

UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION
HUSTON-BRUMBAUGH
NATURE CENTER

Discover the Wonder of Nature's Ever-Changing Story



**SPRING
2023**

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John T. Huston – Dr. John D. Brumbaugh Nature Center

Mission Statement

The John T. Huston - Dr. John D. Brumbaugh Nature Center provides and supports opportunities for enjoying and learning about our natural and cultural heritage.

Staff

Cali Granger

Horticulture and Facility Coordinator

Michael Greiner

Site Manager

Bonnie Twaddle

Community Outreach Coordinator

Lin Wu

Interim Director

Adam Zorn

Program Manager

Visit

Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center
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Instagram

[@UMUNatureCenter](https://www.instagram.com/UMUNatureCenter)



21st Annual Photography Contest

Amateur nature photographers are invited to enter their photos in the Nature Center's 21st Annual Nature Photography Contest and Exhibit on Sunday, February 26. Participation is free, but submissions are limited to nature photos captured in eastern Ohio (east of Interstate 71 and Ohio Route 23). Photos must be size 8x10" and securely mounted and matted behind an 11x14" photo mat (not under glass or in a frame). Photos must be the original work of the photographer.

Photos will be accepted for the following categories: Wildlife – Vertebrates, Wildlife - Invertebrates, Wild Plants, Landscapes, Seasons, Mount Union Campus and Nature Center, Black and White, Youth (photos by children 12 years old and under), and Open. The "Open" category has no geographic range restriction, but the entry must be a nature photo and is available only to participants who are submitting at least one other photo in another category. Ribbons will be awarded for each category. Formal judging will be completed by a panel of judges comprised of professional photographers and naturalists. Judges will also determine one winner of "Best in Show". The public will vote for "People's Choice" awards for each category. People's Choice judging is determined by ballots cast by the public from February 26 through March 12.

Photo submissions will be accepted by Nature Center staff in the Visitors Center during normal operating hours beginning in February. Photographers are limited to five entries in total and three entries per category, except the Open category which is limited to one entry per photographer. Same rules apply to youth participants. Deadline to submit a photo is 4 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21. Full details and contest entry forms are available on the Nature Center's website and in the Visitors Center lobby.

An open house/artist's reception will take place on Sunday, February 26 from 1-5 p.m. Photographers, friends and the public are invited to attend. The exhibit runs through March 19. Questions regarding the contest and exhibit may be directed to Adam Zorn,

Creating a Wetland

A very exciting project is underway at the Nature Center – wetland restoration. Approximately seven acres of land between Daniel Street and the woodlot of the North Woods section will be transitioned from agricultural field to wetland and upland field habitats. The project will physically and aesthetically connect the North Woods section to the main preserve at the Nature Center, restore some of the original hydrology of the landscape, mitigate the effects of erosion in the field and the stream bank in the adjacent woodlot, and create endless opportunities for research and observational studies in a new habitat at the Nature Center.

Mount Union students have already taken part in several aspects of the site analysis phase of the project. Dr. Lin Wu and Dr. Karyn Collie utilized the site for plant surveys with students in BIO 141 (Diversity of Life) early last fall. After the corn crop was harvested, civil engineering students in Dr. Hans Tritico's class completed a thorough topographic survey of the seven-acre site, soil sampling and analysis of soil types in the proposed wetland areas, and infiltration testing of the soil of the proposed wetland areas. Soil analysis and infiltration testing are important to determine the feasibility of the soil to hold water for slow discharge into a nearby stream or the water table below the site, which are critical functions of wetlands.

