



Environmental Education Council of Ohio

Issue Focus:

..Eco Tourism

Winter 2013/14



What is Ecotourism?

By Denise Natoli-Brooks,
Licking SWCD

A challenging aspect of teaching an ecotourism course is that ecotourism is a relatively new area of study and does not have one agreed on definition. For example, Fennel (2008) defines ecotourism as a “sustainable, non-invasive form of nature-based tourism that focuses primarily on learning about nature first-hand, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally oriented.” Another unique definition of ecotourism provided by Goodwin (1996) is, “low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species

and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for the local people to value, and therefore protect, the wildlife heritage area as a source of income.” Finally the World Tourism Organization (2002) has a much more extensive definition of ecotourism as follows: “Ecotourism is a type of sustainable tourism that a) contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage; b) includes local and indigenous communities in its planning, development and operation, contributing to their well-being; c) interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitor; and d) lends itself better to independent travelers, as well as to organized tours for small size groups.”



Cini, Leone and Paola (2012) highlight a few important aspects of ecotourism that differentiate it from other types of tourism such as cultural tourism, adventure tourism, nature-based tourism, and mass tourism. They identify the importance of the tourists' motivations to visit a specific area and increasing biodiversity conservation awareness for both the tourist and the local community. Ballantye & Packer (2011) believe the tourism industry as a whole, and ecotourism as a subset of the tourism industry is accountable for their own sustainable choices as well as endorsing similar behavior from their guests. In class, many lectures and discussions may come back to a confusing reality; ecotourism is in the process of being defined by the experts. Additionally and as a result of being a young area of study, ecotourism is under-researched (Cini et al., 2012). Since these facts can be challenging for students, it provides a wonderful platform for open discussion and deliberation after visiting selected locations during field labs. Since true ecotourism benefits the local people and the local natural environment, one message that students can grasp is that ecotourism is a beautiful example of community-based conservation (Fennell & Weaver, 2005). Community is at the heart of true ecotourism.

(See page 3 for Literature Cited)

Save the Date

More Information available about each opportunity at www.eeco-online.org

OEEF Grants

Letter of Intent due March 4
Grant Due March 11

www.epa.state.oh.us/oeeef/

Ohio Natural History Conference

February 15, 2014, Ohio
Historical Society, Columbus.

www.ohiobiologicalsurvey.org/

Ohio Reptile Research & Conservation Conference

March 8, 2014 at the Ohio
Historical Society, Columbus

<http://www.ohioreptiles.org/>

Wildlife Diversity Conference

March 12, 2014 at Alladin
Shriners Complex, Columbus

www.ohiodnr.gov/Wildlife/DiversityRegistration/

EECO Forums

March 27, 2014 at Deer Creek
State Park Lodge, Mt Sterling,
Oh.

www.eeco-online.org

EECO's Annual Conference

March 27-30, 2014 at Deer
Creek State Park Lodge, Mt
Sterling, Oh.

www.eeco-online.org



Environmental Education Council of Ohio Annual Conference

March 27-30, 2014
Deer Creek State Park Lodge

This year's theme brings us back to the basics of environmental education...Nature! Children are spending less and less time outdoors, both at home and school. Yet there are more and more resources and programs dedicated to reversing this trend. Environmental Education is quietly regaining a foothold in K-12 education and teachers, students, parents, administrators and community members are taking notice. This year's theme helps support the basics of Environmental Education by offering strands that help educators in all settings, as well as their employers and program participants learn more about nature and how to utilize nature in their lessons, programs, projects and careers.

Conference strands include:

- Natural History
- Using the Outdoors as a Classroom
- Citizen Science
- Environmental Careers
- Program and Learner Assessment

Conference highlights include:

- Keynote from Dr. Lonnie Thompson of the Byrd Polar Research Center on Climate Change, Glaciers, People and their Impacts on Natural Resources.
- Educational field trips to Native American Earthworks, Battelle Darby Creek Metropark's new Nature Center, the Columbus Zoo and more!
- Learn more about the new Environmental Career Ambassador program and how to get involved.
- Graduate credit is available through Ashland University.
- Registered Sanitarian credits are also available.

Lodging: Contact the Lodge at 1-800-282-7275 to book a room. Be sure to indicate that you're with the EECO conference to get the \$89/night rate. This rate is available until February 26th.

Registration: Online at www.eeco-online.org March 14 is the registration deadline.

EECO Forums

On March 27, pre-conference, there will be two forums (see below). These forums are recommended for county engineers, commissioners, city/county planners, developers, industry representatives, university professors and the general public. Each forum cost is \$45 and includes lunch. Register online at www.eeco-online.org

Wetland Mitigation & Water Quality... Data Breakdown & More!!

