



UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION HUSTON-BRUMBAUGH NATURE CENTER



2018 Fall/Winter Newsletter

Discover the Wonder of Nature's Ever-Changing Story

Nature Almanac

October

- 8..... Draconids meteor shower (view in the early evening after sunset)
- 20..... Average date of the first hard frost
- 24..... Full Hunter's Moon



November

- 5..... Fall waterfowl migration peaks
(check local lakes and reservoirs for geese, swans, ducks, and loons)
- 6..... Look for planet Mercury low in the western sky just after sunset
- 23..... Full Beaver Moon

December

- 3..... Look for goldenrod galls
(there is a small larva of the Goldenrod gall fly living inside)
- 21..... Winter Solstice
- 22..... Full Cold Moon



January

- 1..... Phenology calendars start over
(start a list of all your first observations for the calendar year)
- 20..... Full lunar eclipse begins at 9:36 p.m., maximum eclipse is at 12:12 a.m.
- 21..... Full Wolf Moon



The 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:

Jamie Greiner, Sustainability and
Campus Outreach Manager
Michael Greiner, Site Manager
Karen Santee, Facilities Manager
R. Chris Stanton, Director
Bonnie Twaddle, Community Outreach
Coordinator
Lin Wu, Ecologist
Adam Zorn, Program Manager

Visit:

Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center
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Minerva, Ohio 44657

Contact:

The John T. Huston - Dr. John D.
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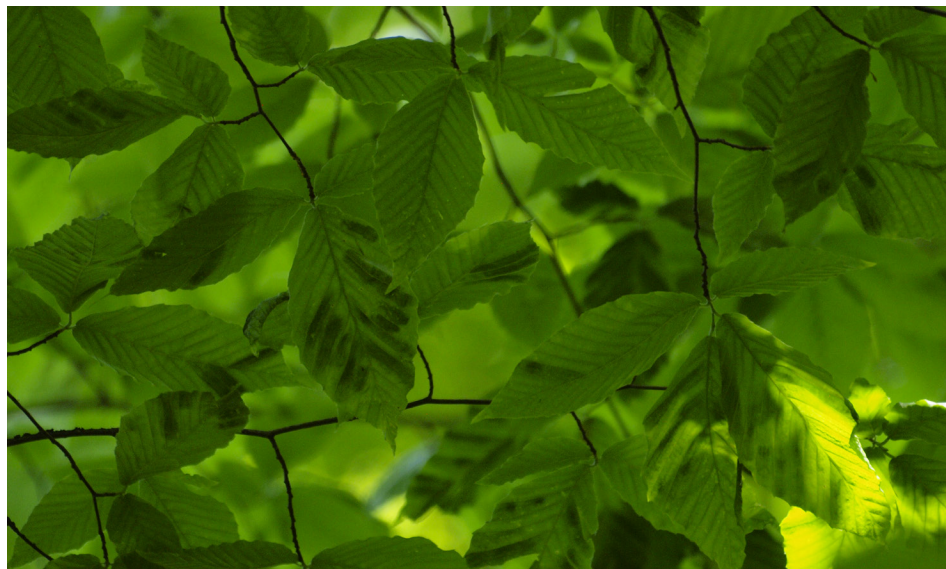
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Beech Leaf Disease

Adam Zorn

The Nature Center's iconic American Beech trees are under attack by an unknown pathogen called beech leaf disease (BLD). The mysterious disease was first discovered in Lake County, Ohio in 2012 and has since spread to nine Northeast Ohio counties, as well as parts of Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario, Canada. Researchers from multiple government agencies and universities are currently working to learn more about BLD. Suspected causes of BLD include bacteria, viruses, fungi, insects, and/or nematodes, but no definitive cause has been identified yet.

Early symptoms of BLD include dark stripes or bands between the veins of beech leaves. The symptom is best located by standing under the tree and looking directly up into the canopy of leaves overhead. Advanced symptoms include shriveled, discolored, or deformed leaves that have a calloused appearance, followed by reduced leaf and bud production in successive growing seasons until the tree eventually dies.

