



Elk Lick Echo

Spring 2010

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Please note that our P. O. Box address has changed. Our new address is:

P. O. Box 21723
Lexington, KY 40522

Help us save on printing and postage costs by receiving your newsletter via email and in color! Send an email to Floracliff@aol.com and include your name and address so that we can make the changes. Thank you!

The Business of Floracliff

By: Charley Sither, Board President

I'd like to tell you a little about what goes on 'behind the scenery' to support our mission of preservation, education, outreach, and research. The Mary E. Wharton Nature Sanctuary at Floracliff, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit private operating foundation overseen by a board of directors who serve without compensation. Our board membership expertise includes biological, environmental, ecological, educational, legal and business professionals. We have one full-time salaried Preserve Manager and two hourly part-time field technicians who are doing a superb job of executing our management plan. Although we are in partnership with the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, we are more like a small business in that Floracliff, Inc. owns, operates, manages and funds preserve operations. Our operating expenses this year will approach \$80K. The bulk of our operating income (~70%) comes from earnings from Dr. Wharton's endowment. The remainder comes from your donations and several miscellaneous sources including a tobacco settlement stipend. Occasionally we receive small federally funded grants for specific projects. Your donations are important. Without them we would have to scale back our preservation and education outreach activities. Thank you for your support and interest in Floracliff.

Nature Center Status

By: Charley Sither, Board President



The winter weather shut us down in February. But March is cooperating so you can finally see a foundation and plumbing risers. With luck we'll finish no later than July 1st. Many, many thanks to the following who have donated services and materials thus far: Chris Edling, Kerry Willett and Dennis Anderson of Anderson Community Properties (general contractor); Bill Rodgers and Jim Potts, James W. Potts Architects; John Park, Yunker & Associates (legal); and Kay Wright, Rector Haydon Realtors; Vulcan Materials (gravel), Haynes Trucking (hauling), Kentucky Utilities, and Central Kentucky Landfill & Hauling (disposal services).

Interested in becoming a Floracliff board member?

The Floracliff Board of Directors is an all-volunteer board consisting of eleven members with a background in biology, law, business, finance, graphics, education, and more. The Floracliff Board occasionally has vacancies for directors interested in advancing the mission of Floracliff. The Board of Directors is responsible for providing oversight of operations and maintaining financial stability of the organization. Board members are expected to support the mission and vision of Floracliff, attend a majority of the meetings, provide guidance to the preserve manager, and assist with financial and strategic planning. We are interested in candidates that have experience in fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and/or finance. Those with an environmental science background could also be of service to our Science Committee. Regular board meetings are held four times a year with occasional special meetings or committee meetings held as needed. Interested candidates can send a resume and cover letter to board president, Charley Sither, at crsither@hotmail.com. If you have any questions, you can reach him at 859-227-3000.

Flora Focus: Spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)

By: Ryan Quire



The pink stripes on the petals of spring beauty guide pollinators toward the nectar source.

The delicate spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) is a plant loved by many because of its sweet aroma and attractive inflorescence. Other common names include narrow-leaved spring beauty and Virginia spring beauty. It blooms between March and May, making it one of the earliest flowering plants in spring. The small flowers have five petals with varying streaks of pink and pink anthers. Its grass-like leaves are opposite and between three and twelve inches long. It is found frequently throughout Kentucky in mesic forests, lawns, and fields.

As with many members of the Purslane family, spring beauty is known to accumulate oxalates, causing toxic side effects if ingested over a long period of time. Deer infrequently consume the leaves and flowers of the plant. Although humans have been known to eat the plant's deep tubers, it is not recommended due to the possibility of its toxic side effects. Other species of the Purslane family found in Kentucky include Carolina spring beauty (*Claytonia caroliniana*) and common purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*).

Spring beauty is of great interest to scientists because of its unique ecological and genetic characteristics. It is most often pollinated by bees and small butterflies; although more than 71 insect species have been observed pollinating the flower. It is also known for having an unstable number of chromosomes. The number of chromosomes in each individual spring beauty varies, and may have up to fifty possible chromosomal combinations!

Our Wish List

Please contact Beverly James at 859-351-7770 or floracliff@aol.com if you wish to donate any of the following items. All donations are tax deductible.

