

*Public Is Invited*

# Marietta Natural History Society

## Spring 2000 Programs



### Growing Your Own Mushrooms

*Thursday, April 13, 7:00 PM*

*Room 124 Thomas Hall*

*Marietta College*

*Presenter: George Vaughan*

*George Vaughan, a pioneer*

*in mushroom  
cultivation,  
will share  
how to  
grow  
gourmet and  
medicinal*

*mushrooms on logs in our backyards.*



### Native Medicinal Plants of Ohio: Solutions for Survival

*A field trip to United Plant Savers*

*Thursday, June 8, 6:00 PM*

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

*Presenter: Tim Blakley*

### Problems of Invasive Nonnative Plants in Ohio

*Thursday, May 11, 7:00 PM*

*Room 124, Thomas Hall,*

*Marietta College*

*Presenter: Jennifer Windus*

*Research and Monitoring Administrator,  
Div. Natural Areas and Preserves, ODNR*

*Jennifer will share concerns of invasive plant species  
and explain some management techniques.*

#### Special Bird Banding Program

**Tuesday, April 25, 6:30 PM**

**Meet at Hermann Fine Arts Center parking lot.**

**Lynn Barnhart will demonstrate bird banding  
procedure at the Nature-For-All Trail at the**

**Washington County Career Center.**

**See how the mist nets work  
and we'll hope for a few birds.**

**Tim Blakley will give us a tour of the United  
Plant Savers facility in Meigs Co.**

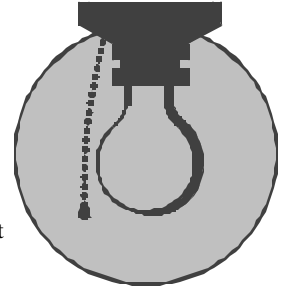
**He'll be telling us about the native medicinal  
plants of the region, why they are popular**

**and what they are used for. Tim will also  
talk about issues of overharvesting**

**and the role an growth of the medicinal  
industry and the Plant Savers facility.**



*Dr. Universe is here!* Dr. Universe, with help from writers and scientists at Washington State University, provides sophisticated yet understandable answers to questions over a wide range of subjects, including “Does the strength of gravity affect a person’s height?” to “Is zero an even or an odd number?” and “What is really in hotdogs?” (“Leftovers”). The site can be found at <http://druniverse.wsu.edu/contents.html>.



*New and Improved MNHS Web Site!* Check out the MNHS web site and pass the word on to your friends. Not only is there information on upcoming programs, Nature Walks and special programs, but also back issues of the MNHS Newsletters in PDF format. Viewing the back issues requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader plugin, which can be downloaded free from a conveniently provided link.

Our page is becoming an important Washington County flora Washington County of Native Vascular Plants is also a link to a new (and you to search by name to get a

about visiting logo on their home page. service to the Marietta send them to the Newsletter



resource on the area natural history. Links are provided to web resources on and fauna. These include information about Fall Fauna, Box Turtles and Butterflies of prepared by Dr. David McShaffrey of Marietta College. Also you can see the entire list of Washington County compiled by Diane Mitchell and edited by Marilyn Ortt. There still under construction) Marietta City Trees web site. Presently, this site allows address to identify the trees located along city streets, or to search by tree listing of the locations of all city trees of that type. Links are provided to other Marietta City web resources, including Broughton Nature Preserve, Marietta-Ohio.com and Marietta Tourism and Convention Bureau. How the MTCB site and send them a thank you email for prominently displaying our Our web site is sponsored by the Marietta College Biology Department as a public Community. If you have any suggestions or comments about our web page, please Editor. Find our Home page at <http://mcnet.marietta.edu/~biol/mnhs/mnhs.html>



## The BookWorm

### *Recent Acquisitions on Natural History at the Washington County Public Library*

Robert L. Henn. **Wildflowers of Ohio**. Indiana University Press, 1998. A user friendly, full color guide to 286 species of wildflowers found growing throughout the state; flowers are sorted by color, and information such as habitat, blooming period and scientific classification are provided.

John H. Mitchell. **A Field Guide to Your Own Back Yard**. W.W. Norton & Co., NY, 1999. A field guide to the familiar yet often overlooked world wherever it is found.

