



Marietta Natural History Society

Summer 1998 Newsletter

Land Rescue

Before and After Reclamation

Thursday, July 9, 6:00 PM

*Meet at the Hermann Fine Arts Center
parking lot at Marietta College*

Leader: Pat Feeley

Pat Feeley, Civil Engineering Technician for NahRAC Resources Conservation Service, will lead us on a field trip to an abandoned stripmine near Lower Salem.

We will see an unreclaimed stripmine and the condition after reclamation has occurred. We will learn about problems generated by abandoned stripmines and the suitability of the reclaimed lands for wildlife. Wear walking shoes and dress according to the weather.



**GRINDSTONE
COUNTRY**

*Thursday, August 13
6:00 PM, Meet at the
Hermann Fine Arts Center
parking lot at Marietta College*

Leader: Brad Bond



A Field trip

The grindstone industry is one of the oldest in Washington County. Brad Bond, a local authority on the history of this once-thriving business, will take us to an actual quarry where we can have a glimpse into the past. Wear walking shoes and dress according to the weather.

H

Night Hike

Thursday, September 24, 6:30 PM

**WWNote: This is 4th Thursday of MonthWW
Meet at Hermann Fine Arts Center Parking Lot**

Leader: Lynn Barnhart

Lynn Barnhart, a local naturalist, will lead us on a hike that will sharpen our senses to the sights and sounds of the night. A great experience for kids and adults. Wear walking shoes and dress according to the weather.



Damsels in da'press. Entomologist Forest Mitchell, of Texas A & M has created a web gallery of dragonflies, up close and in beautiful true-to-life color and detail, by scanning them into a computer. Hmmm, who knows what next will be pressed onto a flatbed scanner!? Check out stephenville.tamu.edu/~fmitchel/damselfly/index.html.



MNHS Finds Grindstone Country In Our Own Backyard — by Brad Bond

On our July 9 fieldtrip, sixteen members of the Marietta Natural History Society toured the grindstone quarry on the property presently owned by Glenda Johnson. In 1910-20 when the Constitution Stone Company operated the quarry it was known as the Schlaubach lease. Lije Nichols hauled stones to the mill at Constitution in the company's first truck, an Indiana with solid rubber tires. Stones turned at the mill from this quarry were sold to file manufacturers such as the Heller (now Simonds) plant in Newcomerstown.

The quarry is a relatively small one with an island of stone in the middle of a pit 15-20 feet deep where the derrick stood when quarry operation ceased. Mike and Daniel Spilatro climbed the stone tower to confirm bolt holes for mounting the derrick on the top. The derrick and the ditching machine were operated by steam produced in a boiler at the site, fueled by the trees which were cut for that purpose. Mrs. Johnson recalls the quarry being treeless in her youth. A nearby stream was dammed to provide water for the boiler.

The stones were cut round from the bed rock with a drill rig invented and patented by Michael J. O'Connor, founder of the Constitution Stone Company. Shallow square center holes, found on most of the stones left behind, were cut for the center post of the so-called ditching machine. The drill pounded the sandstone to powder rotating at a fixed radius to cut the circumference. A teenager scooped the powder from the "ditch" with a

flat-bladed tool called a scraper. Then a hole was drilled two thirds of the way through the base of the 6-foot-wide, 3-foot-thick stone into which a charge of black powder was placed. This blast usually propagated in the plane of sedimentation and freed the stone from the bedrock.

Dressers roughed out the diameter of the stone at the quarry, and then it was taken to the mill for cutting into the thickness desired by the customer, usually 6 inches or so, on a gang saw. A square hole was punched through the center, and the stone was mounted on a lathe where a turner smoothed it to its final dimensions. The stones were shipped by rail flat car to their destination.



Grindstones were the most valuable article that could be sold out of a sandstone quarry, and many holes were dug throughout Washington County in attempts to find suitable stone. Major quarries operated in the ridge west of Ohio 7 between Marietta and Belpre. Another major quarrying area was north of County Road 3 between County Road 2 and Tadpole Road. The Cleveland Stone Company had major quarries in western Washington County along the MC&C railroad.