Do you want to learn how the wetland mitigation process works and who to contact for additional information?

Is stream/river credible data important to you, your organization or company?

Maybe you want to find a local company that can provide credible data training, aquatic bio-assessments or data analysis? If so, join us and learn from our featured speakers:

- Ric Queen, Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water Wetland Mitigation Manager
- Dan Dudley (or designee), Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water Credible Data Program
- Chris Yoder, Midwest Biodiversity Institute

Anne Lyon, Greenacres Foundation, will share data collection results from monitoring the Little Miami River. Anne will also feature her past Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) grant and outstanding project.

Dana Oleskiewicz, Ohio Lake Management Society (OLMS), will present the "State of the Lakes Report" and how she is using the recent OEEF grant to OLMS educating local citizen scientist on how to collect lake water samples for further lab testing and analysis for Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB's).

Zero Waste ... Reduce, Reuse & Recycle!!

Join experts from the waste world to learn how your business or organization can successfully reduce waste and enjoy benefits of a reduced carbon footprint, improved employee morale, higher revenues, and goodwill with consumers and community members.

Discuss what zero waste is.

Tour a Columbus' landfill to gain a better understanding of where our trash ends up.

Discover a state of the art anaerobic digester system that turns waste from the City of Columbus into electricity, heat, and compressed natural gas.

Learn from Xavier University and their journey towards zero waste campus-wide.

Learn from Keep Cincinnati Beautiful and their "Sustainability in Action" program that has assisted schools.

Learn from Cohen Recycling and their ability to recycle your electronics in a sustainable and safe way.

Walk away from the forum with increased knowledge of waste reduction, and how it can help your business or organization move towards a zero waste model.

Ohio Environmental Education Fund

OEEF grant guidelines and funding priorities have undergone substantial revision. Please read the guidelines carefully before beginning an application. The requests for OEEF general grant and mini grant proposals are now open in the eBusiness Center. The Letter of Intent to Apply must be submitted prior to submitting a grant.

The Ohio Environmental Education Fund grant program is administered by Ohio EPA and awards general grants of up to \$50,000 and mini-grants between \$500 and \$5,000. The grants are funded by half of the civil penalties OEPA collects for air and water pollution control violations. Eligible recipients include environmental groups, public and private schools, colleges, local governments, among others.

For more information, please contact the Ohio EPA Office of Environmental Education

Phone: 614-644-2873

Email: oeef@epa.state.oh.us

Web: www.epa.ohio.gov/oeef



Grant Writing Workshops

Contact the Office of Environmental Education for details and registration. See contact details above.

Friday, February 21

Athens Public Library, 30 Home Street, Athens, OH 45701

Friday, March 14

North Central Public Library, 11109 Hamilton Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45231

Recent General and Mini Grant Awards, 2013

University of Toledo, Mechanical, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering, “Applied Rain Harvesting Engineering for Environmental Education and Community Outreach in Ohio,” \$18,150

Lucas County, Audience: Pre-School-University (undergraduate). Contact: Matthew Franchetti, matthew.franchetti@utoledo.edu, (419) 530-8051.

The project will incorporate a weeklong training module into an existing Sustainability Design and Analysis course. As a result, 80 mechanical, civil and electrical undergraduate engineering students will be educated in storm water minimization, rain harvesting design, and rain barrel system implementation. Students will install rain barrels at 10 local households and businesses, and create YouTube videos on rain barrel installation, benefits and maintenance.



Dayton Society of Natural History, Boonshoft Museum of Discovery, “Global Connections,” \$49,005

Montgomery County, Audience: General Public. Contact: Mark Meister, mmeister@boonshoftmuseum.org, (937) 275-7431. An existing NOAA global display system will be updated and redesigned to present local and global data and environmental messaging in a more direct and personalized way. New hands-on interactive outdoor activities that will be implemented as part of the project will allow families to take part in air quality monitoring, water quality monitoring and examining harmful algal blooms by working safely with pre-arranged samples containing algal specimens grown under differing conditions. Messages about personal choices and actions people can take to improve environmental quality will be coordinated with the ongoing GetUp Montgomery County program and other local health initiatives.



Oberlin College, Environmental Studies Program, “Incorporating Community Voices and Real-time Feedback Displays of Resource Use into Public School Curriculum,” \$47,568

Lorain County, Audience: Pre-School-University (K-12 and Undergraduate) and General Public.

Contact: Cindy Frantz, Cindy.Frantz@oberlin.edu, (440) 775-8499.