Especially for children:

Joanne Settel. **Exploding Ants; Amazing Facts About How Animals Adapt**. Simon and Schuster, 1999. From small worms that live in a dog’s nose to exploding ants to regurgitating mother gulls, this book tells of the

## Karner Blue Butterflies Return to Ohio

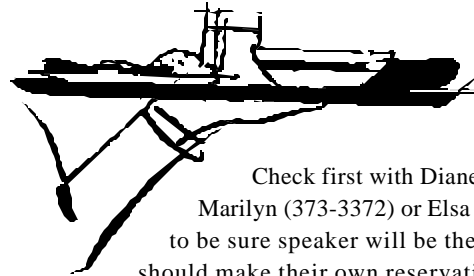
Due to habitat destruction, Karner Blue butterfly populations have declined drastically throughout their range in the eastern U.S. The Karner Blue, once common in northwestern Ohio, is a small butterfly that feeds during its larval stage solely on wild lupine. Its presence in Ohio was last reported in 1988, and it was listed as a Federal endangered species in 1992.

The Ohio Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Team was formed in 1993, with representatives of several organizations. After five years of planning and habitat restoration in the Kitty Todd Preserve in Lucas County, more than 150 butterflies (collected in Michigan) were released. They successfully reproduced, and their offspring survived winter and produced another brood in 1999. Reintroduction is planned until 2003. For more information, contact The Nature Conservancy at 614-717-2770.

# April 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
The 11 year sunspot cycle may be peaking around the beginning of April. Will this cause satellite and communications disruptions?						1
2 Daylight Savings--set ahead 1 hour	4/6: Mars, Jupiter, Saturn And Moon In Conjunction					8 Paint Swap Day
9 Spring Azures May Be Plentiful	10 11 12 First Whip-Poor-Will's Calling			13 MNHS Meeting	14	15 Household Hazardous Waste day
16	17 18 19 Juncos Leave Soon For Northern Fir Fore...				21 John Muir's Birthday (1838)	22 Earth Day!
23	24 25 26 Scarlett Tanagers Back From South America!			27	28 Pileated Woodpeckers On Eggs	29
30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Much appreciation to Julie Zickefoose for providing local nature events for our natural history calendar. Thanks again, Julie!</b></p>					

You can have  
Dinner with the speakers  
5:00 at the Levee House



Check first with Diane (373-8031), Marilyn (373-3372) or Elsa (373-5285) to be sure speaker will be there. Members should make their own reservations.

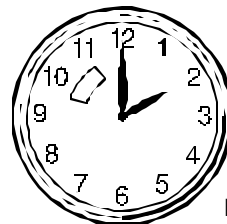
# May 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Morels making appearance	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 MNHS Meeting	12	13 17th Annual World Series Of Birding!
14 Mother's Day	15	16	17 First Song Of Field Crickets	18	19	20
21 Robins Are Hatching!	22	23 Carolus Linnaeus born 1707	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	<p><b>Recycled Paper</b> 50% Total Recovered Fiber 20% Post-Consumer</p>		

# June 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Watch For Baltimore Orioles Feeding Young	2	3
4	5 Bucks Have 5" Antlers In Velvet	6	7	8 MNHS Meeting	9	10 Watch For Turkey Poults And Hens
11	12	13	14 Flag Day	15	16	17 Beard-tongue In Flower
18 Father's Day	19	20 Summer begins! (Solstice)	21	22	23 Deer Flies Are Peaking	24
25	26	27 Red Admiral Butterflies Are Laying Eggs On Thistles	28	29	30 Humming-birds Reach Peak Numbers	

## Did You Know?



Daylight savings time begins at 2:00 AM on the first Sunday of April. On this night there is no clock hour from 2 - 3 AM (a good time to schedule important activities). The change is not made in American Samoa, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Arizona, and most of Indiana. In Britain, the change is made a week earlier.

In the U.S., daylight savings time has not always begun on this date. Between 1966 and 1986 the change was made the last Sunday of April. There was little consistency during the years 1974 - 1976. Congress changed the date in 1986.

# AUTUMN OLIVE – ANOTHER INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES

by Marilyn Ortt

" 'Cardinal' autumn olive yields a large quantity of red fruit – individual plants have been known to produce 90 pounds.....making the plant attractive to large numbers of birds.....screens noise, dust and wind.....outstanding characteristics as a wildlife food" - so reads a 1974 publication by a government agency dealing with "Plants for Conservation".