Ohio supplied 90 % of the grindstones used in sharpening edge tools in this growing country. In the industry's hay-day, in the 1920s, Washington County accounted for about one-quarter of that and northern Ohio two-thirds. As synthetic stones were

introduced, the volume diminished, but Washington County's share increased. The largest stones, Washington County's specialty, were the hardest to make synthetically. The industry closed down in Washington County in the 1960s after providing employment for local residents for 150 years.

-- Brad Bond is a Marietta resident and member of the MNHS.

Editors Note:

Brad Bond's excellent history of the grindstone industry, *Grindstone Country*, is back in print in a new edition and available at local bookstores.

The Value of Nature

In a recent issue of the journal *Nature* (5/15/97), scientists report that the economic value of the services rendered by the natural ecosystems greatly exceed the gross economic product of the world's nations. Estimating the value of seventeen "ecosystem services", including water purification, food production, recreation and CO₂ regulation, the authors pegged their worth at \$33 trillion a year. Human economic product tallied to a paltry \$18 trillion. Those who think ecosystem services can be taken for granted need only consider the challenges confronting NASA in replicating them in space.

**Suggestions, Comments
or Contributions for the
MNHS Newsletter?**

Send them to the editor:

625 5th St

Marietta, OH 45750

374-8778

spilatrs@marietta.edu

October 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bird Silhouette Indicates Bird Feeder Watch Days 				1	2	3
4	5 A	6 MNHS Nature Walk 7:30 AM & PM	7	8 MNHS Meeting	9	10 Fall Foliage Tours
Jupiter Near Moon		Fall Deep Blue Asters Are "New England Aster"				
11 Fall Foliage Tours	12 X Columbus Day (Observed)	13 Last MNHS Nature Walks Of Season	14	15	16	17
Harvest Final Crops of Season						
18	19	20 Δ	21	22	23	24
Any Monarch You See Is Headed For Mexico						
25 Daylight Savings: set back 1 hour	26	27	28 E	29	30	31 Halloween Pumpkins At Risk!
Put Lawn Mowers Away?						

December 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 A	4	5 🐦
Suet Provides Nutritive Boost For Birds						
6 🐦	7	8	9	10 MNHS Meeting X	11	12
Most Trees Now Dormant						
13 Geminid Meteor Shower Peaks	14	15	16	17	18 Δ	19 🐦
Nest Boxes Provide Shelter For Bluebirds And Chickadees						
20 🐦	21 Winter Solstice	22	23	24	25	26 E
27 Pasteur Born 1822	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		

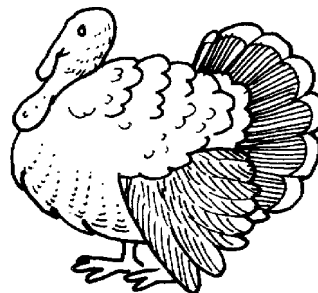
Bird Feeder Watch Time Again

It's almost time again for the Winter Bird Feeder Watch. Here's a great activity for parents and kids. Participants record species and number of birds at their bird feeders every other weekend from November to mid March. You don't have to watch every weekend; all data collected can be used. If you want to participate contact our feeder watch coordinator, Ava Bradley (373-5790) or Bird Watchers Digest (373-5285).



November 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7 🐦
Cabbage White Butterfly Aloft On Warm Afternoons						
8 🐦	9 Carl Sagan's birthday	10 X	11 Veterans Day	12 MNHS Meeting	13	14
15	16	17	18 Δ	19	20 Migration Of Loons And Swans	21 🐦
Chance Of Seeing Leonid Meteor Shower						
22 🐦	23	24	25	26 E Thanks-giving	27	28
Bare Trees Again Reveal Wildlife And Landforms						
29	30	Deer Hunting Season is Nov 30 — Dec 5: Probably Not A Good Time For A Hike.				