The Nature Center's beech trees are living remnants of Ohio's once extensive old-growth forest. When John T. Huston and his family settled onto the present-day Nature Center in the mid-1800s, they used beech trees to build their barn, carriage house, family home, and other structures. The beech trees remaining on the Nature Center's east end were spared the ax by the Huston family, and many individual trees along the Huston Woods and Flat Top trails are a couple of hundred years old.

The beech tree's historical significance is only surpassed by its ecological importance. In Ohio forests, where chestnut, elm, hemlock, and ash trees have been wiped out by disease and pests, beech trees are an invaluable component of the ecosystem. Beechnuts are relished by as many as 40 species of wildlife including turkeys, woodpeckers, squirrels, and deer. Tree cavities in mature beech trees provide nesting sites for owls, wood ducks, flying squirrels, and other woodland animals. The complete loss of another tree species could have serious consequences for forests across the eastern U.S.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources urges Ohioans to report signs of BLD to minimize risk of disease spread while research is on-going. Landowners are urged to avoid moving beech trees or tree parts, whether they look healthy or not, to prevent BLD from potentially spreading to new areas. To report BLD, contact ODNR Forest Health Program Coordinator Tom Macy at thomas.macy@dnr.state.oh.us.



Snow Birds

Al Eibel

In a banding session at the Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center in early August, Adam and I were surprised when we netted a bird usually not seen this time of year. We carefully checked several sources and verified that our surprise was a pine siskin.

Pine siskins are usually winter visitors, and periodic winter irruptions (sudden, dramatic increases in population) can bring many to northeastern Ohio. However, early August encounters are unusual. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology reports that pine siskins, after a large irruption, occasionally remain in Ohio throughout the summer, and, on occasion, breed. Our bird could have been one of those unusual year-round residents or it could have been a very early migrant. Banding data also suggest that pine siskins sometimes migrate west to east, moving from the Rockies where they are residents. In trips west with the Alliance High School Teton Science Club, I often heard – rather than saw – pine siskins. Their call is an unmistakable rising buzz. The pine siskin we banded had the characteristic heavy streaking and bright yellow wing bars and rump feathers, somewhat similar to an American goldfinch.

As August wanes, more and more of our summer residents finish their nesting and begin their emigration from the area. In late September and early October, however, birds nesting in the Canadian taiga (northern coniferous forest) begin migrating to Ohio where they will remain for the winter. Typically, pine siskins are members of this group, along with white-throated sparrows, white-crowned sparrows, American tree sparrows, and dark-eyed juncos – four species that also frequent our winter feeders.

A good pair of binoculars might be needed to distinguish between white-throated and white-crowned sparrows. They look remarkably similar, but with some practice, it's easy to distinguish them. White-throated sparrows do indeed have a white throat and a yellow spot in the front part of the eye. Mature white-crowned sparrows have distinct head plumage that resembles the Michigan Wolverines' football helmet, only in black and white.

Also, separating American tree sparrows, field sparrows, and chipping sparrows might be difficult, but the American tree sparrow's larger size, bicolored bill (dark upper mandible, light lower mandible), and noticeable dark spot on its breast are solid identifiers.

My data show that I begin banding these Ohio immigrants in mid to late October, and I band the last ones in late April and into the first week of May. Included in the group of Ohio immigrants are birds that seem much less common and, therefore, often generate more excitement: crossbills, red-breasted nuthatches, northern saw-whet owls, and snowy owls. During October and November, Adam and I attempt to band northern saw-whet owls at the Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center, and each owl we capture in Project Owl-net sets off a wave of texts to people who are interested in the small, delightful owl.

This winter keep your feeders filled and your eyes peeled for some of our avian winter visitors. They will be a welcome relief to the winter blahs.



Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center's Schedule of Events

Sunday, October 7

Relax and De-Stress Event 1-5 p.m.

EVERYONE needs to manage their stress these days. Take advantage of some relaxing activities such as a free 10-minute shoulder massage, strolling through the peaceful woods, walking the labyrinth, relaxing by the pond, listening to live music and more. Come alone or bring the family. There is something for everyone! No registration required.

