



Issue 20 | January 2024

Just as ripples spread when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching impact. *The Ripple* is a special newsletter created by Cincinnati Nature Center for people looking for ideas and support in their efforts to protect nature.

GET INSPIRED!



Healthy Planet, Healthy Lives

According to research published in *Nature Food*, animal agriculture is responsible for nearly 60% of the greenhouse gas resulting from food production; globally, animal agriculture accounts for 14.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions. The researchers estimate that if every American ate no meat or cheese just one day a week, it would have the same yearly environmental impact as taking 7.6 million cars off the road.

The Ripple writer Bebe Raupe met with Chris Christensen to learn how she supports people in diet change.

Click to Read More!

LET'S COLLABORATE!

Are We Making a Difference?

The Ripple is a special newsletter created by Cincinnati Nature Center for people who want ideas, insights, and inspiration to act in support of nature and the environment. But are we on the right track? We want to know if/how this monthly newsletter is serving your needs and how we can improve.

*This survey was previously included in the April 2023 newsletter. **If you have already taken this survey and provided your feedback, no need to do so again.** Thank you!*

Take the
Survey

LEARN MORE TO DO MORE

Personal Choices Matter

Many people use the new year to re-commit to better diets for themselves and for the planet. The two articles below by *Popular Science* and *Grist* relate to the choices we make about food:

- [How to enjoy fake meat in a way that actually helps the planet](#)
 - [Why can't we just quit cows?](#)
-

Healthy Democracy, Healthy Planet

Citizens Not Politicians is starting an Independent Citizen Redistricting Committee through a ballot initiative to create fair, competitive, and representative district maps that can set the stage for effective environmental policies. In January 2024, the [Ohio Environmental Council](#) will host two virtual training sessions that provide the opportunity to connect with advocates and learn how to properly gather signatures for the *Citizens Not Politicians* ballot initiative.

- [Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 6 pm](#)
 - [Tuesday, January 16 at 12 pm](#)
-

Serve Your Community with a Garden

The Civic Garden Center's 2024 Community Garden Development Training (CGDT) is now open for registration! This free training series gives you the foundation you need to get a community garden up and running in your neighborhood (or take over an existing one).

Click to Learn
More

Don't Be Fooled

Being an informed consumer is hard work! Some corporations manipulate science and scientists to distort the truth about the dangers of their products, using a set of tactics made famous decades ago by the tobacco industry. Most companies don't engage in disinformation, but examples are found across a broad range of industries, from fossil fuels to professional sports.

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More



Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Winter Course

Registration now open! Our Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) winter cohort is the only cohort hosted by Cincinnati Nature Center that is 100% virtual. This online class is a mix of independent outdoor study and live online instruction via Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays (January 11–March 5) from 6-8 pm. The application deadline is **Tuesday, January 9, 2024**, but spots fill fast so don't delay!

[Click to Register](#)

YOU'RE INVITED!

Below you will find invitations from Cincinnati Nature Center members who are hosting meet-ups around topics and skills that might positively impact conservation. This section of *The Ripple* helps people find each other, because we are better together!

Please note, all event participants who are not members of the Nature Center must pay daily admission.

Native Plant Club

Thursday, January 4, 7–8:30 pm

Are you passionate or simply curious about native plants? If so, join us as we set the foundation for sharing knowledge, supporting one another's efforts, and helping get more native plants into the community. Whether your interests lie in gardening, foraging, or ecosystem restoration, this group is for you!

Don't want to join a club? Perhaps you might have interest in earning OCVN volunteer hours by giving a talk about some aspect of native plants for the group. Please contact **Connie O'Connor** at coconnor@cincynature.org to inquire about that option.

[Click to Register](#)

Book Discussion Group: The War for Kindness

Saturdays, January 6, 13, 20, and 27, 11 am–12 pm

Make a holiday resolution to think more about kindness! Serena Finch will lead a discussion group about *The War for Kindness* by Jamil Zaki. The group will meet four Saturdays in January. Purchase your own book and start reading! Be prepared to discuss chapters one and two at the first session. Preregistration required. Members free; nonmembers \$40 (includes daily admission for the series).

[Click to Register](#)

Use Your Voice For Nature

Toastmasters Clubs are internationally known for helping people become more engaging, effective, and comfortable public speakers. There are two local clubs to consider joining:

- The Miami Township Civic Center's meeting is on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7–8 pm. For more info, please contact Jerry Lawson at **(317) 696-5837**.
- Cincinnati Nature Center will also have meetings on the third Wednesday each month from 12-1 pm. Ours is a nature-themed Toastmasters Group for volunteers and staff. For more info, please contact Connie O'Connor at coconnor@cincynature.org.

Plant-Rich Lunch Club

Thursday, January 18, 11:30 am–1 pm

People have many reasons for reducing or foregoing meat: ethical, environmental, and physical. Whatever your goals, join with others to try new recipes and discuss your journey. Bring your own plate, utensils, and beverage, and a vegetarian or vegan dish to share. Hosted by Nature Center members, for Nature Center members. Preregistration required. Member adult free, nonmember adult \$10 (includes daily admission).