Recycled Paper
50% Total Recovered Fiber
20% Post-Consumer

To the membership of MNHS —

Our new improved newsletter suggests some new communication possibilities among us. We'll begin with a big "hello" to all of you. We also would like to present an idea for your consideration.

In the early years, as MNHS developed and we planned programs, we were not sure how much it would cost to bring a yearly schedule of top quality natural history programs to Marietta.

We now have a growing understanding of what it takes to fund the programing for a year of MNHS activities — as well as a healthy bank balance. Since we do not feel the need to maintain too large a balance, we have considered other uses for the funds that would be in harmony with the vision of MNHS and a reasonable financial stewardship of the funds given by members.



Suggestions under consideration include: 1) a program of scholarships and/or grants (\$50-200) to local educational groups to provide funding for special projects or activities that enhance our understanding of the natural history of our area; 2) special projects that assist or call attention to the natural feature of our area; or, 3) reduction in the membership fees.

The Board would appreciate hearing from you about these ideas and is eager to receive your specific and general suggestions about the matter. We are excited about enlarging the impact of MNHS. We will proceed to study the best allocation of some of our funds in the current year and bring a proposal to the membership at the potluck dinner on December 10.

Hope to see many of you at upcoming programs and activities
 Diane, Marilyn & Elsa



Only 0.25% of the insects killed in electric bug zappers are human pests. So found researchers from the University of Delaware and recently reported in *Audubon* magazine.

The researchers collected and identified the 13,789 bugs killed in six bug zappers during the course of the summer. (Now there's a fun summer diversion!) Of these, only 31 were of the biting kind, mainly female mosquitos, which are, ironically, more attracted to CO₂ than light.

While showing that the electronic devices are useless for the intended purpose, the study also suggests the contraptions are causing ecological harm. Most of the insects that are killed are beneficial; predators of pest insects, plant pollinators, and sources of food for birds, fish and amphibians.

As we have heard in some MNHS presentations, bats (the "winged bug-zapper") are far more efficient at consuming mosquitoes.



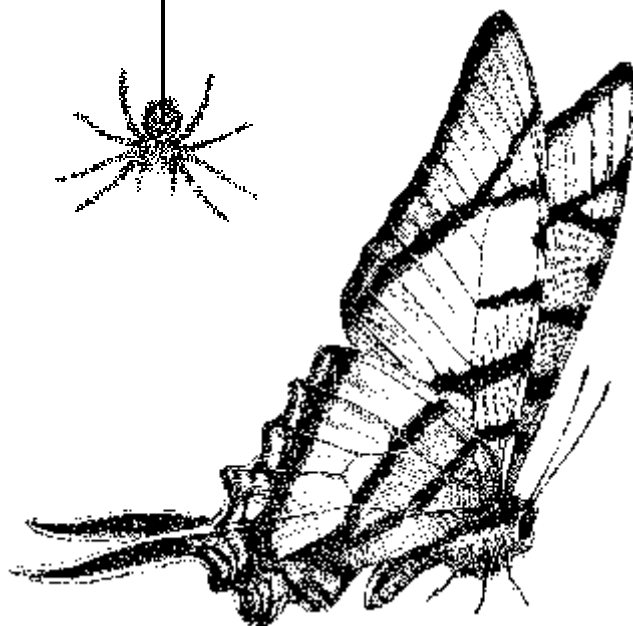
The Book

Worm

Recent Acquisitions on Natural History at the Washington County Public Library

Chichester, Page. **The National Wildlife Federation Book of Family Nature Activities.** A collection of simple, yet entertaining and educational projects. Activities include planting a butterfly or hummingbird garden, capturing a spider web, building a nesting platform, starting a compost pile, and more. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1997

Heideman, Arnette. **Hummingbirds, My Winter Guests.** Charming tales of Arnette's winter guests—birds, who, because of illness or injury are unable to fly south or that had migrated to the wrong place and needed refuge. New York: Crown, 1997.



