

BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION



Trailblazer



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Trailblazer

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Cover photo: Trail Runner at South
Chagrin Reservation
Photo credit: Everett Brandt

Editor's Note

Walking in A Winter Wonderland

This year has certainly been a difficult one, but soon it'll be a new year. Here's to a better 2021 and future hikes. Whatever you celebrate, we hope that you have a wonderful Holiday and New Years. Stay safe and warm everyone!

And remember: Buckeye Trail Association would love to hear your stories on the Buckeye Trail and see your photographs. If you have any content you're excited to share, please email them to me at trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org. If you have any questions for the BTA as a whole, please email info@buckeyetrail.org.

~ Jean Vandervart



Before the days of the GPS location being included in the hike description, we spent many miles lost in my car as we looked for the trailhead - Karen Power & Jeri Getts

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Membership
Brandon Bates & Valerie Gardner

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Trail Preservation
Andy Haag

2020 BTA Award Thank You's



Everyone knows that the Buckeye Trail Association depends on its volunteers. We wouldn't be here without you all! Below are some Thank You letters from this year's recognized volunteers. You can read the full descriptions for the awards on pages 10.

All:

You cannot imagine my surprise when I opened the package I received in the mail from the Buckeye Trail Association. A 2020 Trailblazer Award! I am writing to express my appreciation to the Officers and Trustees of the BTA. Knowing that there are many people out there who are dedicating time and effort to the Association, I am honored to even be considered for this recognition. I hope to continue to bring service along with my membership in the organization. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Dale Sroka



I am truly honored to receive the 2020 Dr. Roy Fairfield President's Award. To stand with those who have been honored in years past is humbling. I only hope to continue to work towards completing the BTA Mission in the years to come.

This award recognizes others whom have been by my side as well: my wife Kimmy, and my two teenagers, Daniel and Ashly (without them, my passion for the Buckeye Trail would be unexplored); my Crooked River Chapter crew, from the ones who are by my side day and night, and to the ones who keep me in check.

This is our award! This is a volunteer award! We are all volunteers. Thank you, Buckeye Trail Association. And thank you, my fellow volunteers!

Sincerely,
Sunny

President's Message

Steve Walker

*Photograph by the Dayton Hikers
(<https://daytonhikers.com/>)*

As I write this article during the week before Christmas of 2020, I cannot help feeling a little glad that 2020 is soon going to be over. Perhaps it is not healthy to want a part of your life to be over, but it is human to want to move on. Even with a pandemic and a contentious election, the Buckeye Trail family adapted to the storm and came through it in fine condition. Although we couldn't gather in person in large numbers, we still managed to move the mission of the Buckeye Trail Association forward on several fronts.

Even with all of our signature events for 2020 being officially cancelled, BTA hikers and members worked together in grass root efforts to stage some of the events in a reduced form. BTA folks still had Morel hunts and unofficial EGGS Hikes and Little Loop Challenges (*one of which you'll read in pages 13-15*). On National Trails Day, held on June 6th, members and fans of the Buckeye Trail hiked a good portion of the entire trail, then celebrated on social media. We also celebrated the event at a rare Special Membership Meeting of the BTA that evening.

Trail work continued throughout Ohio on a somewhat limited basis. Despite these limits, one larger project successfully rehabilitated 44 miles of off-road Buckeye Trail in Eastern Ohio. The AmeriCorps NCCC Oak 1 Team, who built trail with Buckeye Trail Crew Leaders, showed us that we should consider trying this again in 2021 on another part of the BT and tighten the focus to a smaller segment of the trail. The Buckeye Trail Crew was out there this past year and is anxious to get back to a more normal year in 2021 with nine scheduled work parties (*to see the schedules events, go to pages 22 & 23*). We enter the new year with more equipment and trail maintainers and sawyers than ever before.

Under the leadership of BTA Board Members Brandon Bates and Valerie Gardner, the BTA Membership Committee just completed the first of many special membership drives and gained 102 new, renewed or gifted memberships! The team leveraged BTA's social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) and our own mass e-mail capacity. Brandon Bates and Valerie Gates collaborated with fellow Board Member, Mark Heise, our Buckeye Trail Shop operator. Mark Heise, known for making several graphics for the BTA, created a Buckeye Trail Christmas tree ornament (*pictured to the left*) as an amazing incentive for the membership campaign.

The 2025 BTA Strategic Plan, coordinated by Board Member Rory Robinson, will be celebrating one year of operation on January 1, 2021. The

Strategic Plan Working Groups were active in 2020 and all eleven goals reported some progress. Going forward, the Strategic Plan will be the BTA's roadmap through the end of 2025. If you have an interest in knowing more or helping out, contact us at info@buckeyetrail.org or contact Rory directly at rorylrobin@gmail.com.

Our operational and database software suite, eTapestry, became fully operational in 2020 and ready to grow with the BTA in the future. By keeping a close watch on our members and partners, we can closely monitor renewals, donations and all the other aspects of membership services. In addition, it is the primary platform by which we stay in contact with you using e-mail, particularly for the eLoop and Friday High Fives. Ted Shigley has spent the last 18 months successfully managing the launch of eTapestry.

The BTA Finance Committee, under the leadership of Andy Haag and Scott Kamph, monitored and successfully adapted the 2020 BTA Budget to the difficulties coming from the Covid-19 pandemic and kept the financial course on an even keel. It looks like we'll be starting 2021 in a strong financial state! Board Member Jack Shaner, who is also the Development Committee Chair, has been helping chart that course on the fundraising front and has convened his committee several times in planning for 2021.

With the diligent efforts of our soon-to-be-full-time Trail Preservation Coordinator, Richard Lutz, the BTA closed on 16 acres of land adjacent to the former Miami & Erie Canal in Western Ohio that is now tentatively called the Lockington Preserve (*you can read more about this new addition, and two others, on pages 20 & 21*). Richard always has an eye out for these kinds of opportunities that will permanently protect another segment of the Buckeye Trail. If you know of any other similar opportunities, please let Richard know at gis@buckeyetrail.org.



Segment of the map. Full version on pg. 21





Progress on the new future office, painted Buckeye Trail Blue

One of our highest priorities for 2021 is to move our headquarters into the 129 Project. With the help of our dedicated 129 Committee, the house at 129 West Main Street in Shawnee has undergone a major transformation, particularly on the outside. Most of the remaining work is on the inside and, when it is ready to become our center of operations, all mechanical systems will be new. With lots of generous help from donors and volunteers, the 129 Project will be primarily paid for by the time Andrew and his staff move in. Some time next year, we'll be celebrating a Grand Opening and, although Covid-19 will still be with us and social distancing will still be a smart policy, I'm hoping that it can be in

person as well as virtual. Stay tuned. If you're interested in helping with the 129 Project with sweat equity or donations, please let me know by writing me at president@buckeyetrail.org.

Personally, I have a lot to be grateful for. My stepson just beat Covid-19 after a nasty battle and my wife, Karen, beat cancer earlier this year (or as we like to say, "our house beat cancer" because my wife and I are a team). After that, a few downed trees across the trail at Clendening Lake are not going to discourage me. Have a Happy New Year and we hope to see you on the Buckeye Trail in 2021!

On the Trail ...

At the risk of sounding repetitive, 2020 has been a hard year for all of us, and I am so grateful that the Buckeye Trail was out there for all of us when we needed it most. I don't know about you, but even seeing the smiling faces of families out on the Buckeye Trail from my computer screen in between countless virtual meetings made me feel better about everything. We did that, you and I, we built that and maintained the trail to make those smiles during these tough times. Thank you again for supporting and working hard for the Buckeye Trail.

You will see from the articles in this issue on the Trailblazer magazine that we have not sat idly by, waiting for the Covid-19 / Coronavirus to disappear. We adapted and amended, slowed down some activities just to speed up other investments of our time. We made a decision back in March to pivot with the information we had at the time. And while we may not have been perfect at figuring out how to do things during the pandemic, I am proud of what Buckeye Trail Association volunteers and staff have done to keep the BT and BTA in a good position moving into 2021 – not just picking up where we left off, but moving forward to where we originally planned to be in 2021 before the arrival of Covid-19.