College students and faculty will work with public school students and teachers to install a real time “Environmental Dashboard” that monitors and displays information on resource consumption, environmental quality, and the positive thoughts and actions of citizens. The information will be displayed on animated electronic signs in schools and in downtown Oberlin to engage, educate, and motivate the community to be better stewards of the environment. Electricity and water use in the four Oberlin City Schools will be metered and displayed along with data on city-wide resource use and water quality in the drainage basin. School and college students will work with community partners to develop content for “community voices” messages that will be displayed on a Website and on signs in downtown locations.



The Ohio State University, Ohio Bioproducts Innovation Center, “Welcome to the Biorefinery Concept for Environmental Education,” \$34,258

Statewide, Audience: Pre-School-University (Elementary, Middle and High School) and General Public.

Contact: Dennis Hall, hall.16@osu.edu, (614) 292-2922.

A traveling, interactive display will be developed to demonstrate various concepts of biorefinery. The display will show how organic wastes can be processed to produce energy and fertilizer for food production while also demonstrating how the overall system can reduce the amount of municipal solid waste going into landfills, while creating jobs and increasing public awareness of bioproducts.



Columbus Downtown Development Corporation, “Scioto Greenways,” \$39,000

Franklin County, Audience: General Public. Contact: Nell Selander, nselander@downtowncolumbus.com, (614) 545-4732.

The project supports the public education components of the Scioto Greenways project. Grant will support an interactive exhibit at COSI and permanent signage in the newly constructed greenspace, describing the environmental benefits of removing the Main street dam removal, restoration of the Scioto River through the downtown Columbus corridor, and constructing 33 acres of new greenspace. See YouTube video about this project at <http://youtu.be/SctrEkiSJII>



Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities, “Clean Rain in the Drain: Reducing Nutrients and Pollutants through Stormwater/Lawn Care Education,” \$22,000

Butler and Hamilton Counties, Audience: General Public. Contact: Kara Scheerhorn, kscheerhorn@millcreekwatershed.org, (513) 563-8800.

The project supports a lawn care stewardship education program for residents and businesses in the Upper Mill Creek Watershed. Seven local communities will be assisted with MS4 permits to meet NPDES Phase II education requirements through implementation of Best Management Practices to reduce nutrient loading of local streams. The results of proper lawn care practices that reduce over-fertilization in a residential demonstration area will be measured and disseminated. Workshops and fact sheets will also provide information on lawn care management to residents of 34 local communities.



Rivers Unlimited, “Great Miami Citizens’ Water Quality Monitoring,” \$14,380

Hamilton County, Audience: General Public. Contact: Michael Miller, millermc@ucmail.uc.edu, (513) 675-0293.

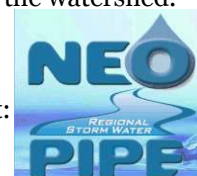
A team of 30-40 citizen volunteers will be equipped to collect monthly water samples at 80 locations along the lower 34 miles of the Great Miami River and its tributaries. Samples will be analyzed for conductivity, nitrates, total phosphorous, turbidity, pH and bacteria, and posted in a database that will allow participants to identify trends in water quality over time, and understand the impacts of storm water runoff and nutrient loading. Results will be shared with the larger community through a forum at the University of Cincinnati, classroom presentations and field trips for middle and high school science classes throughout the watershed.



Northeast Ohio Public Involvement and Public Education (NEO PIPE), “Keeping Your Yard Green and Our Water Clean in Lake Erie and Beyond,” \$5,000

Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage and Summit Counties, Audience: General Public, Contact: Sandy Barbic, 330-929-2871, sbarbic@summitswcd.org.

Nutrient Loading and the resultant Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) are posing a major threat to the water quality in Ohio’s streams and lakes, especially Lake Erie. In suburban and urban areas, much of this nutrient loading occurs due to overuse of fertilizers, other unhealthy landscaping practices, and increased runoff over impervious surfaces. Seven collaborating soil and water conservation districts will create and distribute a Healthy Lawn Care Calendar for Homeowners throughout the entire seven-county region, with practical suggestions for decreasing storm water runoff and applying fertilizers only at the right times and right rates.



City of Delaware, “Watershed Festival,” \$4,923

Delaware County, Audience: General Public, Contact: Brad Stanton, 740-203-1903, bstanton@delawareohio.net.