Saturday, October 13

The BIG SIT! 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

It's a "tailgate party for birders" with the objective to tally as many bird species as can be seen or heard inside a 17-foot count circle. Last year, we tallied 40 species from our lawn chairs at the North Woods. Join us for a couple of minutes or a couple of hours during this annual, international, noncompetitive birding event. Registration appreciated but not required by October 12.

Sunday, October 14

***Fall Decorations with Tree Cookies 2-4 p.m.**

We will make fun fall decorations using tree cookies! Tree cookies are disk-shaped pieces of wood sliced from a log. We have them in various sizes, and they make great pumpkins and Halloween decorations. ***Registration is required and limited to 20 participants ages 10 through adult. Registration opens September 24 at 9 a.m.**

Saturday, October 20

***Fall Care for Dahlias 10 a.m.-Noon**

Join us for a morning of hands on learning about Dahlias. Stan Vuletich and Cathy Hart will be demonstrating how to dig, divide, and store Dahlias for the winter. They care for three beautiful beds of dahlias in our educational garden. The class is for adults due to the use of cutting tools. ***Registration is required and begins on September 24 and ends on October 12.**

Saturday, October 20

***Autumn Haiku Writing 2-4 p.m.**

Celebrate "National Day on Writing" and the beauty of autumn at the Nature Center by crafting and sharing these short but descriptive poems. We will spend some time outside connecting with nature and capturing impactful moments in words. This program is open to all ages but especially to anyone who can count to 17. ***Register by October 19.**

Sunday, October 21

Plastics in the Environment 2-3:30 p.m.

Join the University of Mount Union sustainability manager to learn about the short-term and long-term impacts of plastics in the environment and what you can do as an individual to end plastic pollution. No registration required.

Sunday, October 28

***Faculty Presentation: Dr. Keith Miller 2-3:30 p.m.**

During his lecture – *Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine: From Stem Cells to Artificial Organs* – Dr. Miller, assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Mount Union, will present an introduction to tissue engineering focused on the latest research for medicinal applications. Discussion will include the variety of cell sources, scaffold materials, and current research/clinical trials with skin, bone, and cardiovascular tissues. This lecture is geared for a general audience. ***Register by October 27.**

Monday, November 5

***In Search of Owls 7-9 p.m.**

Learn about the four species of owls that reside at the Nature Center. We will focus much of our attention on the Saw-whet Owl, a unique species that migrates through Ohio's forests each fall and spring. With some luck, we may have a live Saw-whet Owl to band and release during the program as part of the Nature Center's participation in Project OwlNet research. ***Registration is required.**

Sunday, November 11

Brumbaugh Scholars' Showcase 2-3:30 p.m.

See the work of outstanding University of Mount Union students in this showcase event. The 2018 cohort of Brumbaugh Scholars undertook projects related to breeding amphibians and discovery of self and community at the Nature Center. Your attendance is appreciated in support of the students, their mentors, and their academic research! Refreshments provided. No registration required.

Sunday, November 18

Neighborhood Naturalist: Winter Citizen Science 2-3:30 p.m.

Don't hibernate for the winter! Be an active citizen scientist from the warm comfort of your home or our Visitors Center by participating in Project FeederWatch, eBird, or the Great Backyard Bird Count. We will cover a variety of projects active in winter and practice the protocol for conducting a FeederWatch count. Refreshments provided. No registration required.

Sunday, December 2

Holiday Celebration 3-6 p.m.

Drop in between 3 and 6 p.m. to celebrate the holiday season with the Nature Center. Make hand-made crafts, enjoy s'mores and hot chocolate by the fire, listen to acoustic music, and visit Santa Claus in an 1800s-era cabin. Simple holiday fun for the whole family. RSVP appreciated, but not required.

Sunday, December 9

***Holiday Candle Arrangement 2-4 p.m.**

We will use natural plant materials to create unique arrangements for our holiday tables. All materials will be provided. You may bring any special items you would like

to add to your arrangement. ***Registration is required and limited to 16 adult participants. Registration opens November 12 at 9 a.m.**

December 14 – January 5

119th Christmas Bird Count All Day

Participate in the Audubon 119th Christmas Bird Count as a volunteer in the Quail Hollow (December 15) or Tri-Reservoir (January 1) count circles. Join a team of volunteers to count birds in the field, or you may be able to participate at home. Contact the Nature Center or visit the Audubon Society online to learn more.