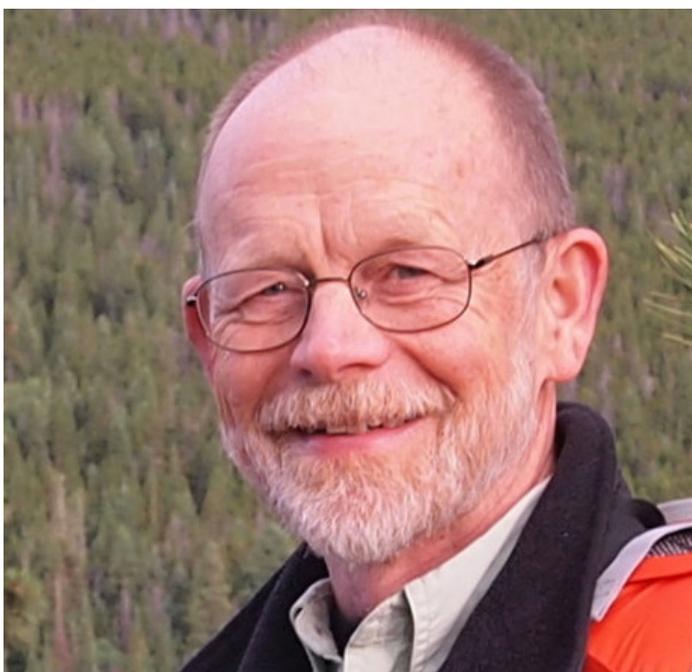
All the data collected by Mount Union students for the site analysis phase will better inform the wetland restoration professionals at MAD Scientist Associates during the final design phase. More importantly, the students are getting practical, hands-on experience to enhance their classroom lessons. Mount



Union students and faculty will continue to be an important part of the project through the design, construction, planting, and monitoring phases of the project.

While the field currently looks the same as it does most every winter through early spring, planning and preparation continues indoors until the weather breaks. Trail planning, planting plans, and plant propagation will take place early this spring. We look forward to sharing more information about the project and its progress later in 2023.

Research Reserve Dedicated



Dr. Charles McClaugherty, professor emeritus in the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences at the University of Mount Union, was honored with a dedication and naming of the nearby Dr. Charles McClaugherty III Research Reserve. McClaugherty was a professor and director of the Nature Center for 30+ years at Mount Union. The Research Reserve was dedicated in honor of McClaugherty's years of service as a professor and mentor at Mount Union, and his continuing legacy as an educator of the sciences and environmental education.

The Dr. Charles McClaugherty III Research Reserve is nearly 100 acres of forest and agricultural land situated adjacent to the main Nature Center property. Four natural vernal pools, steep-sided stream valleys, and mixed-aged hardwood forest are highlights of the ecological resources present. This area is closed to public access which allows for additional study opportunities with limited disturbance. Mount Union students have completed several research projects on the site including inventories of birds, snakes, mollusks, fungi, as well as investigations in sedimentology, organic agriculture, vernal pool hydrology, and astronomy.

Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center's Schedule of Events

General Information

All events begin at the Visitors Center and are held rain or shine unless otherwise indicated. Events marked with an asterisk (*) require registration. All other events are informal, open to adults and families, and are available without registration.

To register or inquire about events, call (330) 823-7487 or email naturecenter@mountunion.edu.

***Great Backyard Bird Count**

Friday, February 17 | 9-11 a.m.

Join Nature Center staff as participants in the Great Backyard Bird Count in the comfort of the Bird Observatory.

***Registration is required.**

***Great Backyard Bird Count**

Sunday, February 19 | 1-3 p.m.

Join Nature Center staff as participants in the Great Backyard Bird Count in the comfort of the Bird Observatory.

***Registration is required.**

***Great Backyard Bird Count**

Monday, February 20 | 9-11 a.m.

Join Nature Center staff as participants in the Great Backyard Bird Count in the comfort of the Bird Observatory.

***Registration is required.**

Photography Contest Open House

Sunday, February 26 | 1-5 p.m.

See page #1 for entry and event details. Photo submission deadline is Tuesday, February 21 at 4 p.m.

***Introduction to Volunteer Opportunities**

Sunday, March 19 | 2-4 p.m.