Funds will provide supplies, an educational kiosk and printing for the City of Delaware’s first-ever watershed festival for the Upper Olentangy River Watershed on June 21, 2014 at Mingo Park. Collaborating organizations, local nonprofits and volunteers will provide games, activities such as macroinvertebrate sampling as an indicator of water quality, and learning stations on topics such as sediment controls, rain barrels, rain garden design and construction, the role of plants in water filtration, and the impact of dams on water quality. The City expects to attract at least 500 residents the first year, and continue the event annually.



Washington SWCD, “Barlow Conservation Area,” \$1,388

Washington County, Audience: General Public, Contact: Dean Sinclair, 740-373-4857, dsinclair@wcgov.org.

Funds will support development of a conservation education area with native grass and wild flower plantings to control erosion on a section of the Barlow Fairgrounds and create exhibits to educate the public about wildlife habitat and conflicts, soil erosion and conservation techniques. The programs at the Fairgrounds draw between more than 11,000 visitors annually and will allow learners to exchange ideas and learn new information about natural resources and farming.



Lorain County Metro Parks, Sandy Ridge Reservation, “*Prairie Meadow Restoration*,” \$3,025

Lorain County, Audience: General Public, Contact Lisa Beursken, 440-653-0178, lkbeursken@gmail.com. Seed and interpretive signs will be acquired for a prairie meadow restoration project. The signs will incorporate the work of a local artist to illustrate plant species native to Sandy Ridge Reservation, and explain how the site captures and filters storm water runoff from impervious surfaces (parking lot and roads) to prevent erosion. The signs will be supplemented with educational programs, hikes and Website materials showcasing how controlled burns and removal of invasive species from the prairie meadow are part of a larger effort to restore five acres of former farmland.



Wood County Solid Waste Management District, “*Storm Drains are for Rain*,” \$4,371

Wood County, Audience: Pre-School – University (Elementary and Middle School), Contact: Amanda Gamby, 419-354-9297, agamby@co.wood.oh.us.

Sampling equipment will be purchased to continue an ongoing ten-year stream quality monitoring program by Bowling Green City Schools’ seventh grade students. Students report their data to the City of Bowling Green, to help inform the selection of target priority areas for storm water monitoring and enforcement. A “Storm Drains Are for Rain” public awareness campaign will include inserts in utility bills to 13,000 residents, medallions placed on 500 storm drains; a “Storm Drains Are For Rain” billboard contest open to all K-6th grade students in Wood County; and National Geographic booklets on pollution and water resources to supplement lessons in the classroom.



Ohio Stormwater Association, “*2014 Ohio Stormwater Conference*,” \$5,000

Statewide, Audience: Regulated Community, Contact: Harry Stark, 216-385-5248, hartstark@gmail.com.



The project supports a three-day 2014 Ohio Stormwater Conference in Akron. More than 600 storm water professionals from the private sector and local and state government agencies are expected to attend. Workshop attendees may earn credits to become Certified Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Specialists (CMS4S). Tours and classroom sessions focus on storm water planning and design; monitoring, modeling and research; MS4 program management; Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs); and watershed planning. Mini grant funds will help offset the facility rental cost to keep the registration fees as low as possible. The program for the 2013 conference is currently posted at www.ohioswa.com.

Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District, “*City Farm Riparian Zone Educational Project*,”

\$5,000, Fayette County, Audience: General Public, Contact: Brigitte Hisey, 740-636-0279, brigitte.hisey@fayette-co-oh.com.

Seeds, tree protectors and interpretive signs will be installed in a riparian re-vegetation/protection zone along Paint Creek to reduce nutrient loadings upstream from the City of Washington Court House drinking water treatment plant. Volunteers from a number of local organizations are being recruited to plant 4.9 acres of trees and shrubs and 12 acres of prairie grass, wildflower mix, and cool season grasses. The Soil and Water Conservation District will assist students from two high school science clubs in monitoring water quality above and within the project area, sampling soils and measuring tree and vegetative growth over several years and plotting the data to the county’s Geographic Information System/ARC Map.



The Holden Arboretum, “*Trees Matter*,” \$3,200

Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga and Lake Counties, Audience: Pre-School – University (Middle and High School), Contact: Sharon Graper, 440-602-3843, sgraper@holdenarb.org.

The social, economic and environmental benefits of urban and community forests are the center of this program for middle and high school students and teachers. Schools will be invited to send teams of students to a one-day Tree Summit to hear experts from the fields of forestry and urban planning. They will learn about tree-related careers, and science-based educational resources to document and demonstrate the value of trees. They will take this information back to their schools and develop service learning projects to engage their schools and communities to enhance the presence and importance of trees. Some might work toward the Tree Campus Award which will be established as part of this grant.