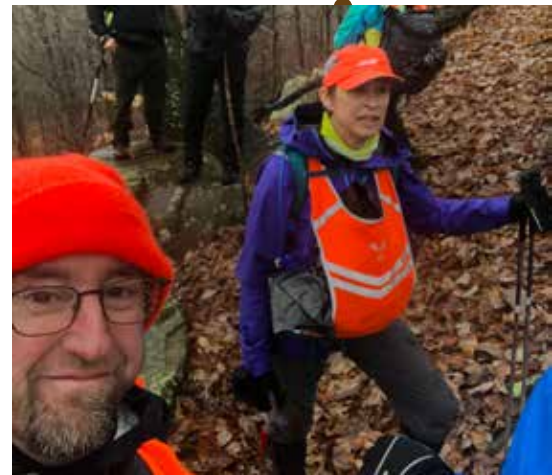
We don't have a crystal ball that will show us the path through 2021 concerning the Coronavirus. I can only imagine that, with the thankful distribution of vaccines, there will still be many questions about who is vaccinated and who is allowed to do what and when. Most of those big questions are the burden of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Our job is to interpret those decisions to safely get our members, volunteers, hikers, and staff back on the BT doing what they do best. In this scenario,

I can imagine that progress towards reopening will be slower and more frustrating than our desire to simply see 2021 as a brand new year, a clean slate to jump into on January 1st. I can only say, again, that I have been so grateful for everyone's support, patience, and understanding in 2020, and that we're going to need some more of that in 2021 and beyond as long term worries about a global pandemic slowly drift away.

Please join me now and throughout 2021 as an ambassador of the Buckeye Trail. The BT is not just for outdoor adventure experts or volunteers who have given to the BT for decades. The BT is there for everyone who has just heard of it for the first time as a safe and healthy option to enjoy time with their families or spend some quality time with themselves. Please encourage them, share your knowledge and experience, and share your kindness and patience with another wave of Ohioans finding and being inspired by the BT when they need it most.

Thank you for hiking. Be safe and hang in there!

Andrew Bashaw
Executive Director
Buckeye Trail Association



Photographs by Dayton Hikers (<https://daytonhikers.com/>).
Editor Disclaimer: These photographs were taken in previous years

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BTA Funds Report

Your contribution to any BTA fund is tax deductible. All contributions of \$20 or more are acknowledged. Thank you to all of our donors who have gone above and beyond to support the mission of the BTA during these challenging times! We appreciate you.

AUGUST 2, 2020 TO DECEMBER 1, 2020

GENERAL FUND

(including, but not limited to, this summer's *Big Give*)

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James Hawkins	Nancy Quist	Gene Wimmer
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Byron Henry	Robert Rice	
Chuck & Beth Hewett	Mike Riggins & Megan Cameron	



IN MEMORY AND IN HONOR OF

Kenneth & Maria Baldwin	In memory of Hazel Bashaw
Paul Bingle	On behalf of Linda Pal, over and above
Joseph Brown	In memory of James H. Brown
Marianne Britt Duvendack	In memory of Ranger Tom Duvendack
Lowerll & Christine Howard	In memory of Lowell B. Howard, who incorporated the BTA in 1959
Cathy J. King	On behalf of CHC Buckeye Trail Group G
Renee Kopache	In memory of Hazel Bashaw
Louisa Kreider	In honor of BT Circuit Hikers Past, Present, and Future
William McGovern	In honor of Kathryn Barto
Tom & Connie Myers	In memory of Jack & Mary Shearer and William & Rita Myers
Susan Stover	In memory of Herb Spuhler
Valerie Tracey	In memory of Betty Benish, lover of nature
James C. Weyman	In honor of Kathryn Barto

FROM EMMA GRANDMA GATEWOOD SOLSTICE (EGGS) HIKERS

Mary Bradshaw	James Datko	David Linnabary	Sandy Reed
Patrick Buffington	Karen Datko	Laura Lowe	Ronald E. Vore, Jr.
Evan Burnell	Gary Dugan	Laura Kate Matos	
John Burnell	Rachel Evans	Wendy J. Miller	
Kelly Christiansen	Lee Hutton	Raman Ras	

BUCKEYE TRAIL PRESERVATION FUND

Lowell & Christine Howard - Donations made in memory of father, Lowell B. Howard, who incorporated the BTA in 1959
Scott Kamph



Photographs on pages 8-9 taken by Kristine Stevens

2020 BTA Volunteer Recognition

Everyone knows that the Buckeye Trail Association literally depends on its volunteers. Many of the volunteers often work quietly in the background and whether you volunteer 1 hour or 1,000 hours a year, your time is valuable and appreciated. We'd like to take a moment to recognize those who went above and beyond this year.

Certificate of Appreciation

Congratulations to Robin McArdle!

This award is presented to any individual, city, agency, business, or organization that has demonstrated exemplary cooperation and diligence to perpetuate and improve the Buckeye Trail (BT) and Buckeye Trail Association (BTA), and must have helped in some significant way to aid the Association in attaining an important objective.

Buckeye Trail Blazer Award for Leadership by Example

Congratulations to Russ, Bill and Dale!

The Buckeye Trail Blazer Award for Leadership by Example is awarded to person(s) who have exhibited superior service and leadership by example in appointed or volunteer tasks. This year, we have three award winners:

- Russ Fletcher, certified sawyer
- Bill Jindra, Mogadore Section Supervisor
- Dale Sroka

The Buckeye Trail Business Partnership Award

Congratulations The Backpackers Shop!

Any business can benefit the BT and the BTA in a variety of ways. These include promoting the BT and BTA, partnering on outreach events, encouraging employees to volunteer on the BT and many others. With a mission to provide local economic benefits, the BT circumnavigates the state through 100 communities. This award highlights significant and innovative ways that primarily Ohio-based businesses are supporting the mission and vision of the BTA.

The Buckeye Trail Partnership Award

Congratulations Cleveland Metroparks!

The Buckeye Trail has not come to be what it is today by the will of the BTA alone. All around the state, partner organizations are assisting with the building, maintaining, protection and promotion of the BT through their region for their own purposes, sometimes unaware that they are benefiting the BT. Awardees are honored for their hard work on their part of our shared vision.

The Bill Miller Award for Conservation

Congratulations Brian Blair of the Forest Conservancy!

This award honors any person or group responsible for actions that have notably preserved or resotred the natural ecology or beauty of a locality by the Trail, or have brought under control a major threat to the utility of the trail in some locality.

The Bob Paton Award for Meritorious Service

Congratulations Mary Hayes!

The Bob Paton Award for Meritorious Service honors members who have contributed exceptionally meritorious services to the Association for at least fifteen years. Such services may pertain to trail maintenance, trail utilization and/or administrative or management functions.

The Dr. Roy Fairfield President's Award

Congratulations Jim "Sunny" Sunyak!

This award goes to a volunteer that has either shown exceptional commitment to an assignment(s), or have made some major contribution of special benefit to the Association during the past year.

Ralph Regula Award for Leadership

Congratulations Representative James Hoops!

At every level of government, the BT and the BTA need the support of our elected decision makers to improve the Buckeye Trail experience. This award honors those elected officials who have made the BT or trails in general a priority for accomplishing some significant effort that benefits trails in Ohio.

If you know someone who has gone above and beyond for the Buckeye Trail, you can nominate them for the 2021 BTA Awards!

<https://www.buckeyetrail.org/awards.php>



Road crossing: Screaming for a CHANGE

Jim “Sunny” Sunyak

Road crossings are - let's face it - probably not our favorite thing. Heck, we follow hundreds of miles of roads while traversing the Buckeye Trail. In my opinion, this is one of the things that makes the Buckeye Trail so interesting. These roads that lead to towns and villages have many stories to tell. So, let me tell you about one particular road crossing.