Are you interested in volunteering at the Nature Center but do not know where to begin? Join us this afternoon to learn about the mission, history, and staff of the Nature Center, what we do to achieve our mission, and the vital roles that Volunteers provide to help us accomplish this endeavor. There are opportunities available for individuals and families of all ages. No commitments will be requested during this informational program. ***Registration is required by Friday, March 17.**

***Amphibian Night Hike**

Friday, March 24 | 7:30-9 p.m.

We'll explore the trail system after sunset for frogs, toads, and salamanders. Dress for the weather and seasonal trail conditions. Bring a flashlight! This is a moderately strenuous walk suitable for older children and adults. ***Registration is required.**

***Spring Haiku Workshop**

Sunday, March 26 | 2-4 p.m.

What are the first signs of spring that you notice? The first crocus in your garden? The trill of redwing blackbirds? Skunk cabbage emerging in wetlands? We will try to capture some of these signs of spring by writing and sharing our own haiku poems. Dress for spending some time outside to observe and write. This program is open to all ages--no experience necessary, but attendance will be limited to 15 participants.

***Registration is required by Friday, March 24.**

***Early Spring Wildflowers**

Saturday, April 1 | 1-3 p.m.

An exploration of the forest in search of spring's first wildflowers. Dress for the weather and seasonal trail conditions. Binoculars and cameras are helpful for viewing specimens up close. ***Registration is required.**

***Introduction to Spinning**

Sunday, April 16 | 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Do you have a spinning wheel, or have you been intrigued by a spinning demonstration at a craft show and would like to learn more? Members of the Canton Fiber Arts Guild will open the door to learning about spinning wheels. The discussion will include historical facts, parts of a spinning wheel, and the basic mechanics for how to turn fiber into yarn. A few spinning wheels will be available to try. Class is free but limited to eight participants. ***Registration is required.**

Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 22

Celebrate Earth Day with the beauty and diversity of life residing at the Nature Center. There will be guided events and activities throughout the day highlighting the beauty, fragility, and resilience of the organisms living on this tiny portion of our massive and unique planet. Events will be free and suitable for all ages. Further details available in April.

***Spring into Fishing**

Saturday, April 29 | 1-3 p.m.

This interactive workshop will introduce the basics of fishing. Topics will include fishing locations, laws and regulations, area fish species, and hands-on tutorials such as casting demonstrations, catch and release techniques, fish handling, etc. will be demonstrated on site. Facilitated by Mount Union Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Christopher Marks.

***Registration is required.**

Bioblitz: City Nature Challenge

Saturday, April 29 | 1-4 p.m.

A bioblitz is an intense period of biological surveying to record all the living species within a designated area. Help us bioblitz the Nature Center and contribute sightings to the 2023 City Nature Challenge. Observations are collected using the iNaturalist app on your smartphone or tablet.

***Explore the Lore of Vernal Pools**

Sunday, May 7 | 2-4 p.m.

Join Stark Soil & Water to learn about the unique nature of vernal pools. Participants will learn how vernal pools enhance water quality, benefit wildlife, and provide other ecological services. Dress for a short hike to visit two of the vernal pools located on the property. ***Registration is required and limited**

***Sounds of Spring Hike**

Friday, May 19 | 6-8 p.m.

Listening is a great way to explore and interact with the wildlife at the Nature Center. We will help you decipher the many voices of our forest in spring. Wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather. ***Registration is required.**

***Spring Insect Walk**

Sunday, May 21 | 1-2 p.m.

Spring has sprung and the insects are jumping back to life! On this guided walk around the Nature Center, come and release your spring fever as we explore, discuss, catch, and identify those early emerging spring insects. ***Registration is required.**

***Enhance Your Homegrown Habitat**

Sunday, May 21 | 2-4 p.m.

Discover what you currently provide for wildlife and pollinators (without even realizing it!), and simple steps you can take to make your outdoor space more wildlife- and pollinator-friendly. FREE seeds, plants, pollinator homes and safe water dishes will be available. ***Registration is required and opens on Tuesday, April 25 at 9 a.m. Attendance is limited to adults only.**

***Bat Roost Monitoring**

Friday, June 2 | 8:30-9:45 p.m.