Anyone wishing to attract wildlife to their land would have a difficult time turning their back on such a glowing report. And it is all true! Unfortunately, the devil is in what wasn't described: its ability to reproduce copiously whether in the open or under the canopy of a woodland.

Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) is a native of the Far East - along with Japanese honeysuckle, multiflora rose, kudzu, etc. Wouldn't you think a red flag would go up whenever anyone mentioned introducing a species from a similar climate without the herbivores, pathogens and fungi that must control it in its native land? Like many of our problem-species, its tendency to reproduce freely was not at first apparent. Illinois was the first to recognize the problem in 1981.

The heavy scent of the numerous small, yellow flowers is almost over-powering in its cloying sweetness. The alternate, small, oval dark-green leaves are silvery on the bottom side on this small tree. When held up to the light, small bronze-colored dots are visible on the leaves and stems. The small translucent red or pinkish fruits often persist until eaten by birds or mammals that aid in seed dispersal.



When the 44 acres behind the Washington County Career Center was set aside for Outdoor Education about 25 years ago, it was decided to plant autumn olive around the raw edges of the south parking lot. This species is a nitrogen fixer and has thrived in the poor, heavy clay soil. During the past 8 years, numerous small autumn olive trees have been pulled and cut on the wooded slope

below the parking lot. Even though there has been an effort at control, the number of species and the density of native species on this slope has declined during that time.

This species has been planted along state highways; after all, all the values mentioned in the first paragraph make it ideal for right-of-way planting. It is obvious that abundant reproduction has occurred in these sites also – and in pastures and woodlands behind the right-of-way fences.

Russian olive (*E. angustifolia*) which can grow up to 30 ft. tall and has more elliptical leaves can also escape but has not been as much of a problem locally as autumn olive – YET!

Recommendation: If either is growing on your property, consider replacing it – preferably with a native species such as blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier* sp.) and dogwoods (*Cornus amomum*, *C. racemosa*). Even though it might not be a problem for you, adjacent woodlands and open areas are probably being planted from the reservoir of seed being produced on your tree.

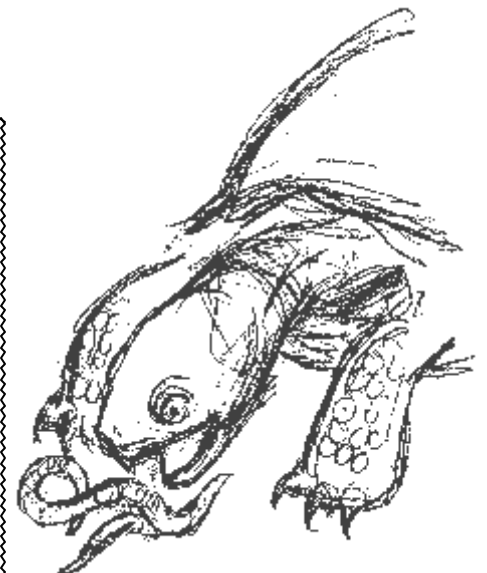


[Editor's note: There are many web sites that show photographs of Russian olive leaves, flowers and fruits. For example, check out the horticulture site of Oregon State University at <http://osu.orst.edu/dept/ldplants/index.htm>.]

## MNHS Contributes to Ohio River Plaque

An exciting joint project of the Marietta Natural History Society with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will help mark the 30th observance of Earth Day. A large plaque made by Sewah Studios should be dedicated the third week in April. You will receive information on time and date so you may attend. The text concentrates on the Ohio River's wildlife need for our help to protect and enhance the habitat. Artwork surrounding the text will include a great blue heron, a dragonfly, a pimpleback (a mussel), a beaver and a paddlefish. The MNHS logo and US Fish and Wildlife Service logo will be side by side.

The plaque will be mounted on a brick pedestal in the small





## May Morel Mania

by George Vaughan, Mushroom Harvest, Athens, OH

Morels are a very interesting genus of fungi, which belong to the division, Ascomycota. They are unusual in this genus in that they produce large, edible mushrooms. Most mushrooms are produced by members of the Basidiomycota, including the button mushroom, shiitake, oyster, chanterelle, boletes, chicken of the woods, etc. The only other commonly eaten ascomycete is the truffle, which is also a highly unusual fungus. A morel is a member of a group of ascomycetes known as cup fungi. Most cup fungi produce solitary cup-like mushrooms. The morel, however, is a stalked aggregate of many cups held collectively in the cap. These cups are lined with spore-producing cells known as asci. Asci are elongated cells containing eight spores and are what characterize the division. The basidiomycetes are characterized by club-shaped spore-producing cells, known as basidia, which only produce four spores.

