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Butler County Stream Team

May News - 2014



Volunteer Stream Monitoring in Southwest Ohio

Next Sampling Day - May 10th

**** Consistent volunteers --- if you cannot collect your samples this month, please contact Lynn White at WhiteLR@butlercountyohio.org. We'll try to get them picked up.**

Don't Miss These Gorgeous Winged Beauties!

by **Mary Cullum**

Springtime means basically one thing to me - the birds are back! The warming weather of May and the emerging green of the plants heralds in a second spring migration of our feathered wildlife. Birds migrate in two "waves", with the first being in late winter when we see geese, ducks and other waterfowl heading north. The second wave brings up mostly passerines, or perching songbirds. In particular, little sparrow-sized birds known as wood warblers" make their springtime journeys from as far away as the West Indies and Argentina.

Over 55 warbler species make their way to North America, some going as far as Nova Scotia and the northern reaches of Canada (Terres, 1980). These brightly-colored, lively neotropical migrants, weighing a mere 0.2-0.7 oz, are marathon travelers, as they sometimes fly non-stop for 8 hrs at a time! They make this arduous journey to raise families, or bring off their broods, in the insect-rich expanses of the tundra or of the northern forests. There they can take advantage of extended hours of daylight, available only in the summer at extreme latitudes, to feed their young and even bring off multiple broods. It's a breeding season in overdrive; they have to do this fast before the winter returns to claim Alaska and Canada once again.

Sampling Summary - March

Thanks everybody! Here's what we did last month:

# of samples analyzed	120
# sites too low to sample	2
# volunteers sampling	36
# volunteers in lab	14

We are staying close to our expected numbers of samples and volunteers - thanks everyone! Again this month, most streams were running - only a few sites were reported dry or too low to sample. We had another great turnout in lab - around 15 people seems to be just about perfect for getting everything done in a reasonable time frame and keeping everyone busy.

Volunteer Spotlight **Terry Haynes-Toney, Suellen Albert, Ridgeway Elementary's Green Team (and Lynn White)**

At Stream Team, we happily accept whatever a volunteer has to give so we have folks involved in many different ways. And, we're not adverse to claiming credit where credit is **not** due ... at least not to us! In that light, we want to highlight some volunteers who have taken their roles as teachers as a way to help spread the word that we all need

Lucky for us, not only do these beauties migrate through our area, but many warblers' breeding ranges extend into the US. About 20 species nest in Ohio (Peterjohn, 1991). One of the most



common warblers you are likely to see as you do your sampling is the Yellow warbler. Males are bright yellow and sport light chestnut breast

streaking. He has a high, cheery melodic song of *sweet sweet sweet I'm so sweet* (All About Birds). Yellow warblers like to hang out around streams, as does the common yellowthroat, only this guy is shy, so you are more likely to hear his *witchity-witchity-witchity-witch* before you ever see him.



Warblers, like all other birds, depend on clean sources of water as they make

their way along their migratory route, not only for drinking, but for the insects, seeds, and berries that streams and rivers provide. Insects like midges, dragonflies, damselflies, caddisflies, craneflies, and beetles are just a few of the insects that these active little birds eat (All About Birds). Without healthy streams and rivers producing an abundance of insects, these beautiful little migrants will not have the energy to survive their long journey to their breeding grounds here or points north, and back again. Just another reason why what we do is so important.

So as you collect your sample this week, keep your ears open for any out-of-the-ordinary birds song. It could be a warbler or some other neotropical migrant using our streams and their riparian corridors to keep them safe, fed and

to be protectors of our natural environments, 5th-grade teacher Suellen Albert and her trusty side-kick art teacher, Terry Haynes-Toney.

Don't get me wrong, we can claim Suellen and Terry as volunteers legitimately. Both of these Hamilton teachers have helped out in lab, attended two macroinvertebrate trainings, and been involved in a variety of other Stream Team things. But they also seem to do everything they can to bring "green" ideas to their school – making recycling the focus of art classes, attending a Habitat for Wildlife workshop last month in Dayton, teaching Project Wild in their classrooms, and applying to have their school recognized as a WILD school. Below is Suellen, working with her students when parent and herpetologist Jeff Davis brought in amphibians for her students to study and identify.



