a contract by converting and draining a wetland there should be consequences. Subsidies should be revoked and payment for conservation easements should be stopped. With water quality problems on the rise, and with heavy storms and flood potential that are likely to increase, we need more wetlands and those that still exist should remain. And agricultural producers who participate in and comply with such programs should be thanked and rewarded. They are deserving of the compensation they receive for doing their part in improving the health of our environment.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR OWA MEMBERSHIP!

- \$ 20 - INDIVIDUAL
- \$ 15 - STUDENT
- \$ 15 - SENIOR
- \$ 30 - FAMILY
- \$ 40 - ORGANIZATION
- \$ 50 - BUSINESS
- \$100 - HERON LEVEL
- \$250 - RAIL LEVEL
- \$500 - BITTERN LEVEL
- \$1000 - SWAN LEVEL

Use the back membership form or visit
www.OHwetlands.org/become-a-member.html

WETLAND TRUMPETER CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Join us today!

We have lost 90% of Ohio's wetlands. Those that remain are critically important. By sponsoring Ohio Wetlands Association events, you will gain valuable positive publicity and help us protect the wetlands we have left. Your contribution will enable us to coordinate, promote, and grow wetland awareness and provide educational materials throughout Ohio. Thank you in advance for your support. We look forward to making Ohio better in partnership with you through wetland protection and awareness. Details can be found at www.OHwetlands.org/wetland-trumpeters-sponsorship-program.html



www.Facebook.com/Ohiowetlands

The National Wetlands Condition Assessment

Ray Stewart

Because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established to implement the Clean Water Act (CWA), they are obliged to understand the status of the nation's waters. They have created a scientific data collection regimen that rotates through five classes of U.S waters on a five-year recurring cycle. This is the National Aquatic Resource Survey (NARS). Waters are divided into coastal, lakes, rivers, wade-able streams and wetlands. The first National Wetlands Condition Assessment (NWCA) was conducted in 2011 with this year, 2016, as the second round.



The EPA will collaborate on the NWCA with state, tribal, federal, and other partners to meet three goals:

1. Describe the ecological condition of the nation's wetlands,
2. Assist states and tribes in the implementation of wetland monitoring and assessment programs that will guide policy development and aid project decision-making, and
3. Advance the science of wetlands monitoring and assessment to support management needs.

Development of the NWCA builds on the accomplishments of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and their production of national reports on status and trends in wetland acreage. When taken together, the results from the NWCA and the USFWS *Wetland Status and Trends* (S&T) will be used to measure progress toward attainment of the national goal to increase the quantity and quality of the Nation's wetlands. These complementary studies can influence how wetlands

are managed at local, state, and national scales (Scozzafava et al., 2007).

Currently, a scientific sampling effort is being implemented to collect data at roughly 1000 sites from coast to coast. Sampling sites are randomly generated out of the National Wetland Inventory and other sources. The samples will represent 5 distinct ecoregions across the country and seven targeted wetland types. Strict and uniform protocols for each site have been rigorously established that will provide scientifically-defensible



information. All participants have received thorough training. An elaborate system of quality assurance is in place. The data will be extensive, reliable and scalable.

The indicators to be evaluated will include:

- Vegetation
- Buffer quality
- Hydrology
- Soils
- Surface water chemistry, and
- Algae

The NWCA will provide answers to basic questions about the nation's wetlands, their ecological conditions and the nature of stressors that influence the quality of habitat. For the entire report go to

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-05/documents/nwca_2011_public_report_20160510.pdf



Ohio Wetlands Association

P.O. Box 3
Amherst, Ohio 44001
www.OHwetlands.org

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Wetlands for a Better Ohio

May 2016 Issue



Ohio Wetlands Association

RENEW OR JOIN TODAY!

Membership Year: June 1 - May 31

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student - \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization - \$40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior - \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business - \$50 |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Rail - \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Swan - \$1000 |

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