



Issue 19 | December 2023

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!



What's the recipe for a wildflower meadow?

In 2015, Melanie and Zak Scheer and their daughter Jozie relocated to "the country" when they purchased an eighteen-acre property in Tate Township. After repairing and improving the existing ranch house, creating gardens, and modifying outbuildings for chickens and the farming equipment they were gradually acquiring, they began dreaming about what to do with the former horse pastures between their residence and the highway.

Why did these two professionals with a young child leave urban Cincinnati and adopt a relatively secluded lifestyle with long commutes to jobs and schools and limited cultural resources?

Click below to read their story, written by Barbara Moss, to find out.

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

Stay up to date on bills in your state!

The National Caucus of Environmental Legislators' mission is to empower a nonpartisan network of legislative champions to protect, conserve, and improve the natural and human environment. They post an extensive collection of environmental legislation across the country, so that you can stay up to date on progress being made in your state.

[Click to Learn More](#)



Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Winter Course

Registration now open! This is the only fully online OCVN course offered by Cincinnati Nature Center each year. It's live on Zoom on Tuesday and Thursday nights from January–March. Tell your friends!

[Click to Register](#)



In Memory of Princess, the OCVN Rat *(March 2020–November 2023)*

Many *Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist* students met Princess during the mammal portion of their course. Princess was a huge soul in a tiny body, and was loved by many. She believed everyone was her friend. While large populations of rats can cause problems for wildlife and people, rats are also used in research that benefits us all—we owe them a debt of gratitude. They're social, resourceful, playful and affectionate. Princess was an ambassador for animals who are often feared and despised by people who've never taken the time to know them. With her, students saw examples of how to foster empathy for wildlife based on [best practices written](#) by the Seattle Aquarium.

One way to honor Princess's memory is to read the book [*Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat*](#) by Hal Herzog. It's an easy and fascinating read about the complicated ethical relationships humans have with other animals.

Rest in Peace, Princess.

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.

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 on 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](#)

Book Discussion Group: How to Know a Person

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

Mike Lacinak will lead a one-night discussion about the book *How to Know a Person* by David Brooks. This will be held on Zoom on Wednesday, February 7 at 7 pm. 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.

Cincinnati Nature Center's 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](#)

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](#)

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.



Despite there being less nature-related volunteer opportunities in December, the winter season is a great time to learn about citizen science programs around the country that need your help!

Calling Citizen Scientists!

SciStarter connects you to thousands of projects in need of your help. When you create an account, you can track your contributions to science on your dashboard. Add your interests and location to your profile to get custom project and event recommendations. You can also connect to the thousands of other citizen scientists in our community to answer questions, share experiences, and more.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Contribute Your Observations to Science

Nature's Notebook is a great place to record what's happening to plant and animal populations, either on a seasonal or long-term basis. Turn your interest into a valuable collaborative community science program!

[Click to Learn More](#)

Rain Barrel Art Project

If you are artistic, you can help promote the *Rain Barrel Art Project* to raise awareness about stormwater and ways to protect watersheds. Rain barrels are decorated and auctioned off. Artwork entries are due by Friday, December 15.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Waste Reduction Innovation Grant

Did you know that reducing food waste is one of the most impactful thing that individuals can do to reduce their carbon footprint? If you have influence within a school or business, consider forming a team to apply for this waste reduction innovation grant.

[Click to Learn More](#)

NOTES FROM OUR READERS

Floating Islands in the Chicago River

"I saw [this episode](#) on television about floating islands placed in rivers to help regenerate the waters and wildlife. It seems to be a very effective and yet simple way to make a difference. I wonder if anyone has seen it being used in Ohio?" - *Cheri Cunningham*

Movie Recommendation: Kiss the Ground

"Have you heard of the documentary [Kiss the Ground](#)? It's excellent—spread the word. And [here](#) are some actionable steps for consumers." - *Bill Hopple*

Recycling Resources

"I wanted to share information on this local nonprofit, [Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub](#), that accepts a lot of harder to recycle materials. Plastics can also be recycled at [Kroger](#). Have you heard about the recycling options through the new [Rumpke Waste & Recycling program](#)?" - *Joan Popowitz*

SHARE & SUBSCRIBE

Give Us Your Feedback

You're receiving this action-oriented newsletter because either 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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