



Elk Lick Echo

A Newsletter of Floracliff Nature Sanctuary

Summer 2011

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The Nature Center Open House

By: Beverly James, Preserve Manager

On April 16th, about 80 people came out to brave the unseasonably cool and windy weather to attend the open house of the Winifred W. Haggart Nature Center. The day was filled with hikes and indoor programs covering herpetology, raptors, ecology, wildflower folklore, aquatic biology, insects, mushrooms, native plant gardening, and more. We would not have been able to hold this event without the help and generosity of many individuals, organizations, and businesses. We would like to send out a sincere thanks to the following:

Hike Leaders: Laura Baird, Mary Carol Cooper, Ryan Evans, Amy Haynes, and Rob Paratley

Indoor Program Leaders: Chris Carpenter and Raptor Rehabilitation of KY

Informational booths: Bluegrass Pride, Julie Beale (UK Plant Pathology), Jennie Condra (UK Department of Entomology), Emily Dobbs, Beate Popkin (Wild Ones), and James Wagner

Volunteers: Joyce Bender, Charlie Chander, Joyce Frye, John Lancaster, John Park, Grant Phelps, Bill Rodgers, Carey Ruff, Charley Sither, Dale White, and Bob Wilson

Food donors: Billy's Barbeque, Bluegrass Baking Co., Donut Days, Great Harvest, and Natasha's Bistro

Overall, the open house was a successful start to expanding our environmental education opportunities at Floracliff. This summer, we'll be hosting a couple of all-ages activities in the nature center (details on page 3) and we're in the process of planning future workshops. We still want to hear from you regarding what types of programs you would like to see offered at Floracliff. You can send ideas to floracliff@aol.com.



Eileen Wicker of Raptor Rehab of Kentucky discusses the turkey vulture during the Winifred W. Haggart Nature Center Open House.

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!

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

Flora Focus: Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)

By: Amy Haynes



The blue mistflower makes a great addition to a butterfly garden.

Conoclinium coelestinum, the blue mistflower, is one of the many beautiful summer flowers of Kentucky. It is found in wet meadows, wood edges and thickets in low grounds, and blooms in late August through October, making it a valuable late nectar source. A member of the composite family, Asteraceae, the mistflower has blue-violet, flat-topped clusters of fuzzy flowers, loved by butterflies and insects, particularly sulphurs, skippers, and monarchs.

Easy to grow, it makes a spectacular addition to the yard as a border plant or colonizing ground cover. The blue mistflower grows to 1-3' tall and is often called the "hardy ageratum" because of its resemblance to a smaller introduced annual, the cultivated *Ageratum*.

Fauna Focus: Lion's mane fungus (*Hericium erinaceus*)

By: Laura Baird



The lion's mane fungus has long spines rather than gills.

Also known by the equally colorful names "bearded tooth," "satyr's beard," and "hedgehog mushroom", this unique-looking fungus is easily recognized by its roundish mass of hanging, beard-like spines. It is found throughout Kentucky in the summer and fall and on dead or dying hardwood trees, particularly oaks and beeches. In addition to feeding on decaying tree matter, lion's mane is also considered parasitic, so it may be found attacking an otherwise healthy tree. It's often easy to spot, growing 4-12" across.

This fungus has long been used in traditional Chinese medicine, where it is often prescribed for stomach problems and cancers of the digestive tract. Modern research suggests it may have antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and immune-boosting properties. Plus, lion's mane contains molecules suspected to stimulate nerve growth factor (NGF), a protein necessary to send information along nerve cells. A lack of NGF may be a factor in neurological problems such as dementia and Alzheimer's. Someday, compounds from lion's mane may be used to stimulate and repair nerve cells in the brain to treat these and other neurological conditions.

Many thanks to those who donated in the last quarter:

Volunteers

Joyce Bender
Charlie Chandler
Joyce Fry
John Lancaster
Victoria Ligenza
Montessori Middle School of KY
John Park
Grant Phelps
Leanne Robertson
Bill Rodgers
Carey Ruff
Charles Sither

Dale White
Bob Wilson

Donors

Acorn:
Rose-Marie Roessler
Sharon Stubblefield
Jeanne Van Arsdall
Shooting star:
Ramesh and Suzanne Bhatt
Kevin Lutes
Spicebush:
Thomas and Melinda Kelly

Charley Sither
Clara Wieland

Hickory:

Audubon Society of Kentucky

Hike Leaders

John Baggerman
Mary Carol Cooper
Ryan Evans
Martina Hines
Rob Paratley
Charley Sither
Zeb Weese

Schedule of Events

All events require advance registration. Cost is \$5 per person or \$12 per family unless otherwise noted. Most programs last 2-3 hours. Call 859-351-7770 to register or for more information.

Interpretive Hikes

Wednesday, June 29th @ 12:30 p.m.: Fabric Sunprints

A program for naturalists of all ages, we'll find and identify leaves and other objects to make sunprints on fabric that is light sensitive. The finished product can be used to make a bag, pillow, or wall hanging. There is a suggested donation of \$5 to cover the cost of materials.



Wednesday, July 27th @ 12:30 p.m.: Mason Jar Terrariums

Terrariums are small, enclosed containers for plants that need little maintenance if properly designed. We'll use mason jars and plants native to central KY to make a terrarium you can take home. There is a suggested donation of \$5-\$10 to cover the cost of materials.

Saturday, September 17th @ 10:00 a.m.: Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants

Preserve Manager Beverly James will be leading this hike to Elk Lick Creek discussing popular garden plants that have become invasive in central Kentucky. We'll also see many native plants along the way that can have desirable ornamental attributes and make great alternatives. Hiking level is moderate.

****Other programs may be added. Please visit our events page at www.floracliff.org/events.html for the most current listings.**

Weed Warrior Days - free!

Saturday, September 3rd, 10 am – 1 pm

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!

Private Appointments

Private tours can be scheduled for small groups interested in visiting Floracliff. Interested parties can contact Beverly James by calling 859-351-7770 or email floracliff@aol.com to schedule an appointment.

**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.



**P.O. Box 21723
Lexington, KY 40522**

Address correction requested