Saturday, December 22

***Winter Night Hike 7-9 p.m.**

Celebrate one of the longest nights of the year and escape the noise and stress of the holidays by joining us for a quiet walk through the woods under a full moon. A self-guided luminary walk and a guided night hike are available to participants of all ages. Upon return to the Visitor's Center, warm up with hot beverages and a crackling fire. ***Register by December 21.**

Sunday, December 23 – January 1

Holiday Break

The Visitors Center will be closed as part of the University of Mount Union's holiday break. Staff will be present daily for limited hours to respond to email, voice messages, and care for the animals. The Visitors Center will reopen on Wednesday, January 2.

Sunday, January 20

***Picture Perfect 2-3:30 p.m.**

If you have a great photo but are hesitant to enter it into a photography contest, this program is for you! The Nature Center's photo contest organizer and a photography judge will give you the basic information, tips, and tricks to entering photos in local photography shows, including the Nature Center's upcoming 17th Annual Nature Photography Contest and Exhibit. Come prepared to take notes and ask questions!

***Register by January 18.**

Sunday, January 27

***Winter Haiku Writing 2-4 p.m.**

The forests and fields of the Nature Center have a different feel during the winter, and we will try to capture those emotions as we write and share our original haiku poems. Dress for spending some time outside. This program is open to all ages, but especNo registration required. ***Register by January 25.**

February 15-18

Great Backyard Bird Count

Join Nature Center staff and volunteers to count birds visiting the feeders outside the Visitors Center. A fun and educational activity that contributes data to one of the world's biggest citizen science projects. Learn more at <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>.

Friday, February 22

Photo Contest and Exhibit Open House 6-8 p.m.

Photographers, friends, and the public are all invited to attend this open house and reception for the Nature Center's 17th Annual Photograph Contest. View place winners that were awarded during formal judging and cast your own ballot for the People's Choice award. See page 7 for contest information.

Sunday, February 24

***Winter Salads 2-4 p.m.**

When the weather is cold outside, the idea of a salad might not be the first idea that pops into your mind. Judi Strauss will share great winter salads and recipes that can be a way to beat those wintertime blues. Full of greens, citrus, and some unexpected ingredients, these salads are a great first course. Some are a meal in themselves. You'll get a chance to sample several salads in class and there are plenty of recipes to take home. ***Registration is required and limited to 16 adults. The food fee is \$9 per person. Registration opens on January 28 at 9 a.m.**

Recurring Programs

Acoustic Jam

2-4 p.m. on October 7, November 4, January 6, and February 3

3-6 p.m. on December 2

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! No registration required.

Bird Banding with Al Eibel

10 a.m. to Noon on December 2 & 16

Noon to 2 p.m. on January 6 & 20

See live songbirds and science in action during a bird banding demonstration with licensed bird bander Al Eibel. Banding takes place inside the Visitors Center on the designated dates and times. Bird banding is canceled in the event of rain, snow, or temperatures below 20 degrees Fahrenheit. No registration required.

Project FeederWatch

Every Sunday afternoon from Nov. 11-March 31

Assist the Nature Center staff and volunteers with identifying and counting birds visiting the bird feeders on Sunday afternoons. No experience necessary. Takes place indoors.

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

Volunteer Recognition

We extend a sincere thank you to our April, May, June, and July 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	Paul Hobe
Joseph Balogh	Megan Hoover
Ken Blake	Judy Horn
Rick Blessing	Emily Keller
Adrienne Bock	Lester Lozier
Adrianna Border	Barbara Lyons
Katriel Border	Jared Marsh
Lani Border	Martha
Ruth Border	McClagherty
Thaddeus Border	Larry Miller
Boy Scout Troop 15	Heather Milliken Mercer
Patty Bruey	Rebecca O'Neill
Phyllis Case	Carol Pancake
Kathy Chambers	Sophie Ramsey
Mark Clough	Patty Rickard
Shirley DeMaiolo	Glen Robertson
Alan Dolan	Nate Ross
Lee Dolan	Liz Ross Jones
Elayne Dunlap	Logan Sable
Jim Dutter	Jennifer Simpson
Al Eibel	Susan Smith
Devin Farmiloe	Darla Sutton
Cathy Hart	Rich Sutton (father)
Deb Hatherill	Rich Sutton (son)
Jane Helwig	Stan Vuletich
Ann Hendel	

