



Issue 23 | April 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!

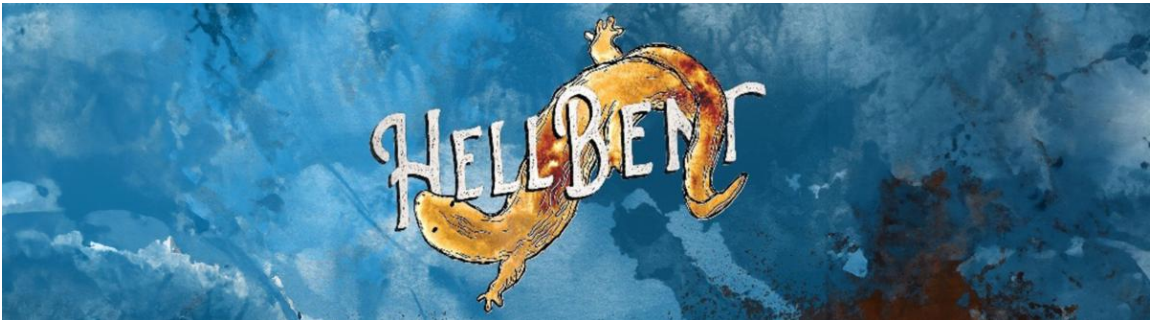


In Memorium

This issue of *The Ripple* is dedicated to Bob Rack. Bob was a champion for the Nature Center's efforts to bring people together to protect nature and democracy. A light has left this world.

[Click here](#) to read 'Love is the one eternal element:' What we learned from a true Cincinnati leader via the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Bob's book is available for purchase [here](#), with proceeds donated to Cincinnati Nature Center.



Hellbent on Community Action! (Online)
Monday, April 22, 7-8 pm on Zoom

What does it take to protect your home and family? Drinking water for a small rural Pennsylvania community of 700 people was under threat by the proposed

installation of a fracking waste injection well. The community banded together to protect not only their own safety, but also the home of a rare salamander, the hellbender.

In honor of Earth Day on Monday April 22, we will share the story of this community in the documentary film, *Hellbent*, on Zoom. The film tells this community's story of activism. This will be followed by a brief live broadcast from Thomas More University Field Station Manager Molly Williams, who will show live hellbenders and explain the research underway to support them.

Preregistration required. Member adult \$10; nonmember adult \$10 (includes daily admission).

[Click to Register](#)

Do You Know An Influencer?

We are always looking for new people to feature in *The Ripple*. If someone you know has been impactful in their action for conservation, please email **Connie O'Connor** at coconnor@cincynature.org with details.

LEARN MORE TO DO MORE

Public Speaking for Nature Lovers

Cincinnati Nature Center hosts their Toastmasters Club meetings for volunteers, CNC members, and staff on the third Wednesday each month from 3:30–4:30 pm. **Toastmasters International** is known for helping people become more engaging, effective, and comfortable public speakers. Ours is a nature-themed Toastmasters Group, where you'll get to know staff and each other as we talk about nature-themed topics.

Dues payable to Toastmasters International are \$60 every 6 months plus \$20 one-time registration fee. Membership includes a helpful online learning platform with videos, worksheets, and articles to help improve your public speaking. For more info, please contact **Connie O'Connor** at coconnor@cincynature.org.

Disagree Better!

Solving environmental problems requires bipartisan involvement and respectful, open-minded conversations. That's why it's good news for nature when people get along across political ideologies. Utah's Governor Spencer Cox recently introduced the video series *Disagree Better* by saying, "I want to talk for a few minutes about this *Disagree Better* initiative. Study after study shows our social fabric is fraying fast, trust in major institutions has plummeted over the years to historic lows and so has our trust in our neighbors. Republicans and Democrats increasingly view the other side not just as misguided but immoral and dishonest and 30% of Americans have ended a family relationship because of politics.

The good news is this... we're actually not as divided as the conflict entrepreneurs would lead us to believe. We give too much air time to combative voices who represent a tiny sliver of the population.

An analysis from the Pew research said 1/4 of adult twitter users generate 99% of political tweets. The other good news is there are lots and lots of elected officials modeling good behavior. I want to offer a special thanks to all the governors who have been a part of this initiative so far and helped show our country the politicians that disagree passionately can still be friends."

[Click to Learn More](#)

Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) Course

August 19–22, 2024 at Cincinnati Nature Center

The nationally recognized Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) program is designed for anyone who wants to learn more about how to develop and lead interpretive programs. This course will introduce you to the history, definitions, and principles of interpretation. During the course, you will develop a program outline and deliver a 10-minute thematic presentation, all with the support of your instructor(s) and fellow participants. You will learn how to make your programs purposeful, enjoyable, relevant, organized, and thematic, and leave ready to facilitate meaningful experiences that inspire engagement with the world around us.

\$600 Non-member (includes a complimentary one-year NAI membership)
\$525 with NAI Member Discount.

[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.

Podcast Discussion Group

Thursday, April 11, 7-9 pm (on Zoom)

Environmental problems are complex, and to protect nature we must connect with one another. What stands in our way, and what can we do about it? Listen to the following podcasts of [Hidden Brain](#) which attempt to answer this question:

- [Click here](#) to listen to "What We Have in Common"
- [Click here](#) to listen to "Win Hearts, Then Minds"

If the podcasts resonate with you, consider joining Cincinnati Nature Center member **Mike Lacinak** to share your thoughts and discuss ideas with other listeners. To participate, email Mike at mlacinak@me.com by April 10.

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.



Volunteer at Cincinnati Nature Center

If you'd like to volunteer with Cincinnati Nature Center, April 28 is the final new volunteer orientation for 2024. Applications will stop being received on April 15 and will resume in November.