Bats are a critical part of our ecosystem and an important component of the agricultural economy. As the main predator of night-flying insects in Ohio, bats keep insect populations in check and reduce impacts on humans. Bring a lawn chair and assist the staff in counting bats that leave the roost in the Huston Barn. ***Registration is required.**

Recurring Programs

Acoustic Jam

February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4 | 2-4 p.m.

Join us at the Nature Center for a music jam. Bring an instrument or just come to listen. Beginners are welcome. Make new friends, have fun, and learn a new tune or two!

Get Wild & Wooly

February 12, March 12, April 16, May 21, June 11 | 2-4 p.m.

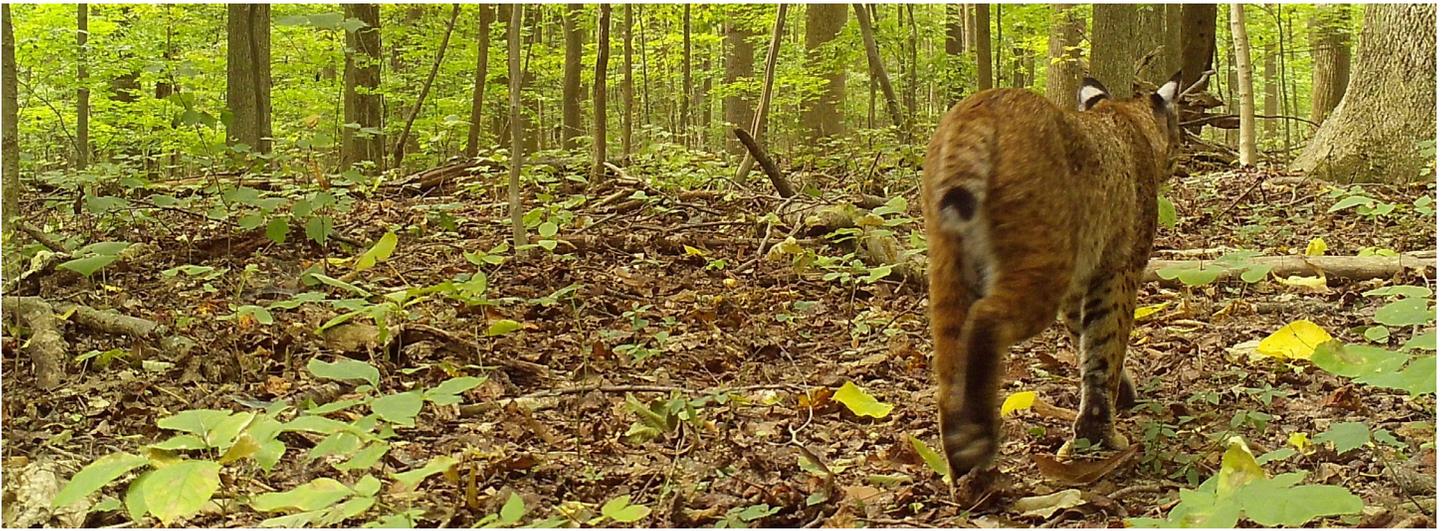
Bring your spinning wheel, knitting, crochet, needle felts, looms, etc. for a wooly sharing of the fiber arts. Open to all interested in participating or curious to watch and learn.

***Spring Bird Walk**

April 17, 24, May 1, 8, 15 | 9-11 a.m.