West Clermont School District, Brantner Elementary, “*The Dinosaurs Drank This?*” \$3,285

Clermont County, Audience: Preschool – University (Elementary), Contact: Kathy DeMougin, 513-943-6400, demougin_k@westcler.org.

In the spring and fall, 4-5 grade students will collect and test water samples from East Fork Lake, Stonelick Lake, the Little Miami River and a storm drain on the school grounds. Students will test for nitrates, pH, ammonia, dissolved oxygen, sediments and algae then develop hypotheses about the causes of pollution they find and create an action plan to reduce the pollution of one of the water sources tested. They will design and construct models of a watershed with a catch basin to test various substances that would be found in local surface waters such as fertilizers, pesticides and roof debris. Students will also design and carry out a study on the effects of natural and chemical fertilizers on algae growth in controlled situations. Their findings will be presented to the public on the literacy science night at Brantner Elementary, and shared with the science teachers at seven elementary schools in the district.



The Economics of Bird Watching in Ohio

By Jen Dennison, ODNR Division of Wildlife

Bird-watching is big business in the state of Ohio! If you've never been to Magee Marsh Wildlife Area the Saturday before Mother's Day, below is a typical shot of the enthusiasts that pack the mile-long boardwalk that is nestled in the marshes along the south shore of Lake Erie.

Annual visitation to the region exceeds 100,000 each year, with much of it being concentrated on the Magee Marsh/Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge complex in Lucas and Ottawa Counties. This is a fairly recent discovery on the part of birders. While the boardwalk will be celebrating its 25th year this coming spring, it was a relative secret until about 10 years ago. Word was spreading slowly about this little gem along Lake Erie. It is a stop-over or resting spot for migrating birds before they cross the Lake to Canada. And thanks to some great promotion and lots of word-of-mouth, the secret is now out!

Bowling Green State University professor Dr. Philip Xie, in cooperation with Ohio Sea Grant, recently completed a study that shows how bird watching just along Ohio's Lake Erie coastline injects more than \$26 million annually into the state's economy and is responsible for approximately 300 jobs. The survey asked questions of approximately 1,100 birders as they visited some of the most popular birding sites in the region, including Magee Marsh, which has recently been voted as one of the top birding destinations in North America by a number of birding organizations.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also conducts a survey every five years that looks at trends in hunting, fishing and wildlife watching across the country. The most recent study was concluded in 2011 and shows an increase in participation in wildlife watching in Ohio as well. Birdwatchers are included in the category of wildlife watchers, but that category also includes those that feed and photograph wildlife. Some interesting facts from that study that are specific to Ohio include the following:

4 million hunters, anglers and wildlife watchers in Ohio (35% of the state's population)

- 1.6 million hunters and anglers (14% of the population)
- 3.2 million wildlife watchers (28% of the population)

\$3.6 billion spent on wildlife-related recreation

- \$1.8 billion spent on fishing
- \$753 million spent on hunting
- \$738 million spent on wildlife watching

Days spent in Ohio on each activity:

- Fishing: average 13 days
- Hunting: average 21 days
- Wildlife Watching: average 7 days of participation AWAY from home (does not include activities done while at home)

Trip-related expenditures (food, lodging, gas, etc)

- Fishing: \$91 million
- Hunting: \$20 million
- Wildlife Watching: \$95 million

This kind of information has fueled increased marketing and partnerships among conservation organization with businesses and facilities that birders utilize on their trips. An example is the new Lake Erie Birding Trail. The website is www.lakeerieohiobirding.info This is the newest of these kinds of "trails" in Ohio that are designed to drive traffic not only to hot birding spots along the Lake, but also to help birders find restaurants and accommodations that are convenient and that cater to birders and their needs.

Travel and tourism bureaus, city and county planning groups, and private industries are beginning to recognize the economics of birding and are waiting to cash in. And all of this is good for not only the local economies along the Lake, but it also drives awareness and appreciation for Ohio's natural resources.

Birders who care about conservation can find a multitude of additional ways to help monetarily prop up funding towards conservation of these areas, whether it's through the purchase of the Ohio Division of Wildlife's Ohio Wildlife Legacy Stamp, tax-check off, or Cardinal License Plates (\$933,000 in 2012).



*Photo courtesy of
Kolibri Expeditions website.*

Continued on next page

Economics of Birding Continued...