One day, my nephew and I visited the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) to check out the new visitor's center by Boston Mills. We looked at the displays in the center and were very impressed; the Buckeye Trail was displayed at least twice throughout the center, not surprising as the only trail to and from the center was the BT. We decided to take a short hike. The interpretative Ranger suggested that we follow the Buckeye Trail up to see Blue Hen Falls. Though that was where I wanted to go anyways, I was curious to know what the Ranger would recommend. Three miles round trip let's go! As we wandered west into the woods for about a mile on the Buckeye Trail, we gradually climbed up to a level path right before a descending staircase. Down the stairs we hiked, cross a rickety bridge, and then back up again. We continued to follow the Blue Blazes west on a path near the road. Very soon after, we turned left into woods again and exited to what looked like a muddy gravel parking lot. The blue blaze pointed us right. And there it was: the precarious road crossing between us and our goal of reaching Blue Hen Falls. The BT runs diagonally across Boston Mills Road, about a fifty-foot jaunt. Moving quickly, we crossed the road. To the left, we had a blind uphill turn coming from the west. To the right, we had cars flying towards us at 45 miles per hour. We took turns crossing, both safely making it to the other side and continued on to see the amazing Blue Hen Falls. All in all, a great experience.

Then in June 2018, I received an email from CVNP's Chief Ranger Bruce Gagnon. He wished to talk to me about some Buckeye Trail issues around Blue Hen Falls. The park wanted to close the overflow parking lot, because of safety concerns with people crossing the street in order to go to Blue Hen Falls. I shared my concerns with him. I told him that the trail leading from the closest parking lot was in bad shape and he should be concerned that trail users would not return to that trail. I also suggested that we move the trail and find a better crossing.

As a result, they closed the parking lot and the visitors started using Boston Mills Road for the return trip. What happened next was something we did not expect. CVNP visi-



Photo Credit: Randall Roberts - Newly rerouted Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail at the KB BioEnergy Composting Plant Between PT 12 and PT 13

tors started parking on the sides of the already narrow road instead. This led to even more safety issues. Vehicles were getting stuck in the soft ground adjacent to the road. Locals complained about the backed-up traffic. I assume Boston Township Police grew tired of daily calls and convinced the CVNP to re-open the overflow parking lot.

In June 2019, I received another email from Chief Ranger: “Sunny, they are talking about closing the parking lot again.” This time Chief Ranger and I met and walked the BT from the visitors center up to Blue Hen Falls, where Pat Hayes and Richard Lutz joined us. I had a plan: I'd lay out flags to mark a new trail on the northside of the Boston Mills Road to effectively reroute the BT to a road crossing with better road visibility. I, however, had not yet shared the plan at this point. We all noted where the trail crossed Boston Mills Road. As stated, the CVNP closed the overflow parking lot once again. Here I thought: *Why? You are just making more problems again. Did we not learn from last time?* The closing only lasted about two weeks.

In November 2019, my plan went into action. I met with Richard and Pat again at the parking lot and spilled the beans about my plan. I am no expert, and needed the aid of these Buckeye Trail geniuses. Richard, having much more experience coordinating with the National Park Service, asked if I had permission to build a new trail. I replied, “Um ... no! But let's just lay it out and flag it. Then we can GPS it and send it

along with a proposal to the CVNP." I laid out a good trail. Richard only suggested minor changes. The plan came to a standstill, however. In January 2020, planning for the Buckeye Trailfest kept me preoccupied. I had a meeting with my volunteer liaison with the CVNP to discuss options for Buckeye Trailfest. He kindly suggested I not spend any more time up near Blue Hen Falls than needed, as he didn't want to see that I waste my time trying to move the trail.

And then came March 2020. Covid-19 hit and the CVNP closes most of the facilities - including some parking lots. Blue Hen Falls lot made the list. At this point, the whole world was practically closed. So, what did we, as a whole, do? People went outside in droves! Visitors in the park skyrocketed and so did the illegal parking on Boston Mills Road near Blue Hen Falls. I took a drive down one day just to check out the craziness. The road was so backed up that I felt as though I were in line to park at Cedar Point Amusement Park. I received a few calls and emails from CVNP staff asking if I could help post on social media about proper social distancing and respectful trail use. Happily, I obliged.

Late April this year, I received a call from my CVNP liaison. The CVNP trails division began building the new Buck-

eye Trail that I had laid out. I was so surprised and ecstatic. I was pumped and started yelling, "Finally!" My wife walked into my office and asked what I was screaming about. In this case, Covid-19 might have served as a catalyst in getting the CVNP to pick up the pace and move the trail, which saves lives from unfortunate accidents. By moving the trail, the road crossing is now 600 feet to the east and has no line of sight issues. The parking lot now has an out of sight, out of mind feel. In the past six months since the new trail was built, the trail tread has gone from eighteen inches wide to four foot wide. I can only imagine that with the increased number of visitors, what eventually may have happened if the old, unsafe road crossing was still in place. I am glad we were able to do something about this. But this is only one road crossings of many on the Buckeye Trail. So, use caution following the Blue Blazes we love so much. Be safe my fellow Hikers!

*Photo Credit: Jim "Sunny" Sunyak
Blue Hen Falls on a sunny, summer day*



Photo Credit: James Sunyak - Blue Hen Falls

My 24-hour Adventure in the Akron Section

Photo Credit: James "Sunny" Sunyak
Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail
Between PT 25 and 26

Randall Roberts

2020, the year of the Coronavirus. So many of my favorite hiking events were cancelled, because of Covid-19 concerns. Even so, I walked and hiked the same distance - locally - that I'd normally take in my hikes as a sort of mock challenge near my home, even if I couldn't replicate the locations and terrain. The quarantine gave me time to reminisce and reflect on hikes of the past from 2016 and 2017. Inspired by the annual E.G.G.S 60-mile hike, my hiking partner, Kat, and I hiked the Loveland section from Eden Park into Caesar Creek (we called it E.P.I.C.C.) in about 18 hours in 2016. In 2017, she and I scheduled the A.K.R.O.N hike - another Kat and Randall overnight hike (It's an acronym!). Our friends, Greg Madachik, Rosemary Celeste, Julie Kirby, and "Pebbles," joined us for the journey. Unfortunately, at mile 30, I started showing symptoms of heat stress and had to stop. That was the premature end of that hike. But that Akron hike kept gnawing at my brain and, in 2020, I made a plan. When I contemplated the 2017 hike, I wasn't sure then which direction I should go. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) was open 24 hours, but going north meant traversing the hills at the end - not a very pleasant last trek after hiking many miles. So, I would leave at 10 pm Friday, August 28th at the north end and hopefully reach the southern end by 10pm on Saturday, August 29th. Whenever backpacking and taking long hikes, it's wise to have someone to send updates to in case of an emergency. I contacted Everett Brandt (a fellow hiker who holds the Fastest Known Time (FKT) for hiking the entire Buckeye Trail at 55 days, 6 hours and 12 minutes) as he offered to help if any emergencies came up. He'd send me weather updates and track my progress as it was uploaded to Garmin explore via my In-reach mini. I also prepared a spreadsheet of my planned times that I'd be reaching each point on the BT map.

On the day of the hike, rain began to fall in the afternoon. The forecast stated that it would quit early evening, but as time moved on before the hike, it kept raining. And raining. *It would quit eventually right?* I hoped. Instead, flash flood warnings showed up on the forecast. My wife, Beth, began to worry, but nonetheless dropped me off on Valley Parkway. I turned on my headlamp and headed down the short distance to the junction of the Medina, Bedford, and Akron Sections in Brecksville Reservation. To start off my journey down the Akron section, I played the audiobook

North: Finding My Way While Running the Appalachian Trail by Scott Jurek on my phone. It would be many miles, mostly in solitude. While winding my way through a tight narrow trail, all of a sudden I thought I had heard traffic noise from a road nearby, I took out my earbuds. It turned out to be running water. My headlamp light caught the reflection of a swollen, fast-flowing stream that was still small enough to jump across. By the time I reached Ottawa Point Driveway, the rain had stopped - a little later than I had hoped, but soon enough.