The kids we are focusing on are members of the Green Team. Recently they participated in the Cincinnati Zoo's rainbarrel contest – painting and then successfully selling a rain barrel. Being teachers, Terry and Suellen made sure the students learned a bit while designing the rain barrel; the barrel featured Ohio wildlife, each of which the students researched before being allowed to put it on their barrel! Terry, as an art teacher, contributed her own barrel, featuring Ohio wildflowers.

watered as it makes its extraordinary journey north. While you're at it, take a pair of binoculars with you just in case you spot something. In fact, take walk to a nearby park or near some pine trees or meet up with a local bird group - for those of you interested, below is a list of some of the birding activities near you.

This is the month! Get out and find these beauties of the bird world. Otherwise, you'll have to wait a whole year to witness these colorful, delightful, melodious little guys again!

Macro training

Thanks for coming!

We just thought we'd share a few pictures from Saturday's macroinvertebrate sampling training.

We had 12 people who came to learn how to do the invertebrate sampling we hope to get started this summer. There is still a little work we partners need to do in deciding which sites are appropriate and available and getting kits of materials together, but we hope you will be able to do at least 2 samples this summer and fall to get us a start on evaluating our streams condition using the little guys who live in them!

If you were unable to attend the training, no worries, you can head out with someone who did and will be fine. Meanwhile, enjoy the following pics - thanks to Teresa Barnes from Butler County Engineers Office.

The day began with some background on invertebrates, why they might be good to assess streams, and a run through the kinds of critters we might find.



Then we headed outdoors to see how to do it and what we could find. Below, the class watches as Lynn and Donna demonstrate how to



The Green Team is Ridgeway's after-school environmental education group. It meets at least twice a month and is supported by many staff and the principal, as well as many of the students' families. Terry and Suellen's goal with this group is "to share the importance of taking care of the earth, learning how to do just that and hopefully they will become messengers in the greater community." WOW – what a great effort! Suellen says they have seen some evidence that their goal of "spreading" their green ideas is working, since one of the families purchased a rain-barrel and had it set up and working within a week's time!

A final KUDO needs to be given – to Lynn White. It seems that when Suellen invited Lynn to present a healthy stream monitoring simulation with her class, "Lynn fanned our flame of interest". Lynn returned several times to meet with other classrooms and the Green Team and is assisting Ridgeway in creating trails on the property. Ongoing collaboration with Lynn has helped the school, from the art program focusing on recycle, reuse, re-purpose art projects to rain gardens, rain barrel painting, composting, project wild, classroom presentations, poster contests, Audubon art contests and more.

All 5th and 6th grade students at Ridgeway also may participate in Cornell Ornithology Lab's FeederWatch and NestWatch programs. These students meet twice a week before and after school. And a recent inspection by MetroParks of the school's wooded area revealed it to possibly be the site

collect a sample ...



and then sorts through what floated into the net to find anything that was moving!



Finally, we headed back inside to take a closer look at the critters we found under dissecting microscopes.



And we ended with a second time out in the stream, making sure everyone felt comfortable with being able to go out on their own to collect a sample. We had a great day! Thanks to all who were able to come, and if you didn't, we'll catch you next time!

Lending Library

We all have lots of books that we would love to share with someone who has similar interests. So we thought this might be a way to share some books with people we know like streams! The books are in the Stream Team lab, ready to be borrowed by anyone who would like to do so.

If you have books, DVDs or other things - especially

of the historic Timberman Brothers Orchard – from when the Butler County gardens were famous for feeding the whole east coast!

Through help from US Fish and Wildlife, the school may soon develop a vernal pool to help our increasingly-vulnerable amphibians. And for all this, Terry and Suellen point the finger at Lynn – we “cannot stress how much help Lynn White has been with support in the classroom, newsletters making us aware of workshops, professional development, the Soil Trailer, facilitator, etc. Butler Soil and Water has been such a help!!” **Lots of KUDOs due to all above!** Thanks, from me and all of Stream Team, to all those above who help spread the word that we need to be good stewards of our environment.

Coming up ...

May 17th - Rain Barrel Workshop

If you haven't made reservations yet, get on the phone NOW! Rain barrels collect precipitation while it is falling for use later, so they have a direct effect on storm flows in our streams and rivers. At this workshop you will learn about water conservation techniques and build your own rain barrel. It is offered to all county residents through the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District.