Birders can even make direct donations to the myriad of Friends groups, management agencies and organizations that provide the habitat for these beautiful birds. The Lake Erie Birding Trail website also has a “business card” that birders can print off and leave at local businesses to thank them for supporting the birding community in their area. This technique was first used by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory (BSBO), which is a research, educational, and advocacy organization for birding and bird habitat along western Lake Erie. This organization also partners with Magee Marsh Wildlife Area and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge to host the Biggest Week in American Birding, which is the 10 days surrounding Mother’s Day weekend. This is the prime migration time for over 30 species of warblers to come through on their way to Canada. Through the use of these cards, the influence of birding and birdwatchers has steadily increased in the area by highlighting the economics of birding. That economic influence could help not only drive the tourism industry in the area, but could also drive policies and decision-making related to the habitat that brings the birds, and therefore the birders. Birders are becoming a powerful voice along the Lake Erie shoreline and there’s no telling where or how far that influence could migrate in the coming years.

You can find more information about the economics of birding in Ohio from the following sources:

- Lake Erie Ohio Birding Trail www.lakeerieohiobirding.info
- ODNR-Division of Wildlife www.wildohio.com
- Black Swamp Bird Observatory www.bsbobird.org
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-ga.pdf
- Socio-economic Impacts of Birdwatching along Lake Erie: A Coastal Ohio Analysis by Philip F. Xie, Ph.D. <http://ohioseagrant.osu.edu/research/economic/?ID=R/ME-033>



*Photo courtesy of
ODNR-Division of Wildlife*



Image courtesy of Denise Natoli-Brooks

EcoTourism: Great Articles & References

Ballantyne, R., & Packer, J. (2011). **Using tourism free-choice learning experiences to promote environmentally sustainable behaviour: the role of post-visit ‘action resources’**. *Environmental Education Research*, 17(2), 201-215.

Cini, F., Leone, L., & Passafaro, P. (2012). **Promoting Ecotourism Among Young People: A Segmentation Strategy**. *Environment & Behavior*, 44(1), 87-106.

Fennell, D. (2008). **Ecotourism**, third edition. Routledge: New York, NY.

Fennell, D. A. & Weaver, D.B. (2005). **The ecotourism concept and tourism-conservation symbiosis**. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 13(4), 373-390.

Goodwin, H. (1996). **In pursuit of ecotourism**. *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 5(3), 277-291.

World Tourism Organization. (2008). **Definitions**. Retrieved on April 2, 2013 from <http://tinyurl.com/mof4s2d>

Piloting a College-Level Ecotourism Course

By Denise Natoli-Brooks

An ecotourism class was added to the natural resource curriculum at Zane State College as part of the transition from quarters to semesters in 2012. The students and the instructor piloted the course together, and along the way, developed a new-found appreciation for tourism resources in the Zanesville area, as well as throughout Ohio. The area the students call home is considered one of the most important locations to celebrate natural and cultural history in the world, as demonstrated by the Newark Earthworks being considered for UNESCO World Heritage Site status. When the Earthworks are deemed a World Heritage Site, they would stand equally with the Great Pyramids of Egypt and the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. This discovery renewed appreciation and cultivated pride for the students' home community.



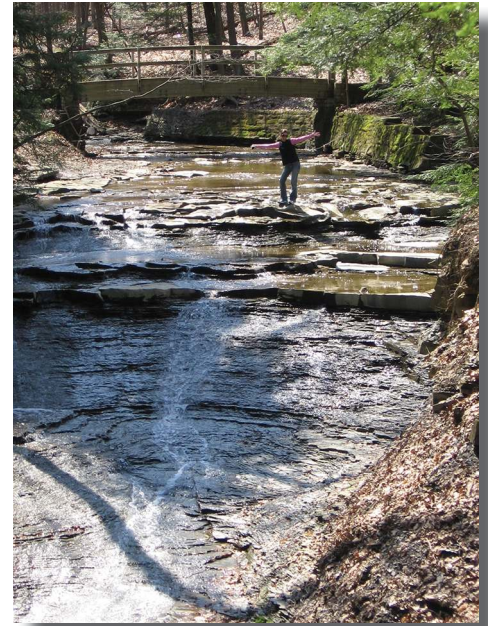
***Zipline Safari Field Trip,
Zane State College, 2012***

The course included foundational lectures early on, but then transitioned to many field labs in the surrounding community. Some highlights included visiting area convention and visitors bureaus to get an idea of the economic impact of tourism in the region, going ziplining and visiting luxury overnight accommodations at the Wilds, and touring Blue Rock Station, the only Earthship east of the Mississippi River. Students gained an appreciation for the tourism resources in their home community, advanced their communication skills, and expanded their network of professional colleagues. The instructor forged new connections among college departments, and between the college and community organizations. Due to the success of the program, more students enrolled in the course in 2013, and Zane State is poised to produce many natural resource professionals that can fill the ecotourism niche in Ohio and beyond.