Now, it was time to make the long journey. Despite the heavy downpour, the trail was not as slippery as I had feared. Some areas were wet, but I straddled the trail and kept to the high ends. Along the way stood a brand new log bridge that the Cleveland Metroparks (CMP) placed on to the trail. And where there's no man-made bridge, there's nature-made bridges. At my first major water crossing, I came across a downed tree that I had used once before to cross - both times I kept my feet dry when crossing! Following afterwards was a confusing fork in the trail. Go left and you'll be at the barn on Riverview Rd. Go right and you stay on the main trail. I turned right and came to what was formerly, and colloquially, known as the "Bog of despair" due to the poor drainage, with ground that's constantly wet and muddy. However, recent improvements included an elevated boardwalk. The boardwalk there was so nice, I felt like running (thank you CMP for the improvement!), but did not because of the potential for slipping on wet wood. I crossed Columbia then another stream, this time hopping from rock to rock like a gleeful child. Up, over, then down to Blue Hen Falls! It's only an eighth of a mile off-trail and well worth the extra steps. Although the night obscured my vision of the falls, the sound of rushing water from Blue Hen Falls (pictured on page 12) was an experience worthy of pause to take it all in. After listening to the calming sounds of the waterfall for a bit, I continued up the abandoned road to a new part of the trail recently



rerouted by the CVNP. *Was the trail complete? Should I go that way?* I fretted. Luckily, the park service had completed the trail by that point and I soon walked out of the forest to Boston Mills Road and rejoined the original trail. Coming down from the maintenance area, the trail has been completely reworked. What used to be an eroded trail now had parallel trenches dug and water diversions built in. It was still steep, but the tread was smooth and predictable. Coming down into Boston at 2:20am, I saw people walking around and some cars stopped on the side of the road. Given it being in the middle of night, the sight made me apprehensive. But I was on a mission; there were rocking chairs waiting for me at the old visitor center. Despite my preconceived concerns, I found out upon conversation that the people were visiting their friend who had returned from the military and needed directions to Helltown. For those who don't know, Helltown is the nickname for the town of Boston, Ohio.



Waterfall on Sand Run Between PT 13 and PT 14

It gained its eerie name from the several ghost stories and cryptid legends in the area. But that's another story. I pointed in a general direction, but told them there wasn't much to see. After succeeding my mission and resting in the rocking chair, I continued along the towpath to the bridle trail, then back into the woods on the Buckeye Trail with a wide grin on my face. I was having a blast.

At 3:13 a.m. I received a text message from Everett Brandt. Everett had previously mentioned to me that he would look for me in the morning. I thought that that would mean 8 or 9 a.m. or even later. Not 3:13am! The text read: "Heading your way now. I have paracord for the creek. If need be." This set my mind at ease. There was one water crossing I worried about: Boston Run. I knew it would be wide, maybe even deep, because of the rain. Everett met me on the trail way before the water crossing and then started leading the way, pulling far ahead until he realized his faux pas and let me take the lead again. When we reached Boston Run, Everett showed me where he had crossed wearing his rubber boots: another downed tree. The rushing water below was about 8-10 inches deep. I crossed the downed tree without mishap. Without Everett there, I doubt I'd have tried crossing that particular tree. We continued on and eventually arrived at Peninsula, Ohio. It was a great feeling. I still had a few more hills left on the BT, but the hardest parts were behind me. The time was 4:34 a.m. and I was 24 minutes ahead of schedule. Everett had his car parked in town. I took a short break there as he moved his car further down the trail, then met up with him just before O'Neil Woods. He hiked with me as we took the towpath back to his car at the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railway Station. I was exhausted. My mind and body screamed for sleep and rest. I layed down on the hard, wooden bench at the station and set the alarm clock on my phone for 8:45 a.m. While I tried to catch up on sleep, I heard Everett quietly taking a seat nearby. He finally said something at 9 a.m. I had accidentally set my alarm for weekdays not Saturday.

The mistake set me behind schedule, but I welcomed the rest. Everett wished me luck and I set out on my own again.

All was going well, until I missed a turn in Sand Run. After quickly noticing it, I made the correction, but still lost some more time. But even so, I felt good; this was the point I dropped out on my first attempt after becoming ill. The observation boosted my morale. I still had a ways to go, but I could do it! Lunch was in Akron, something to look forward to. I had my heart set on Lock 15 Brewing Company and their Chicken Paprikash. No luck. When I reached my destination, the restaurant was closed. I tried 69 taps next, but it was closed too. I settled on Woody's Bar for a sloppy joe and a beer (I craved a second beer, but

thought better of it). Even though I had planned for a 60 minute lunch stop, my side quest to find lunch led me off-trail and 14 minutes more behind my artificial schedule to finish in 24 hours. At this point, I was really just hoping to finish before midnight. I quickened my hiking pace to make up for lost time, but fatigue took over me. I had to stop along the trail to rest my eyes a few times more. Then, a message from Sunny spurred me from my rest. He and Jo Rawley were coming out to join me at point 26 on the BT. He asked if I needed anything. I asked for some Ginger Ale. After some miscommunications, they met me at point 25 instead (with the Ginger Ale in hand) and hiked the last 12.8 miles with me. Hiking with friends was a great emotional boost. It saved me from stopping and sleeping yet again. I was 44.8 miles in and had 12.8 miles to go. Despite the fatigue, I was still able to maintain a 3mph pace on the flat towpath. During our trek together, we caught up and reminisced over all of us hiking the trail here one spring in shin-deep, freezing water during the Crooked River Chap-



Cherry Street Creamery in Canal Fulton PT 28

ter Group Hike. As we neared Canal Fulton, I immediately began to crave the sweet and refreshing ice cream at the Cherry Street Creamery. But the clock was ticking. The shop would close at 9pm. We reached the creamery just before close and quickly took our place in-line, before they shut off the lights. I ordered a milkshake (*scene pictured on bottom right of page 14*).

Sunny, Jo and I finished the hike at the Towpath Cabin at 11:16 p.m. I may have missed my artificial goal of 24 hours by an hour and 16 minutes, but I was quite pleased. Sunny offered to give me a ride home instead of having my wife come pick me up. I slept the whole hour during the car ride back to my house. Amusingly, I forgot to turn off the tracking on my Garmin, so it appeared as though I was hiking really fast that last hour!

During the hike Jo had asked me why I did this. I couldn't

quite put it into words at the time, but I'll quote one of the runners who assisted Scott Jerek on his FKT of the Appalachian Trail: "It's who I am. It's what I do". I guess if I'm forced to come up with an answer, it's because I watch the Barkley Marathons, I follow runners who go after FKTs, complete the triple crown in one year, or other amazing pursuits and, although I know I am not capable of doing that, I do know I am capable of creating my own challenges to test my own personal limits and boundaries. I also have Byron Guy to thank for creating the EGGs hike that inspired me to get started on this adventure. There is adventure out there for anyone willing to pursue it, even if that means creating your own.

Plan your own adventure...

If you need a trailmap to help guide you along the Buckeye Trail, the Buckeye Trail Association has you covered. From trailmap sheets, to section maps, a handy guide book, or app maps, there's plenty to choose from. Trail maps can help you plan your trip so your adventure runs as smoothly, and safely, as possible. **For more information, go to <https://buckeyetrail.org/maps.php>.**

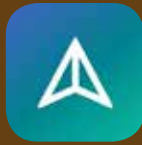
Avenza Maps App



Entire trail for \$119.99 or sections for \$6.99/each. Cost saving bundles available.



Atlas Guide's Guthook App



Entire trail for \$39.99 or available in any of the 8 sections from \$4.99 to \$14.99.