Join Naturalist Adam Zorn on the Nickel Plate Trail in Louisville, OH for a morning bird walk. Great for beginners and experienced birders. Level, paved walking surface. Bring your binoculars. Meet at the trail head on Pinevale Ave, Louisville, OH. Canceled for inclement weather. Group size limited. ***Registration is required**





Another Snapshot

Adam Zorn

September and October 2022 marked the fourth annual data collection period for Snapshot USA, a coordinated national camera trap survey of the United States. Since 2019, the Nature Center has participated in the two-month sampling period of September and October using a suite of trail cameras to capture images of wildlife residing in the forest. In 2022, 13 cameras were deployed across the main preserve and adjacent research reserve. In two months' time, over 87,500 images were recorded.

This year's data showed many similarities to previous years. Most notably, and unsurprisingly, White-tailed Deer and Northern Raccoon were the two most frequently photographed species. Other common mammals included Fox Squirrel, Eastern Chipmunk, Red Squirrel, and White-footed/Deer Mouse. A hike on a snowy afternoon will reveal the tracks of all these species with great regularity. These mammals account for 70-80% of the images captured by the trail cameras.

When a few species show up on camera so often, it's more likely that we will capture interesting behaviors, moments, or unusual individual animals. Some examples include Red Squirrels chasing Fox Squirrels, a raccoon slurping an earthworm much like a child eating spaghetti noodles, and some interesting (and impressive) antler patterns on White-tailed Deer. One deer observed this year is a buck with an accessory antler that makes it look like a deer-unicorn hybrid.

According to Michael Tonkovich, PhD from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, accessory antlers "on bucks are most likely the result of trauma to the forehead." The trauma can stimulate antler growth at the injury site and result in an extra antler. Mr. Tonkovich went on to say, "Except for its location, the extra antler is normal. The deer will shed the antler and re-grows it each year with its other two antlers."

In addition to common mammals, the cameras recorded several uncommon species in 2022. Southern Flying Squirrels were captured on camera in a few different locations. We hear them after dark but rarely get a chance to see them. Two members of the weasel family were found on camera – Long-tailed Weasel and Mink. Both animals are known to reside here but are not encountered regularly in person or on camera.

The rarest observation was a first! For the first time, a bobcat was recorded on camera on the main preserve of the Nature Center. This may be the first time a bobcat has been observed on this land since before the Huston family settled here in the mid-1800's. Bobcats were extirpated from Ohio around 1850. In December 2021, we recorded a bobcat on camera in the Ball Research Forest in Waynesburg. Hopefully additional images of both cats will be a common occurrence.

The first two years of Snapshot USA data have been published in the journal *Ecology*. The data from 2021 was submitted to *Ecology* and awaits review for publication. The 2022 data set is currently being reviewed and checked by project participants. The 2022 data are expected to be submitted for publication some time in late 2023. Check out the Snapshot projects, the Nature Center's camera trapping project, and dozens of other projects from around the world at <https://app.wildlifeinsights.org/explore>.



Mary Lindsay, Volunteer of the Year

Bonnie Twaddle

What a delight it was to reinstate the annual Founders Day/ Volunteer Luncheon after a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic! Also included with the November 13, 2022 event was the dedication of the Dr. Charles McClaugherty III Research Reserve. The day was filled with food, fellowship, gratitude, and joy!

Fun and weeding... those two words are rarely used together in a sentence. But our Volunteer of the Year, Mary Lindsay, embodies those words according to Cali Granger, horticulture and facility coordinator. Mary has such a joyful spirit and is really "fun to work with, plus she really likes weeding!" Mary brings her own kneepad with her because she spends two to four hours each visit, weeding, transplanting, and doing other garden tasks. Cali placed Mary in charge of the garden beds around the Visitors Center because of her dependability, know how, and "go-getter" work ethic. When you visit the Nature Center in the spring, look for all the daffodil bulbs in bloom around the Visitors Center that Mary planted this past season. Thank you, Mary, for helping make the Nature Center a beautiful place to visit, and work!

"From the Heart" awards recognize exemplary acts of kindness that come from the caring heart. One of the recipients was Mark Clough, who volunteers as a trail guide for many of our school groups. Mark has a knack for engaging students with the out-of-doors in a fun way. His sense of humor and big smile help the children feel at ease in the "big" woods, and it creates a safe environment for learning.