There are abundant tourist destinations in the regions surrounding Zane State College. It is an ideal campus to offer an ecotourism course for natural resource majors.

Researching, designing, piloting and evaluating the new ecotourism class at Zane State College proved to be a challenging and rewarding experience for the author. Although there are many changes and additions to strengthen the course, it has a strong foundation on which to build. The support from the college community, as well as the larger tourism community in the region, is astounding, and it ensures a strong future for the natural resource program at Zane State College.

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Guernsey Historical Museum Tour

Great Online Resources

The International Ecotourism Society
<http://www.ecotourism.org>

European Ecotourism Network
<http://www.ecotourism-network.eu/>

World Tourism Assn, Sustainable Development of Tourism
<http://sdt.unwto.org/>

Sustainable Tourism International
<http://sustainabletravel.org/>

The International Ecotourism Club
<http://ecoclub.com/>

SustainingTourism
<http://www.sustainabletourism.net/>

Big Volcano Ecotourism Resource Centre
<http://www.bigvolcano.com.au/ercentre/ercpage.htm>

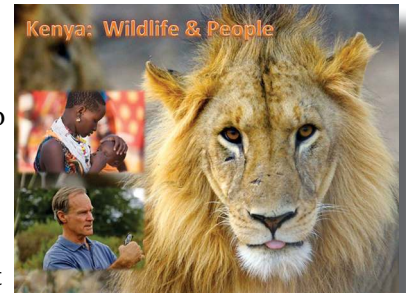
US Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, IVLP: Parks, Biodiversity, and Ecotourism Management
<http://tinyurl.com/n4scgcd>

Beyond Ecotourism: Getting Serious About Change

*By Chris Myers & Jill Korach,
Project Dragonfly, Miami University*

Project Dragonfly's Global Field Program (GFP) provides a unique master's degree that combines firsthand experiences at critical field sites worldwide with web-based coursework that supports collaboration and conservation action. The GFP, which builds on the success of Earth Expeditions field courses (<http://EarthExpeditions.miamioh.edu>) can be seen as a challenge to some forms of traditional ecotourism, particularly to those forms that promote superficial ecological and cultural spectacle over true connections and shared knowledge creation. The GFP also challenges traditional education, which mistakenly assumes that confining students to classrooms will somehow produce effective leaders who can address the vital social and ecological issues of our time.

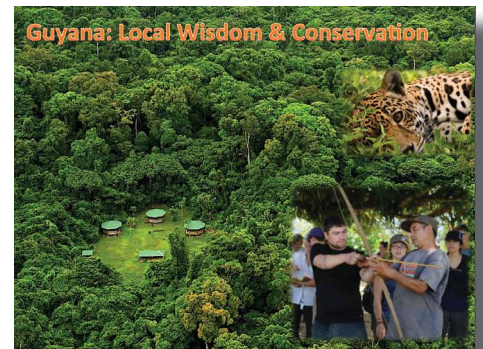
GFP students go way beyond the classroom (and often their own comfort zones) to learn within diverse cultural settings, applying lessons of environmental stewardship and global understanding to their own lives, their professions, and their communities. Students develop Inquiry Action Projects, Community Engagement Labs, take on Leadership Challenges, and design a Master Plan. They converse with Maasai elders in Kenya about human-wildlife conflict, create school guardian programs with Hawaiian teachers, create conservation radio spots with Mongolian youth, conduct coral reef surveys alongside scientists from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, join Malaysian communities to save orangutans in Borneo, explore connections between Buddhism and ecology at a forest monastery in Thailand. These students help restore threatened ecosystems and release endangered species back into the wild.



In short, GFP students are making a difference, and they are doing so by joining a growing alliance of leading conservationists, educators, and community leaders committed to social and ecological change. This alliance, which began through a partnership with the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, has since grown to include conservation partners and course programs in 13 countries and 8 U.S. cities. The Chicago Zoological Society, Cincinnati Zoo, Denver Zoo, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Phoenix Zoo, San Diego Zoo Global, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and the Woodland Park Zoo (Seattle) are now also co-offering graduate courses in their respective cities through a sister program to the GFP called the Advanced Inquiry Program (AIP). Together, the GFP and AIP have become the largest graduate degree programs

of their kind. GFP and AIP students work to solve very pressing issues, and we encourage anyone with an interest in environmental stewardship, participatory education, or community engagement to consider taking part. As Paulo Freire wrote, "No one is born fully-formed; it is through self-experience in the world that we become what we are."

For more on Project Dragonfly programs, visit: <http://masters.df.miamioh.edu/>. The graduate programs are designed for working professionals from all backgrounds and can be taken while working from anywhere in the U.S. or abroad.