Follow the Blue Blazes: Second Edition by Connie & Robert Pond

\$15.00

Hiker on The Go Maps

Hiker on The Go Maps - \$5.49 each



BT Section Maps

Section maps - \$8.10 each
All map bundle - \$147.42



Unexpected Bonuses of Trail Building

Ann Furste

I am a relatively new to the Buckeye Trail (around 200 miles so far), but have long been interested in learning about the work that goes into making the trails we all enjoy. My goal is to adopt a trail portion in order to give back. Being recently retired, I finally have more time to fully pursue my interests. And so, I dipped my toe in trail maintenance with Joe, Petra and the Central Ohio Buckeye Trail group. That day I learned how loppers are used to trim and prune along the trail, and how to blaze.

The next adventure I took was spending a day with Herb's crew building trail at the Upper Rock Reclamation Site in the Wayne National Forest, otherwise known as the site of the New Straitsville Mine Fires. The crew patiently explained various changes they had made to the existing trail (and why), as well as repeating the names of the tools and what their purpose was multiple times – a great topic for a future article. As Susie and I raked the trail route down to bare dirt, Terry, Dan, Herb and Jean (an AmeriCorps member serving with the Buckeye Trail Association) followed, benching and finishing the trail. Meanwhile, Earl used a chainsaw to clear the way out front, occasionally consulting with others as to what the best route to go would be. Every single one of these volunteers was a wonderful teacher; my concerns about being the new kid were unfounded. They were all patient teachers, always willing to answer questions and offer explanations – then let me learn on my own while periodically offering gentle suggestions for improvement. But the best part of the day for me, besides the hard work and great company with people of shared interests (as usual on the Buckeye Trail) was the caterpillars.

During the course of the day, we found several caterpillars. I was curious about the caterpillars – what species they were, why so many, etc. Susie and I briefly tried to identify the ones we found during a break, but I was unsure so I turned to Google, and then iNaturalist. A friend shared the iNaturalist app with me; you can upload photos of plants, insects for identification and include where you found them. After three people on the site agree with the identification of our finds, the finds are generally classified as research

grade observations. The app is an extremely helpful tool and taught me more about caterpillars. But I wanted to learn more. A more in-depth return to Mr. Google later taught me that fall in Ohio is a peak time for caterpillars. Several moths and butterflies lay their eggs during warm weather, so that their offspring – caterpillars - will mature in time to search for overwintering sites in the fall. Caterpillars can also change in appearance as they mature. (See Field Biology in Southeastern Ohio blog 9/26/2014 Autumn, Caterpillar Time).



“When fully grown, most moth larvae burrow into the ground and pupate in earthen cells. Others pupate among dead leaves. Most of the large moths and butterflies spend the winter in pupal form”. (Giant Caterpillars Ohio line The Ohio State University).

With our first find, my Google search identified this fluffy white caterpillar with long, black tuft-like spines as a white hickory moth caterpillar, or American Dagger moth (*Acrionicta americano*). Logging our find into iNaturalist, the app and fellow citizen scientists confirmed it as an American dagger moth. The black spines contain venom that can irritate skin. They feed on the leaves from a variety of trees (oak, ash, elm, alder, willow and maple) and can be found underneath them. These trees are known as “host plants.”

Terry found the next caterpillar on a redbud tree, where we returned the caterpillar after taking photos. I identified this beautiful, yellow polka-dotted caterpillar as a flannel moth caterpillar. Like the American dagger, it, too, is a stinging caterpillar – note the fine, yellow hairs. Brushing against the caterpillar breaks hairs that release venom, causing pain and can form blisters at the sting site. This is an adaptive trait to defend the caterpillar against would-be predators. My new friends at iNaturalist confirmed it as a white flannel moth (*Norape*



White Flannel Moth (*Norape ovina*)



Polyphemus larvae

ovina). Also called hackberry leaf slug. They lay their eggs on hackberry, redbud, beech and mimosa trees.

The third caterpillar we found was a green caterpillar. I took a guess and classified it as a Polyphemus moth, otherwise known as brown angle moths. However, iNaturalist struggled to identify this caterpillar – only one person identified it as part of the *Phlogophora* genus. The Polyphemus larvae feed on alder, balsam, fir, cranberry and plum trees. Does anybody have a more specific identification? **

Our last caterpillar find was large. It was as long and wide as a thumb with a glove on it! I guessed that the caterpillar was an imperial moth, but the images of caterpillars I found were green. This confused me because immature larvae are green, then turn brown when they mature. I felt relieved, however when iNaturalist confirmed the identification as *Eacles imperialis* or Imperial moth. The dots you see along the body of the caterpillars are breathing holes. Imperial Moth caterpillars feed on many trees and shrubs. Their larval stage lasts around 42 days, before they burrow into the ground to pupate and overwinter. The adults emerge in May or June to mate and repeat the cycle.



Imperial moth (Eacles imperialis)

While out working on the trail, we found and learned about more than just caterpillars and trailbuilding. We also learned about other fauna and flora. Dan pointed out trees against which deer bucks had rubbed their antlers. They do this during rutting (mating) season to mark their territory and warn off the competition. While smoothing out the trail at the end of the group, Jean found something wriggling in the dirt. Was it a worm? Baby snake? Wait – freeze! It’s a salamander! Unfortunately, we have no picture to share. I was too excited to see the little guy that it had enough time to bury itself in the dirt, before I could get my phone out, though Jean thought that it might have been an Eastern Red-backed Salamander. There are 24 species of salamanders in Ohio – half the number of Georgia but double the number of that state up north. A resource for salamanders is *Getting to Know Salamanders in Ohio: Life history and Management*, published by OSU extension and can be bought at county offices or online store <http://go.osu.edu/salamander>. At one point, Terry, the jokester of the group told me that there

was a rattlesnake on the trail, startling us. However, Earl then motioned to a plant with beautiful leaves that Susie and I had left on the trail for everyone to admire. He informed us that the plant is known as the downy rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*), a native orchid and evergreen terrestrial herb with variegated leaves. We all had a good laugh.



Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (Goodyera pubescens)

One of the things I have enjoyed about circuit hikes on the Buckeye Trail is that there is usually a knowledgeable person on insects, plants, trees, geology and local history among the participants. Working on the trail has given me a better appreciation of all that is involved in creating and maintaining the Buckeye Trail. It also provided an unexpected opportunity to slow down to enjoy and appreciate the area we were working in – and learn a little about caterpillars and more. If you, too, are interested in identifying flora and fauna on the trail, as well as helping out scientists, check out the app and website, iNaturalist.org. California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society cosponsor it! According to their website, they have 3,230,803 members who have entered 51,115,758 observations of 298,379 species. I wonder how much Buckeye Trail hikers could contribute to those observations? You can join in on documenting observations by joining the group, *Fauna and Flora of the Buckeye Trail!* If any of you use other citizen scientist apps besides iNaturalist, I’d love to hear about them! **

If you want to learn more about caterpillars, here are some additional resources about caterpillars:

1. Golden Guide booklet “Butterflies and Moths”
2. Peterson Field Guide: A Field guide to the butterflies of Eastern North America
3. A Field Guide to the Moths of Eastern North America
4. Princeton Field Guide: Caterpillars of Eastern North America

***Editor’s Note: If anyone has an answer to Anne’s questions, please email trailblazer@buckeyetrail.org.*



Orange-Striped Oakworm (Anisota senatoria)

TWO NEW CHAPTERS OF THE BUCKEYE TRAIL!

The year 2020 has brought many challenges, but even in these difficult times, there's bits of good news to be shared here and there. Despite Covid-19, Buckeye Trail volunteers have remained dedicated to maintaining the trail. Even as we are urged to social distance, several volunteers have united (via internet), to form two new Buckeye Trail Chapters. The Buckeye Trail Association would like to welcome the Lake Plains Chapter and the Miami & Erie Canal Chapter! These two new chapters cover North Central Ohio and Northwest Ohio respectively, areas that have needed representation for a long time now.