If current OCVN students are interested in volunteering with the Nature Center, they will need to complete an application by April 15 and attend the orientation on April 28.

[Click to Apply](#)

Citizen Science Volunteer Opportunity for OCVNs

Caterpillars Count! is a citizen science project for measuring the seasonal variation, also known as phenology, and abundance of arthropods like caterpillars, beetles, and spiders found on the foliage of trees and shrubs.

OCVNs can get service hours through citizen science with this program which aims to better understand:

- insect declines (and hence bird declines)
- shifts in seasonal insect activity
- impacts of climate change and urbanization
- importance of insect-host plant relationships

Plus, this can be done in your own backyard!

[Click to Learn More](#)

Get Ready for Spring Litter Clean-Up!
Saturday, April 20, 2024

The Clermont Soil & Water Conservation District (CSWCD) and the Adams-Clermont Solid Waste District work together each year with local partners to support community and volunteers throughout Clermont County and the East Fork Little Miami River Watershed for the Annual Spring Litter Clean-up.

In 2023 over 230 volunteers came together to help spruce up areas in their communities while enjoying the outdoors. Collecting a combined total of over 310 bags of trash. Click before to register for this event!

[Click to Register](#)

Volunteer at Gorman Heritage Farm

There are many individual and group volunteer opportunities at the Farm, including gardening, animal care, lawn care, general maintenance, trail upkeep, education, and program/event support.

If you are interested as an individual volunteer or bringing a group, contact the Farm's Volunteer Manager **Beth Walker** at bwalker@gormanfarm.org for more information.

Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance (CORA)

[Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing a thriving outdoor community in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Our vision is to ensure every mountain biker, hiker, and trail runner has convenient access to quality, multi-use natural surface trails right outside of their front door. [Click here](#) to see CORA's trail expansion projects and click below to volunteer.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Invasive Plant Removal Volunteers Needed

Warren County Park District is looking for volunteers to supervise invasive plant removal at several of our parks in late-April and early-May.

If interested, please contact **Shannon Pennington** at shannon.pennington@co.warren.oh.us or call (513) 833-7360.

Volunteer for Mill Creek Alliance

[Mill Creek Alliance](#) is a nonprofit in Southwest Ohio that focuses on restoration, education, and recreation to envision the Mill Creek Watershed as a natural and community asset. There are many ways to get involved, all of which would count for OCVN service hours. We are in need in particular of folks who have a flexible schedule during the school day in our Environmental Education Program.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Click to Learn
More

If you have a love for learning, a passion for the outdoors, and a desire to share your knowledge with the next generation, please sign up for the Environmental Education Program!

Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Education Director **Johnny Dwyer** at jdwyer@themillcreekalliance.org or call (513) 563-8800. There are other ways to get involved, including restoration work parties in the watershed and adopting a spot along Mill Creek as well as joining monthly volunteer events on The MCA calendar.

Garden Tour Volunteers Needed

Are you passionate about native plants and gardens? Cincinnati Nature Center seeks enthusiastic volunteers interested in helping with this year's **Garden Tour: Noteworthy Natives** presented by Wimberg Landscaping Company. This self-guided tour on Saturday, June 22nd, 2024, will showcase 10 magnificent gardens located in North Avondale, Indian Hill, Blue Ash, and Loveland, all showcasing innovative uses of native plants in our landscapes. Join us for a day of inspiration and appreciation for our native plants.

As a volunteer, you'll play a vital role in educating guests about the benefits of native plants and *Inspiring Conservation*. Whether you are a seasoned gardener or simply intrigued by the world of native plants, your enthusiasm is needed to help spread awareness about the native plant movement to over 500 garden tour guests. With your help, we can encourage our community to embrace native gardening and cultivate a deeper appreciation for the ecological benefits and beauty of our local flora. You do not need to already be in the CNC volunteer system—we can sign you up as a one-day special event volunteer. This counts toward OCVN certification hours with OSU.

For more information about the Garden Tour or to find out how you can get involved, please contact **Katy Potoka** at (513)-774-1947 or kpotoka@cincynature.org.

NOTES FROM OUR READERS

Join the Fight for Fair Maps in Ohio

Hello! I'm writing as a fellow nature enthusiast and someone who cares deeply about protecting our environment. In my experience, you cannot have a healthy environment without a healthy democracy.

In Ohio, we're currently operating under legislative maps deemed unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court. The good news is that Ohioans will have the opportunity to end gerrymandering in our state if enough signatures are gathered for the proposed Citizens Not Politicians redistricting ballot initiative.

You can learn more about the amendment and the non-partisan **Citizens, Not Politicians** coalition [here](#) and since the petition must be physically signed, the closest place for Cincinnati Nature Center members would be the Clermont County Democratic Party Headquarters (174 E. Main Street Batavia, OH).

Their website, [Vote Early & Sign Petition 03-12-2024 - Clermont County Democrats](#), provides hours for signing and also lists people in Loveland, Milford, and Union Township who can arrange a signing. - *Kylie Johnson*

A Quote from Justice Sonia Sotomayor

I recently watched a video that I thought would be great to share in *The Ripple*. Here is one quote that stood out for me, from Justice Sonia Sotomayor:

"I firmly believe that civic responsibility is not just public service, it's not elected politics. It is every member of a community feeling a responsibility to ensure that they are taking an active role in helping some part of society. You can't define what a problem is because there are so many. Every one of them deserves attention. You can decide that the really big problems like the environment are your thing. Or you can decide that something as little as improving the quality of your local school board is important. But you have to, as a citizen, feel a responsibility to be part of the community that does something to change that community for the better."

[Click here](#) to watch the full video on C-SPAN. - *Annie Weisbrod*

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.

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