Upcoming Newsletters

Do you have a theme that you are interested in? Want to share information about a particular EE topic? If so, contact our newsletter committee about submitting contact, or even becoming part of the committee.

Articles are typically 300-500 words.

As you can see, we like to include lots of pictures. If you submit photographs, please make sure they are high quality/resolution.

To find out more about how to submit, or to join our committee, please contact Betsy Banks at ewb@case.edu



In Northwest Ohio the Warbler Capital of the World

May 6-15

Details about locations, workshops, fieldtrips, and other special events will be posted on

www.biggestweekinamericanbirding.com

Winter Owl Prowl

February 6, 5:30 - 8 pm

**Waterloo Aquatic Education Center
New Marshfield, Ohio**

The owls of Ohio are some of the most elusive and fascinating of our wildlife neighbors. Join the Raccoon Creek Partnership for a closer look and listen to these nocturnal creatures.

Get cozy by a campfire and welcome special guests, Hocking Hills State Park Naturalist, Pat Quackenbush and his owls. Then we will go for an owl hike. Bring a flashlight and be sure to dress for the weather. Please, no pets at the owl prowl. There is a minimum suggested donation of \$5. For more information or more detailed directions, reach Kaylee Moser at kayleem.moser@gmail.com or call (614)425-7112.

Woodcock Wooing

February 22, 6-8 pm

VOA MetroPark, West Chester, OH

Winter is a great time to investigate the night. Owls, salamanders, woodcocks and forests are part of the "In the Dark" hike series. The program will start in the community room and then hike outside in search of woodcocks. Dress for the weather. FREE for all ages.

In May, Butler MetroParks will be hosting Bird Birding Week events including: Birding by Canoe on the Great Miami River, Birding by Bike, a Crepuscular Hike, a Bluebird Hike, Birding by Horseback, Birds of Gilmore, and Bobolink Breakfast at Voice of America MetroPark. See www.yourmetroparks.net



Hocking Hills

By Jim Stratton, Hocking Hills Adventure Treks

At Hocking Hills Adventure Trek, we advocate for ecotourism not just because we want to share the beauty and splendor of the Hocking Hills with the world, but also because we value the importance of exposing Ohio's natural beauty to raise consciousness about ecological conservation and education. After exploring a state forest or nature preserve with our guides, we want consumers to feel empowered to take action in support of their local environments, and inspire their fellow community members to do the same.

We ensure that each trek aims to raise awareness of local ecosystems, provide fresh insight on modern preservation and give the consumer an adventure to

remember and relish. Our naturalists and guides are independent contractors of all ages with myriad backgrounds. Having planted our roots in Southeast Ohio, we offer practical work experience to current students and recent graduates of Hocking College. At the same time, demand for our nature programming has led us to expand cross the buckeye state providing opportunities for qualified naturalists located anywhere in Ohio. With such a diverse and talented team, we're able to offer our services year-round, to groups of any size, anywhere in Ohio.

In hopes of enhancing the many other great biomes of Ohio and bringing them to the forefront of our educational agenda, we encourage every program leader to consider contacting their local banks to ask how they can submit a request for funding through their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) of 1977 requirement. This legislation requires all banks to reinvest in their communities, and environmental education is just the right kind of programming for banks to fund. Assess your relationship with local banks and approach them about where their CRA monies are going. You may discover that there's capital available and that there's a process to submit ideas for funding nature programs in your community.

We're constantly looking for skilled naturalists and experienced, enthusiastic guides to lead nature hikes, teach rock climbing and rappelling or present living history. If you are interested in joining the Hocking Hills Adventure Trek team or know someone who is, please contact us at 740.777.2579 or send an email to trek@hockinghillsadventure-trek.com.

Images taken in Little Rocky State Nature Preserve courtesy of Hocking Hills Adventure Trek



What region of EECO are you in?

And, who is your local contact?

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Region 5 - SW Ohio

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Region 6 - N Central Ohio

Janet Ellsworth, Mansfield City Schools
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wellsworth@neo.rr.com

Region 7 - S Central Ohio

Bill Wickerham, Adams SWCD
T: 937-217-1906
wickerham.adams.swcd@live.com

Region 8 - NE Ohio

Dawn Wrench, Earth Day Coalition
T: 216/281-6468x225
dwrench@earthdaycoalition.org

Region 9 - NE Central Ohio

Currently vacant

Region 10 - E Central Ohio

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Region 11 - SE Central Ohio

Vicki Kohli, Fairfield SWCD
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