The Lake Plains Chapter, formed on August 26, 2020, spans across the Pemberville, Norwalk and Medina sections. Flatland and back roads make for easy hiking along the Pemberville and Norwalk Sections. Wide open fields, old barns, and rustic farmhouses embody the midwestern spirit. The BT joins the North Coast Inland Trail (NCIT), a multi-purpose paved trail, in Elmore, Ohio (Pemberville Section), and continues until just east of Wakeman, Ohio (Norwalk Section). There are also several historical sites of interest along the way like America's first presidential



Richland Heritage Preserve in Lake Plains

library (which is part of the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont), and the towering 273-foot, double-arch Chapin Bridge that was built in 1872 and spans across the Vermillion River in Wakeman.

The Lake Plains chapter is led by co-chair leaders, Richard Saccardi and Valerie Gardner. Interest in starting a new chapter in the north had been growing among members and so Richard initiated the progress to make this goal happen. Richard is also a Trustee on the BTA board and was previously a Membership Chair, while Valerie is the current Membership co-Chair and part of the Marketing Team. Some may know Richard from the Buckeye Trail Work Parties. Richard defines his priorities in life to his faith, family (all of whom also enjoy the outdoors) and hiking and camping. He's hiked 18,444 miles of the Appalachian trail, with only 390 miles to go. For him, volunteering with the trail crews reminds him of his hiking experience, and much of the people on the crew have become his close friends. The Buckeye Trail does not just provide outdoor experiences, it provides a sense of community. When asked how the Lake Plains Chapter was first envisioned, Richard shared some wisdom from our local trail hero, Grandma Gatewood: "It came together through the efforts of a lot of volunteers." Beyond building trails and beginning the call for this new chapter, volunteers and members also helped give the Lake Plains its name, a nod to the habitat of the area. If you live in the Chapter region and are interested in joining the community, volunteer positions are needed! Currently, Lake Plains is looking for a Secretary, a Treasurer and Trail maintainers.



Photo Credit: Dale Wical - Lockington Locks

The Miami & Erie Canal Chapter, formed on October 1, 2020, spans across St. Mary's, Delphos and Defiance sections. Along the trail of the Miami & Erie Canal Chapter, hikers encounter a lot of historical locations. The original towpath passes many of the original locks of the Miami & Erie Canal. The trail then winds through Deep Cut Historical Park, a National Register Historic Site, which is a 6,600-foot long, 50-foot deep cut made entirely by hand. The Buckeye Trail goes through towns that were built on top of Myaamia, Shawnee, Kaskaskie and Kiikaapoi land. In these sections, hikers walk on the path that General Wayne and his troops used in 1794 and on the route used during the War of 1812 between forts. There are also canal boat rides available through a working lock at Providence Metropark near the Maumee River.

Sam Bonifas (Delfos Section Supervisor, and host of several BTA events) leads the Miami & Erie Canal Chapter with Marion Schoffner (St. Mary's section supervisor), Marianne Duvendack (creator of the Wabash Cannonball Trail, part of the rails-to-trails project) and several others. The idea for the chapter began about two years ago at a Trailfest between Sam Bonifas, Andrew Bashaw and a few other BT volunteers. The team decided on the name, "Miami & Erie Canal" to pay homage to the history of the trail in the area. Much of the trail in the Chapter's region includes the Miami & Erie Canal Towpath, which follows the Miami & Erie Canal. The canal was built to transport supplies from Lake Erie and the Ohio River to the Forts built by European settlers in the area. One of these forts was Fort Defiance, hence the name of the Defiance Section. While the canals fell out of use with the introduction of the train railroad system, they still provide a historical tour of the land. As Marion put it: "When you hike the Buckeye Trail, the Buckeye Trail highlights all of those historic places. Okay, now I'm not just reading this from a history book, I'm standing at the confluence of the old place of the Miami River right on the stone where Fort Defiance was built." A walk on the BT is a walk along history!

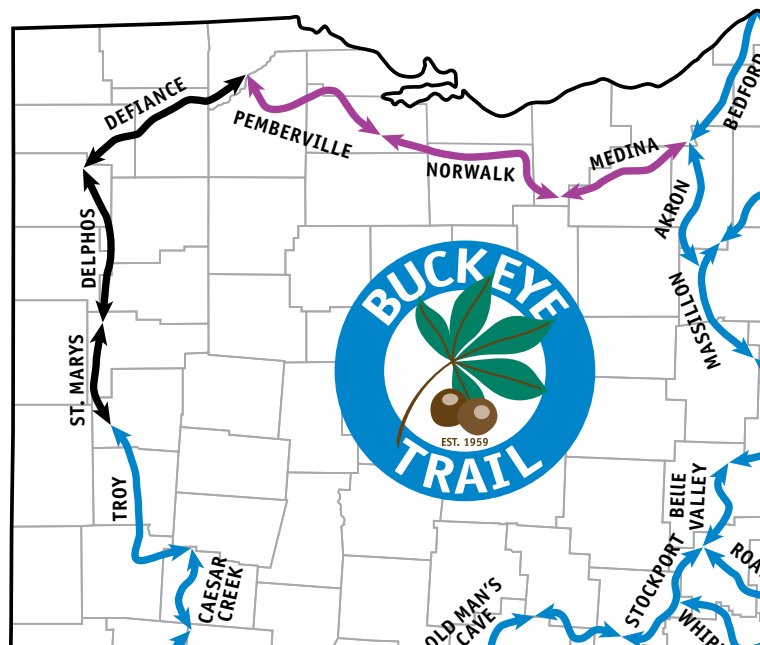
Besides giving a means for BT hikers, volunteers and members to unite in enjoying and working on the trail together, Chapters can also be useful in giving the Buckeye Trail Association as a whole representation in an area. The Miami & Erie Canal leaders collaborate with the Delphos Canal Commission, the Miami & Erie Canal Corridor Association (MECCA), the Miami & Erie Scenic

Trail and the ODNr division in North Central Ohio. One project these several amazing organizations worked on together was to mark historic sandstone trail mile markers from one to over 110. Chapters also help oversee BTA owned property. In Miami & Erie Canal Chapter's case, this would be a property adjacent to the Lockington Locks (*more details on this in the next article, pages 20-21*). Chapters also help promote the Buckeye Trail, spreading the BTA's reach to all corners of the state, despite its headquarters being tucked away in the spanning forests of Southeast Ohio. Marion Shoffner, before having joined the Buckeye Trail as a member at a BTA Membership drive in Pickaway, grew up unaware of the Buckeye Trail.

"Unbeknownst to me, I had been walking on the Buckeye Trail to and from my hunting farm about three quarters of a mile, the same three quarters of a mile over and over again, going out of my tree stand ... to me, it was the Miami & Erie Canal Towpath."

This is a common story from new members and volunteers of the Buckeye Trail. Which is why Chapters are so important and appreciated. The goal of the Chapter is to promote fellowship, support the trail building and maintenance, promote the trail and provide opportunities for fundraising for the Buckeye Trail Association. Just like the Lake Plains Chapter, the Miami & Erie Canal Chapter is looking for volunteers. Anyone in the chapter region can volunteer or join at any level, whether it's being a member of the chapter and BT as a whole or all the way up to having a position of the board chapter. The Buckeye Trail also has two other prospective Chapters in the Appalachian Hills and Wilderness Loop hoping to become official. If you are interested in helping those Chapters become reality, please contact info@buckeyetrail.org.

Location of the two new chapters. Miami & Erie Canal Chapter is indicated by the black arrows (Sections: St. Mary's, Delphos, and Defiance). Lake Plains Chapter is indicated on the map by the purple arrows (Sections: Pemberville, Norwalk, and Medina).