Because of materials, each rain barrel costs \$32.

When: May 17, 9-11 am

Where: Butler Soil and Water offices, 1802 Princeton Rd, Hamilton

Registration required: see more info [here](#)

June 18th - Metropark family programs with Lynn White

Our own (Butler Soil and Water) Lynn White will lead several family programs for Butler County Metroparks, where she will lead **you** into streams! In June, take a walk in Dry Run at Governor Bebb Park to find macroinvertebrates, fossils, and other creek critters.

about water - that you would like to contribute, feel free to bring them along anytime. Or, if there are particular books you would like us to buy, let us know and once a year or so we can add a few to our collection.

Here's our list to date:

*[A Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America](#)

*[A Guide to Ohio Streams](#)

*[After the Storm](#) - DVD

*[An Introduction to the World's Oceans](#)

*[Bugs of the Underworld](#): a fly fisher's guide to the natural history of aquatic insects (DVD - available on request)

*[Exploring the World Ocean](#)

*[Fostering Sustainable Behavior](#): An introduction to community-based social marketing

*[Guide to Aquatic Insects & Crustaceans](#)

*[Gulf Hypoxia: Action plan 2008](#)

*[Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans](#) to Restore and Protect Our Waters

*[Introductory Oceanography](#)

*[Life in the Soil](#): A guide for naturalists and gardeners

*Marine Ecology

*[Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Management](#) in North America

*[Monitoring Guidance for Determining the Effectiveness of Nonpoint Source Controls](#)

*Oceanography

*[Ohio's Lake Erie Public Access Guidebook](#),

*Ohio's Lake Erie Public Access Guidebook: Rivers Edition

*[Ohio Vernal Pools: Diamonds in the Rough](#) (DVD - available on request)

*[Our Waters, Our Health](#)

*[Pond and Brook: A guide to nature in freshwater environments](#)

* [Rainbows of Rock, Tables of Stone: The natural arches and pillars of Ohio](#),

*[River of Words](#)

*[Stemming the Tide of Coastal Fish Habitat Loss](#)

*[Swamp and Bog](#): Trees, shrubs, and wildflowers of eastern freshwater wetlands

*[The Colorado](#): A river at risk

*[The Evolution of North America](#)

*The Face of the Deep

*[The Mill Creek: An Unnatural History of an Urban Stream](#)

*[Watersheds: A Practical Handbook for Healthy Water](#)

If you have any comments, concerns, or suggestions,

please contact us at mccollds@miamioh.edu.

Day/Date: Wednesday, June 18th

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Governor Bebb Metropark

RSVP: [Lynn White](#)

June 28th - Canoe trip

We will continue our tradition of canoeing on Butler County rivers, probably on the Whitewater River. We chose this river because a new water monitoring effort will be part of the Whitewater River Watershed Project.

Two sites in Butler County will be sampled, along with many in Indiana, where most of the river resides. Stay tuned for details on this trip, but here's what we think we know now (subject to change):

Day/Date: Saturday, June 28th

Time: meet to carpool at 8:00 am, drive to Brookville and canoe, eat lunch somewhere along the river, finish early afternoon

Location: Morgan's Canoe Rental, Brookville

Bring: A dish to share with others, we will provide sandwiches and drinks.

RSVP: [Lynn](#)

[White](#) at whitelr@butlercountyohio.org

July 16th - Creekin' in Indian Creek with Lynn White

In July, take a walk with Lynn in Indian Creek at Indian Creek Metropark to find macroinvertebrates, fossils, and other creek critters.

Day/Date: Wednesday, July 16th

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Location: Indian Creek Metropark

RSVP: [Lynn White](#)

Crisis Spot

As you are out sampling or just out for a walk along the waterways and see something wrong, email us. We always want to hear from our volunteers, especially if there is a problem that can be corrected.

You are our eyes in the field, the first line of defense for streams in Butler County. Once a problem has been reported to us, we can pass it along to the appropriate

agencies. For instance, when a sampler noted a VERY LARGE sycamore trunk had been washed up against a bridge in Wet Chester, we notified the Soil and Water District and they took care of it.

Thanks again for all you do for Butler County Stream Team!

Crisis Spot emails can be sent to Donna McCollum at mccollds@miamioh.edu.

Butler County Stream Team Monthly Newsletter

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