Bob and Jen Gervasi both received a "From the Heart" award. As ambassadors at the University of Mount Union campus, they have made a point to take the time to discover the Nature Center and its various aspects. Though they are very busy with campus responsibilities and activities, Bob and Jen have grown very fond of the Nature Center and visit whenever they can get away to visit this "oasis"; as Bob calls it. Both serve as cheerleaders of the Nature Center at Mount Union to encourage others to use and visit this great resource.

Shirley DeMaiolo, aka "Nature Center Mom", was recognized for her many years of service since 2003, and for providing the highest number of Volunteer hours in the past year! Shirley did not hesitate to come back and volunteer as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic subsided.

This past year, 77 Volunteers donated 672.5 hours of time! We are so thankful for the help and support you all have provided in so many ways to help us accomplish our mission to "provide and support opportunities for enjoying and learning about our natural and cultural heritage." THANK YOU!

Pictured top right: Mary Lindsay receives her Volunteer of the Year Award presented by Cali Granger.



Volunteer Recognition

We extend a sincere thank you to our August, September, October, and November Volunteers! Our outstanding volunteer staff assists us in maintaining high-quality programming and a beautiful facility. Thank you for ALL that you do!

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Kim Anderson | Matt Fiegenschuh | Ryan Mihalik |
| Joseph Balogh | Claire Fried | Kathy Milan |
| Julia Bates | Sandy Gahan | John Milan |
| Emily Becker | Joseph Haas | Logen Nott |
| Rick Blessing | Matt Hammonds | Cheryl Oswald |
| Adrianna Border | Liza Harris | Steffan Oswald |
| Katriel Border | Kathy Hart | Karen Planisky |
| Ruth Border | Rich Hart | Joe Planisky |
| Thaddeus Border | Ann Hendel | Sam Quinonez |
| Hannah Botzman | Paul Hobe | Mark Quillen |
| Chyenne Brammer | Judy Horn | Bonnie Rittner |
| Bernie Bresson | Billy Hreha | Mel Rittner |
| Chris Bresson | Anse Kee | Joshua Sanford |
| Patty Bruey | Arlo Kee | Adam Seefeldt |
| Monica Budac | Anthony Kemer | Grace Seefeldt |
| Jacob Buttar | Keagan Kindler | Joseph Seefeldt |
| Megan Casciola | Richard Kindler | Norma Seefeldt |
| Tim Caspio | Catherine Klopp | Paul Seefeldt |
| Mason Conn | Liz Koziarz | Brandon Sibbel |
| Mike Cope | Cheryl Kunz | Myron Smith |
| Paula Cope | Ed Kunz | Allison Smrdel |
| Chance Coultrip | Jake Laurie | Gail Swift |
| Colton Cyburski | Mary Lindsay | Scott Swift |
| Shirley DeMaiolo | PJ Lombard Jr. | Caitlin Thouvenin |
| Ben Dodds | Emily Maroni | Kylie Thouvenin |
| Travis DuBois | Jacob Mattern | Larry Thouvenin III |
| Elayne Dunlap | Amy McElhinney | Stan Vuletich |
| Tim Falter | Aiden McFerren | Sage Warner |
| Ben Fiegenschuh | Tammy Mierzna | Brandon Youngs |



John T. Huston-Dr. John D.
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Alliance, OH 44601

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Discover the Wonder of Nature's Ever-Changing Story

Visitors Center and Bird Observatory Hours

April through October
Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, 1-5 p.m.
Closed Mondays

November through March
Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sunday 1-5 p.m.
Closed Mondays and Saturdays

Our trails are open from dawn to dusk every day.

**The Nature Center is located six miles south of
the University of Mount Union on Daniel Street, just off Route 183**



Contact us at:

Phone: (330) 823-7487

Email: naturecenter@mountunion.edu
mountunion.edu/nature-center