Three New Additions to Buckeye Trail Property

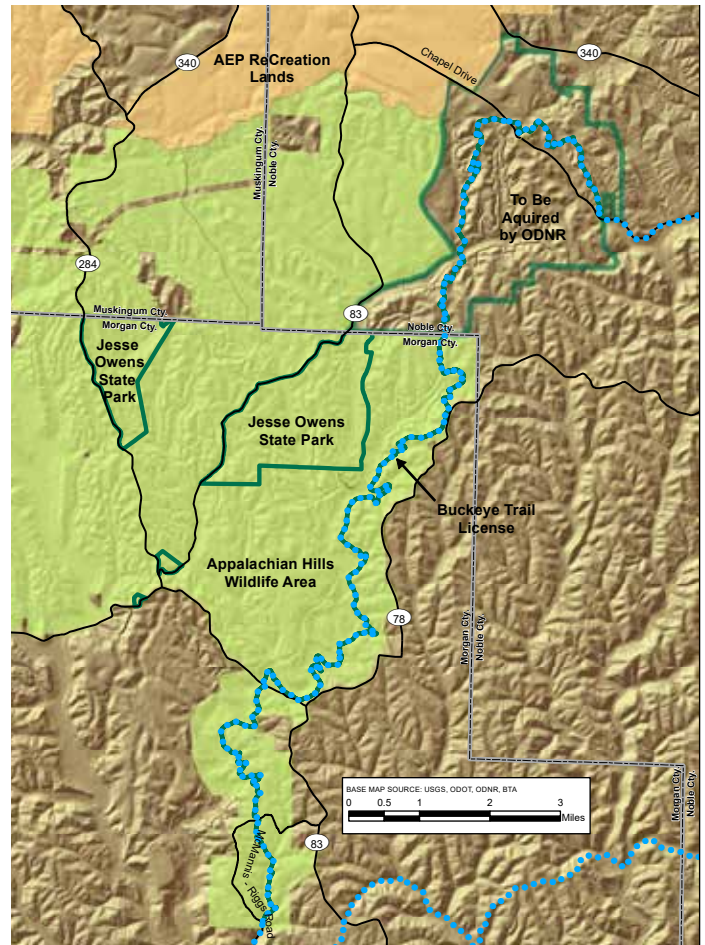
By Richard A Lutz, Trail Preservation Coordinator

Introducing the Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area

This spring, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources started the acquisition process for a new wildlife area that was formerly the AEP ReCreation lands. The new area, known as Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area, is currently in the process of being acquired with plans to complete the process in the first quarter of 2021.

Currently, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Division of Wildlife) has acquired land in Morgan County where the Buckeye Trail (BT) currently lies. This area is between McMannis-Riggs Road (Point 5, Stockport Section) and the Noble/Morgan County Line (between Points 1 and 2 of the Stockport Section). This part of our trail no longer requires a recreational user permit; however, the BT north of the County Line heading to Chapel Drive does require the permit until acquisition completes. An additional change is that the Wood Grove Campground (Campground H) is now permanently closed because of potential flooding issues from upstream dams. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife is working with the Buckeye Trail Association (BTA) to develop a potential primitive campground between the old Wood Grove Campground and State Route 78. Stay tuned for future information on that. We will post updates on social media and our website.

The Buckeye Trail Association was one of the many partners that advocated for the acquisition of these lands by the state over the past several years. Before the process began



this spring, AEP reached out to the Buckeye Trail Association to provide a license agreement for the BT across the American Electric Power ReCreation lands. The agreement signed in the middle of April provides an additional layer of protection for our trail across the lands. This agreement covers all 24 BT miles in the former AEP ReCreation lands. The license agreement covers the next 10 years until 2030 for BT maintenance and use.

We look forward to working with Ohio Division of Wildlife to make improvements to the trail and thank AEP for their long term efforts to allow the trail to be on their land and provide a protection measure for the Buckeye Trail.

Header: Richard Lutz - Bluebell Flowers at Lockington Preserve

Above: Map of Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area, made by Richard Lutz

Left: Richard Lutz - Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area





Photo Credit: Richard Lutz - Lockington Preserve

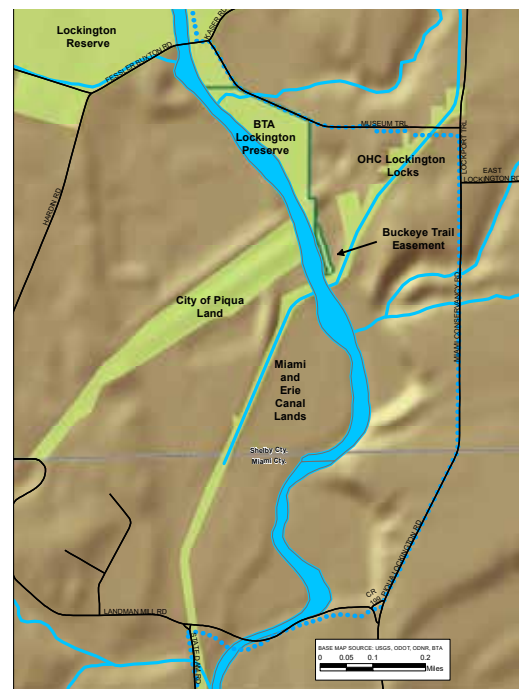
Another Addition to Add to the Lockington Preserve

One would think that just acquiring a property that is a crucial piece in a long stretch of off-road Trail would be important enough; however, sometimes that is just the first step. That was the case earlier this year after acquiring the Buckeye Trail Association Lockington Preserve.

Early in July, we were approached by the current landowner (Forest Conservancy Limited), with whom we had negotiated the deal for the purchase of 16 acres that became the BTA Lockington Preserve (mentioned below). He asked if we would be interested in putting a trail easement on his five remaining acres that he planned to sell to the State of Ohio as part of the Ohio History Connection's Lockington Locks property. The Buckeye Trail Association agreed that that would be a good option. After fairly quick negotiations, the Buckeye Trail Association and Forest Conservancy Limited filed the easement in the Shelby County courthouse in early August of 2020. The 30-foot wide easement connects our current BTA Lockington Preserve property with the current land owned by the Ohio History Connection at Lockington Locks. The easement also allows for the potential availability to develop a future campsite on the property as well.

When asked why he wanted to do this, Brian Blair of Forest Conservancy Limited said, "We need to have permanent legal trail easements whenever possible to protect the Buckeye Trail when lands change hands in the future". The Buckeye Trail is grateful for Brian and his willingness to ensure that the BTA can continue to improve our ability to provide a meaningful hiking experience for our hikers.

Right: Map of Lockington Preserve, made by Richard Lutz



16 Acres along Loramie Creek, the Newest BTA Preserve

Earlier in July of this year, the BTA closed on the newest BTA preserve along the Buckeye Trail. This time, it's near the Lockington Locks in Shelby County in Western Ohio. This property will help us extend the Buckeye Trail off an existing long section of road walk to create an even longer off-road trail segment to hike. Now we get to tell you the longer story, the story of the BTA Lockington Preserve.

Back in very early 2017 the Miami Conservancy District pointed us towards a landowner who was interested in selling their 21 acre property to a conservation group. The Miami Conservancy District wasn't able to purchase the property. The Buckeye Trail Association, being an organization that purchases properties as a last resort when not able to find a conservation partner first, proceeded to reach out to other conservation partners in the area to see about their interest in the project. We had hoped that the Friends of Johnston Farm or the Ohio History Connection would purchase the property as part of Lockington Locks. Unfortunately, none of the conservation partners were able to purchase the property. The Buckeye Trail Association saw it as a crucial piece of property, because it connected to an existing trail section at Johnston Farm to Lockington Dam and Lockington

Reserve. The BTA came close to losing the property completely and had almost given up when a hero stepped in.

In 2019, Forest Conservancy Limited stepped in to buy the property from the private landowner (and act as a bridge landowner) while the Buckeye Trail Association got the processes in place to purchase the land with Clean Ohio Green Space Funding. In July of 2019, the Buckeye Trail Association applied for Clean Ohio funding for 16 of the original 21 acres. In July of 2019, Ohio Public Works granted Clean Ohio funding for the BTA to acquire the property.

And the rest is history - well almost! Even though the property has been acquired, there is still work to do. One example is to create a native prairie as part of our grant from Clean Ohio. This requires a planting in the spring. There's also the development of trail and figuring out how to bridge Loramie Creek (planning and discussions are underway). There's also a gate to install and work required to mark the boundaries. We can always use volunteers to help. If you're interested, please feel free to reach out to Richard Lutz at gjs@buckeyetrail.org!