- Handheld GPS
- Tools (hand tool or power tools)
- Regional field guides
- Gift certificate to hardware or office supply store
- Work gloves
- Spray bottles
- Birding binoculars

Many thanks to those who donated in the last quarter

Donors

Acorns:

Bill Carol
Greenside Garden Thumb
Rebecca Schnelle

Shooting stars:

Charlene Parker
Gabriel Popkin

Charlie Shanks

Spicebushes:

Rick and Lib Dirkson
Down to Earth Garden
Club

Lawrence Kim

Dogwoods:

The McReynolds Family
Foundation

Hickories:

Bill and Susanne Johnson

Old Oak Trees:

Charles Sither

Volunteers

Colin Goggin
Paul Harp
Claudia Marin

Montessori Middle School

Will Overbeck

Grant Phelps

David Robertson

Leigh Ann Robertson

Bill Rodgers

Charles Sither

Schedule of Events

All events require advance registration. Cost is \$4 per person or \$10.00 per family unless otherwise noted. Most programs last 2-3 hours. Call 859-351-7770 to register or for more information.

Interpretive Hikes

Saturday, March 27th @ 1:00 p.m.: Wildflowers and Their History with Native Americans w/ Tommy Kuhlman

Native Americans used many of our native plants for food, medicine, fiber, ceremonies, and much more. Floracliff field tech, Tommy Kuhlman, will discuss many of these uses with a focus on what's in bloom.

Tuesday, March 30th @ 10:00 a.m.: Mid-week Wildflower Hike

This will be a chance to catch the spring wildflower display for those with some free time during the week.

Saturday, April 3rd @ 1:00 p.m.: Wildflower Folklore w/ Ryan Quire

Many of our wildflowers have interesting historical uses and superstitions or neat stories about how they were named. Floracliff field tech, Ryan Quire, will discuss the fun facts of wildflowers on this hike to Elk Lick Creek.

Saturday, April 10th @ 10:00 a.m.: Pollinators w/ James Wagner

Join James Wagner, Professor of Biology at Transylvania University, for a program about pollinators and their relationships with the spring wildflowers.

Saturday, April 17th @ 10:00 a.m.: Wildflower Hike w/ Brian Yahn

Brian Yahn, ecologist with the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, will lead this wildflower hike. Celandine poppies, dwarf larkspur, nodding trilliums, and shooting stars should be in full bloom!

Sunday, April 25th @ 1:00 p.m.: Mushrooms for Beginners

Preserve Manager Beverly James will lead this hike to search for spring mushrooms and discuss their basic identifying characteristics as well as some fun facts regarding their role in the forest, human uses, and more.

Saturday, May 1st @ 9:00 a.m.: Herpetology w/ Zeb Weese

Zeb Weese, eastern regional preserve manager with the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, will lead this program to find some of our native frogs, snakes, salamanders, and turtles in the pond and Elk Lick Creek. He usually brings a snake with him just in case we don't find one. This program is one the entire family will enjoy!

Saturday, May 8th @ 8:30 a.m.: Birding w/ Hank Yacek

Spring migrants and other birds will be identified by sight and sound on this hike led by Hank Yacek. He will also discuss which birds to expect in various habitat types. If you have a pair of binoculars, bring them along.

Weed Warrior Days - free!

Saturday, April 3rd, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Saturday, May 1st, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Saturday, June 5th, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Volunteer activities will involve assisting with the removal of exotic plants from the preserve. This is part of an ongoing effort to protect our native species and we rely on the help of volunteers. Please call ahead to register and receive more information at 859-351-7770. If you are interested in helping out on any other day, give us a call and we can work something out!

**THE MARY E.
WHARTON NATURE
SANCTUARY AT
FLORA CLIFF**

P. O. Box 21723
Lexington, KY 40522

Phone: 859-351-7770
Email: floracliff@aol.com
Web address: www.floracliff.org

Floracliff is a non-profit organization. We rely on support from community members like you. Please support preservation in your region.

Yes! I would like to contribute a tax-deductible gift to Floracliff.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Email _____

Amount enclosed _____ Date _____

- \$25 - \$49 acorn
- \$50 - \$99 shooting star
- \$100 - \$299 spicebush
- \$300 - \$499 dogwood
- \$500 - \$999 hickory
- \$1000+ old oak tree
- other

Please make checks payable to Floracliff and mail to:
Floracliff, P. O. Box 21723, Lexington, KY 40522.



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Lexington, KY 40522**

Address correction requested