[Click to Register](#)

Announcing OCVN Quarterly Alumni Meet-Ups!

Monday, January 22, 6–8 pm

If you're a graduate from an *Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist* (OCVN) course hosted by Cincinnati Nature Center, we welcome you to this group which meets quarterly. Preregistration required. **Space is limited!** Drop-ins are not permitted—register today! These offerings are designed exclusively for graduates of Cincinnati Nature Center's OCVN program: CNC members free; nonmembers \$10.

Reasons to join us:

1. Practice your presentation and/or interpretive hike skills while earning volunteer hours toward annual OCVN requirements,
2. Learn about natural history topics from your peers while getting continuing education hours toward annual OCVN requirements, and
3. Enjoy meeting old friends from your cohort as well other OCVNs who share your passion for nature.

If you are interested in giving a brief talk or walk during one of our meetings, please contact **Bob Buring** at bburing@cincynature.org.

To see all upcoming meet-up dates, [click here](#).

Click to
Register

Book Discussion Group: How to Know a Person **Wednesday, February 7, 7 pm via Zoom**

Mike Lacinak will lead a one-night discussion about the book *How to Know a Person* by David Brooks. Purchase your own book and start reading! Be prepared to complete the book prior to the discussion. To participate, please email **Mike Lacinak** at mlacinak@me.com.

Book Discussion Group: Food is Climate **Saturday, February 24, 10 am-12 pm**

Do you want to eat better for your health and for the environment? Cincinnati Nature Center member and Certified Wellness Nutrition Educator Chris Christensen recommends the book *Food is Climate* by Glen Merzer. She invites you to join her to discuss your thoughts on the book. Pick up the book [here](#) and read it before attending the discussion. Free for members; non-members \$10 (includes daily admission).

Click to
Register

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Cincinnati Nature Center is still on the lookout for short-form article submissions to be featured in the *Now in Nature* bi-weekly newsletter. These should be seasonally appropriate or evergreen topics that are informative and interpretive.

For more information, please contact Digital Marketing Coordinator Megan Mahon at mmahon@cincynature.org. If your piece is used, you can count the time to write it as volunteer credit for your OCVN certification hours.



Become a Nature Center Volunteer **Volunteer applications will open back up on January 1, 2024!**

Please visit our website to review our opportunity directory and, if interested, complete an application to attend an orientation in early March, late April, or early-August. All volunteers are required to attend an orientation/onboarding

session. Orientations are hosted during times of the year to coincide with upcoming programs and opportunities.

When completing your application, please chose one of the following dates:

- March 3, 1–3 PM: Community Science Focused
- April 28, 1–3 PM: Plant Native Focused
- August 4, 1–3 PM: Special Event Focused

We thank you for your interest and hope to meet you soon! Please email the volunteer services team at volunteer@cincynature.org or by phone at 513-965-3348.

[Click to Learn More](#)

NOTES FROM OUR READERS

#GiveCowsABreak with This Milk Alternative

"Like many people, I'm aware of how large-scale or 'factory' farming causes animal suffering, pollution, habitat destruction, and carbon emissions. As a result, I eat much less meat than I used to. My weakness is dairy. I've tried the alternative milks: rice, soy, almond, oat, macadamia, hemp, and even hazelnut. At least some of them seem to be better for the environment, compared to cows' milk, and I've gotten used to the taste. I prefer to purchase meat, milk, and eggs from pasture-raised, organic, regenerative farms but when I do so, I consider whether this high-end choice could be available for everyone in the world without massive economic, dietary, policy, and cultural shifts. With these concerns in mind, I've been following the news about lab-made meats and dairy with interest.

Recently I've had the opportunity to try [Bored Cow](#) milk, a plant-based milk alternative that uses real milk protein in a fermentation process that uses 96% less land, 67% less water, and emits 44% less carbon than production of the same amount of dairy milk. For lab-grown milk to be truly sustainable, though, it would need to be produced with only renewable energy sources. Hopefully that's on the way. *Bored Cow* milk is now sold at *Jungle Jim's* or online. I recommend it for the taste and also because I believe that science and technology can help us reverse climate change, and it's up to consumers to support these technologies by voting with our dollars." - *Tim O'Connor*

SHARE & SUBSCRIBE

Give Us Your Feedback

You're receiving this action-oriented newsletter because you signed up for it, because you are a graduate of the Nature Center's Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program, or because you have completed *The Ripple Effect* online course.

Wouldn't it be great if everyone had better information about ways to act (and inspire others to act) for conservation? **Take a minute to share this electronic digest with your friends**—they'll thank you for it!

If someone forwarded you this newsletter and you want to become a regular subscriber, [click here](#).

If you have suggestions for content or have other input, contact the Director of Applied Learning, Connie O'Connor at coconnor@cincynature.org.

If you want to unsubscribe, please [click here](#).



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