2021 Schedule of Hikes & Events

Always check <https://buckeyetrail.org/> for more information and last-minute updates, including any Covid-19 cancelations

Covid-19 guidelines: CDC recommends that people wear cloth face coverings in public settings and when around people outside of their household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings may help prevent people who have Covid-19 from spreading the virus to others. You will be required to submit to a temperature check daily before work begins. You will be required to sign a BTA event waiver.

Please review the BTA Covid-19 guidelines of 5/14/20 which is posted on the BTA home page.

JANUARY

January 16-17, 2021

BTA Circuit Hike - Mogadore Section

Saturday: The hike will be from Point 6, Shaw Woods parking lot N41.18229, W081.19287 to parking 0.2 mile north of Point 13 on Knapp Rd., N41.13679 W081.19133. This is a distance of 11.9 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at parking 0.2 mile north of Pt. 13 on Knapp Rd. and carpool to Point 6.

Sunday: The hike will continue from parking 0.2 mile north of Pt. 13 on Knapp Rd., N41.13679, W081.19133 to parking area 0.1 mile south of Point 18 on Congress Lake Rd., N41.06273, W081.32891. This is a distance of 12.4 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at parking area 0.1 mile south of Point 18 on Congress Lake Rd. to carpool to parking 0.2 mile north of Pt. 13 on Knapp Rd.

Sign Up: Go to the BT Friends Meetup site to indicate you are attending: www.meetup.com/BuckeyeTrailFriends

Contact: Jay Shutt at shuttjay@gmail.com

January 30, 2021

BTA Board of Trustees Board Meeting

Virtual Meeting from 9:00am to 12:00noon

Contact: Steve Walker, president@buckeyetrail.org

FEBRUARY

February 20-21, 2021

BTA Circuit Hike - Mogadore/Massillon Sections

Saturday: The hike will be from parking area 0.1 mile south of Point 18 on Congress Lake Rd., N41.06273, W081.32891 to Point 23, Parking lot across from Goodyear Blimp hanger on Wingfoot Rd., N41.00660, W081.36252. This is a distance of 11.5 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at parking lot across from Goodyear Blimp hanger on Wingfoot Rd. and carpool to parking area 0.1 mile south of Point 18 on Congress Lake Rd.

Sunday: The hike will continue from Point 23, parking lot across from Goodyear Blimp hanger on Wingfoot Rd., N41.00660, W081.36252 to YMCA just N. of Massillon Point 3 on King Church Ave. NW., N40.95969, W081.36170. This is a distance of 10.1 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at YMCA just N. of Massillon Point 3 on King Church Ave. NW. to carpool to parking lot across from Goodyear Blimp hanger on Wingfoot Rd.

Sign Up: Go to the BT Friends Meetup site to indicate you are attending: www.meetup.com/BuckeyeTrailFriends

Contact: Jay Shutt at shuttjay@gmail.com

MARCH

March 20-21, 2021

BTA Circuit Hike - Troy Section

Saturday: This hike will be from Point 5 Deeds Point parking lot, N39.76856, W084.186261 to Cassel Rd. Trailhead parking north of E. National Rd. about 0.4 mile north of Point 9, N39.87702, W084.16913. This is a distance of 10.5 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at Cassel Rd. Trailhead parking north of E. National Rd. about 0.4 mile north of Point 9 and carpool to Point 5 Deeds Point parking lot.

Sunday: This hike will continue from Cassel Rd. Trailhead parking north of E. National Rd. about 0.4 mile north of Point 9, N39.87702, W084.16913 to Point 13, Trailhead off Dye Mill Rd., N40.02626, W084.18994. This is a distance of 11.9 miles. Meet no later than 8:30 a.m. at Point 13, Trailhead off Dye Mill Rd. to carpool to Cassel Rd. Trailhead parking north of E. National Rd. about 0.4 mile north of Point 9.

Sign Up: Go to the BT Friends Meetup site to indicate you are attending: www.meetup.com/BuckeyeTrailFriends

Contact: Jay Shutt at shuttjay@gmail.com

Coronavirus update:

According to Covid-19 Guidelines, it is required that any BTA volunteers who are carpooling must wear a mask over the nose & mouth.

A P R I L

April 10-14, 2021

Old Mans Cave Section

Hocking Hills State Forest Buckeye Trail Crew Work Party

Description: Dust off the ol' trail tools and come out to Hocking Hills as the forest comes back to life during the first work party of the year. We will be working on building new trails, heavy trail maintenance, vegetation management, bridge building, boardwalk construction, and rock work through an old section of the BT. We will work from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Camping: Bishop Gardens, 13200 Little Cola Rd, Rockbridge, OH 43149

Contact: Byron Guy, oldmanscave@buckeyetrail.org

M A Y

May 15-19, 2021

New Straitsville Section

Burr Oak State Park Buckeye Trail Crew Work Party

Description: Come on out for a 5-day work party in the New Straitsville section. We will be doing heavy trail maintenance to clear out the overgrown trail corridor and maintain the tread of the trail. This event is a great opportunity to come out for the first time: meet other volunteers, learn some new skills, and help prep this section for the coming year. We will work from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Camping: Burr Oak Group camp, 10153 Williams-Homer Rd, Glouster, OH 45732

Contact: Ann Furste, wawt1ste@aol.com

J U N E

June 5-9, 2021

AEP (Appalachian Hills Wildlife Area) Buckeye Trail Crew Work Party Belle Valley and Stockport Sections

Description: Come volunteer for this 5-day work party. We will be re-benching the trail tread, doing heavy trail maintenance, and vegetation management. All volunteers are welcome. No prior experience needed! We will work from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Camping: Campground K on Lincoln Parkway, 10766 Lincoln Parkway Caldwell

Contact: Terry Blackstone at bellevalley@buckeyetrail.org or Herb Hulls at stockport@buckeyetrail.org

June 12-13, 2021

EGGS Hike Preparation Buckeye Trail Crew Work Weekend

Wayne National Forest and Burr Oak State Park

New Straitsville Section

Description: Buckeye Trail is hosting a 2-day work party in preparation for the E.G.G.S hike, perfect for people with limited time availability. The hike challenge loops around Burr Oak Lake and the Wildcat Hollow Trail Systems, including the BT/NCNST/ADT. We're going to make sure the trails are clear, well blazed and improved for the event and for all hikers year round. If you can stay overnight, camping will be at the Burr Oak group camp. We encourage everyone to come out even if you can only come for a day or two! We will work from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Camping: Burr Oak Group camp 10153 Williams-homer Rd, Glouster, OH 45732

Contact: Byron Guy, oldmanscave@buckeyetrail.org

June 12-16, 2021

Hinckley Reservation from State Rd into Whipps Ledges Medina Section

Description: We are hosting another 5-day work party in the Medina section. We will be working on new trail construction and rock work. Even if you can only volunteer for a day, come join us! No experience is necessary and there will be on site training. We will work from 8:00am to 3:00pm.

Camping: Hinckley Reservation, Redwing Picnic Area off of West Drive. N41.22101° W81.72051°

Meals: You will need to bring your own food and water.

Contact: Pat Hayes, pat.hayes@buckeyetrail.org

June 24-27, 2021

EGGS Hike

New Straitsville Section

Description: The BTA is hosting the annual E.G.G.S hike again this year! Participants will have an option of 5 hiking challenges consisting of 20 (day & night), 40, 60, and 80 miles that need to be completed in 12, 24, 36, and 48 hours respectively. We are looking for volunteers to man trail checkpoints, assist with registration, and help with camping activities for any hikers bringing their family and little hikers to the event. Volunteers will have no cost for their efforts and will receive an EGGS Hike T-shirt for their help.

Camping: Burr Oak Group camp 10153 Williams-homer Rd, Glouster, OH 45732

Contact: Byron Guy, oldmanscave@buckeyetrail.org

Buckeye Trail Association

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