Morels are decomposing fungi which live in the soil and feed on leaf litter. There are, however, a couple of species of morels known to occasionally form symbiotic associations with tree roots. When a morel spore lands in a suitable site and germinates, it begins to colonize the surrounding soil and forms a network of fungi, known as hyphae or mycelium. In order to reproduce, this network of hyphae must come in to contact with the hyphae that developed from another morel spore. When the tips of their fungi come together, they fuse and from then on produce hyphae which contain the genetic information of both spores. This network of mated hyphae is the beginning of a new patch from which morel mushrooms can arise.

In Ohio, morels usually begin to come out in the beginning of April and continue through mid-May. Some years, however, they can come out even earlier or later. Last year a warm spell was responsible for producing a sizeable flush in February, and I can also recall finding some as late as early June. There are three main species of morels here in Ohio. The first to appear, usually at the beginning of April, are the half-free morels (*Morchella semilibera*). Their appearance usually coincides with the flowering of hepatica or dogwood. They tend to have a much smaller cap that is only attached to the stem midway up the cap and reach heights between four and six inches. They are fairly good for eating and on occasion reach a more substantial size.

The half-free morels are shortly followed by the black morels (*Morchella angusticeps*). The blacks are usually larger and are of a higher culinary quality. They have a black cap, which is connected to a yellowish or whitish stem at the base of the cap, and attain heights between four and seven inches. The blacks tend to have the strongest flavor and are favored by some mushroom hunters.

The last and largest to appear are the yellow morels (*Morchella esculenta*). These giants can reach heights over

twelve inches. They have the thickest flesh and an excellent flavor. These tend to occur most commonly under dead elm trees where the fallen bark creates a mulch layer surrounding the snag. A common mistake is to pick yellow morels while they are still immature. Many hunters believe there is another type of morel known as "little grays". However, these are just the young yellows with a grayish color. If these little grays were left to grow, in a week or two they would develop into mature yellows. This is another unique feature of morels – it can take a full four weeks for a mature morel mushroom to develop. Most mushrooms are fully developed in just three to seven days. Yellow morels tend to appear in late April and continue through mid-May. Frequently, however, the fruiting period of all three mushrooms can overlap making it possible to find all three species in a single day.

It is difficult to pinpoint one habitat type for finding morels. Of all the fungi I know, the morels are the most unpredictable. I have found yellows in ideal habitats, such as north facing slopes, but also in meadows, dry slopes and suburban front yards. Morels are also frequently found in disturbed sites, especially coming through the ashes the spring following large forest fires. One spring, black morels even came up through the gravel in a woodlot road that I had made the previous fall!

The morel is a very difficult mushroom to successfully cultivate. A bed of peat moss and ashes can be mixed together and inoculated with morel spawn in the fall. Typically, the following spring morels come out of the bed. However, this only occurs 50% of the time. Sometimes, they wait until the next spring to fruit. If it is a warm fall, the morel fungus might travel through the leaf litter growing as much as an inch a day. By the time it settles down for winter, it might have spread as far away as 50 feet from the bed. In this case, morels might appear the following spring but at a substantial distance from the bed. Therefore, a morel kit can only insure that you are introducing the morel fungus to your land, not that you will be able to find and harvest the morels.

There are, however, other mushrooms that can be grown with very high success rates, such as shiitake, oyster and several other gourmet varieties. We will be giving a hands-on workshop in Marietta on April 8. This workshop will include a slide-show and inoculation session in which each participant will be able to inoculate a shiitake log to take home with them. Anyone interested should call Will Rounds of Rural Action at (740) 767-4938. For further cultivation information or growing supplies, feel free to contact me at Mushroom Harvest, PO Box 5727, Athens, OH 45701, (740) 448-6105, mushrooms@eurekanet.com.

# Marietta City Bird Walks

... Will be starting again soon!

A great opportunity to see nature 'at work'  
—right here in Marietta

Walks are held on Tuesdays, 6:30 to 7:30 AM

*Leader: Lynn Barnhart*

April 18 at Oak Grove Cemetery

— meet near entrance to American Legion

April 25 at Buckeye Park

— meet at picnic parking area

May 2 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