Senior Action Now EASI

The Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement (EASI) is a springboard through which senior citizens can help build sustainability into their communities, the nation and the world. EASI provides a variety of services for senior initiatives and the Senior Environment Corps is EASI's national organization that links the efforts of seniors in communities across the nation. Currently there are 100 chapters.

The organization was founded in January, 1992 by a consortium of environmental, conservation and senior volunteer organizations. The founders include the National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, EPA, National Resource Conservation Service, Cooperative Extension Service, Alliance for Environmental Education, and other groups. EASI states that its mission is "to promote in senior Americans an environmental ethic that results in expanding their knowledge, commitment, and active involvement in protecting and caring for our

environment for present and future generations." Some of the projects that EASI is working on, or is currently involved in, include brownfields remediation, a solar energy project, well-head protection program, the Missoula radon project, and a global climate change initiative.

One outstanding example is occurring in Pennsylvania, where local organizations in 10 cities have established EASI Senior Environment Corps in a statewide water monitoring program. EASI is providing each SEC with chemical analysis kits, stream assessment tools, and computer hardware and software, as well as training and field manuals and other training resources. Each SEC is training its volunteers to begin monitoring, site assessment, and data collection activities. Volunteers are educated at colleges, environmental education centers and County Conservation Districts in procedures for chemical and biological testing of water quality.

The organization publishes a newsletter, *Senior Network News*, and a variety of manuals and booklets focusing on development of sustainable communities. These include the *Sustainable Communities Review* and the *Environmental Volunteer Program Resource Guide*.

Maybe Marietta would be a good place for another chapter—surely we have no want for worthy projects. Maybe you could spark a new local movement. To learn more about EASI and the projects in which it is involved, visit their web site at <http://www.easi.org>, or write to EASI, 8733 Old Dumfries Rd., Catlett VA 20119. Their phone number is (540) 788-3274.

Natural History Question?

Do you have a question about our local natural history? Submit it to the Newsletter editor and we will print it with an answer from local experts.



Ohio Amphibian & Reptile Asylum

The Ohio Department of Wildlife has enacted new laws to protect and conserve amphibians and reptiles native to Ohio. While regulating the sale, possession and purchase of these animals, the regulations also endeavor to maintain their educational and economic value.

The new laws require a permit if you sell, trade or barter any native amphibian or reptile regardless of when or where the animal was obtained. A permit is also required to sell, transport or possess wood turtles. Species designated as endangered cannot be possessed, bred or sold except in accordance with the applicable Ohio Revised Code.

The new laws also prohibit the release into the wild of a reptile or amphibian that has been born in captivity or is not native to Ohio.

When all applicable regulations are followed a permit is not required to possess or collect amphibians or reptiles (except wood turtles) for personal use or for education and research. Turtles and frogs can be harvested when conducted in accordance with applicable Ohio Revised Code with possession of fishing license.

More detailed information about the new regulations and permits can be obtained from the ODW, Environmental Section, 1840 Belcher Dr., G-2, Columbus, Ohio, 43224. The new regulations are in Ohio Administrative Code [OAC] Section 1501: 31-19-01(D).



Marietta City Nature Walks

... Will be starting again soon!
A great opportunity to see nature 'at work'
—right here in Marietta



Walks are held on Tuesdays, 7:30 to 8:30
Morning and Evening

September 15 at Oak Grove Cemetery
— meet near entrance to American Legion

September 22 at Buckeye Park

September 29 at Indian Acres

— meet near the boat launch ramp

October 6 at Jackson Park

The MNHS Vision

- i To foster awareness of and sensitivity to our environment and its biodiversity
- i To provide a place where people with these interests can gather for information and activity
- i To create a presence in our community representing these ideas



Marietta Natural History Society
P.O. Box 1081
Marietta, Ohio 45750
(740) 373-5285