Additional gratitude is extended to the **Canton Fiber Arts Guild** and **ArtsinStark** for presenting a free, collaborative, and well-attended afternoon program, "Fiber Arts through the Ages," for the general public. Thanks to **DeHoff's Flowers and Greenhouse** and **Ream's Greenhouse** for donating flowers to plant on the Pollinator Mound Habitat at the University of Mount Union campus. And, as always, thank you to **Mount Union Mill** for their continuous donations of bird seed.

Volunteer Opportunities Share Your Love of Gardening!

Now in our 14th year, the Children's Hands-On Gardening Program continues to serve Alliance-area third and fourth grade students. The students visit the Nature Center four times during one growing season to learn about, and get hands-on experience with, gardening. Third grade students come in March and May, and then return as fourth-graders in September and November. Students visit from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and cycle through activity stations in small groups that reflect the season and theme of their visit. The themes are Germination/Plant Life Cycle, Plant Parts and Functions, and Pollination in the spring. The fall includes Seeds to Salsa Harvest, followed by Soil/Nutrient Cycling. With this basic knowledge and hands-on experience of an entire growing season in Ohio, we hope these students are inspired and confident to plant in pots or gardens at their homes for years to come. Volunteers are needed to help facilitate the activity stations on a variety of dates in both spring and fall. For more information about this volunteer opportunity, please contact Bonnie Twaddle at (330) 823-7487 or twaddlb@mountunion.edu.

October is Campus Sustainability Month

Jamie Greiner

Held every October, Campus Sustainability Month is an international celebration of sustainability in higher education. Throughout the month, colleges and universities, like the University of Mount Union, organize events to engage and inspire the campus community, as well as the larger community, to live in a more sustainable manner. Here are ways that you can live a more sustainable lifestyle:

- 1) Reduce your consumption of electricity by doing the following: replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs, turn off the lights before leaving a room, unplug all chargers when not in use, use a programmable thermostat, wash full loads of laundry in cold water, and dry clothes on a drying rack in place of using a dryer.
- 2) Reduce your consumption of water by doing the following: drink tap water instead of purchasing bottled water, turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth, shaving, etc., and reduce your shower time (try five minutes).
- 3) Reduce your waste by doing the following: recycle all paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, and glass bottles that cannot be reused, buy recycled and used products, put food and drinks in reusable containers, avoid unnecessary items such as straws and plastic cups, bring reusable bags to the grocery store, and reuse items whenever possible.
- 4) Reduce your ecological footprint by doing the following: buy local and seasonal foods and support local farmers and companies, eat less meat, print only when necessary and print double-sided, spend more time outdoors exploring and enjoying nature, and promote and support renewable energy sources.
- 5) Be more socially and economically responsible by doing the following: buy goods manufactured under fair conditions, such as "fair trade" certified, donate unneeded or excess food and other items to food pantries and thrift shops, and vote.

These are just a few suggestions for incorporating sustainability into your lifestyle. Come to the October 21 program – Plastics in the Environment – to learn more!

The Nitty Gritty on the Ground

Mike Greiner

If you've spent any amount of time around the Nature Center this summer, you've seen lots going on. Most notably is the completion of a 100-foot long bridge connecting Hickory Trail to Huston Woods Trail. This project was started late last fall with excavation and the pouring of concrete for footers. After some wet weather throughout the spring delaying our work, the bridge finally came together at the end of June. Be sure to make some time in your schedule to hike out to this destination piece.

An Eagle Scout candidate, Logan Sable, and Boy Scouts from Troop 15 (Louisville, OH) completed an Eagle Project in June by improving the trail surface on the front loop of the Huston Farm Trail. The 300-foot section of trail was edged with 6 x 6 timbers, lined with fabric matting and filled with over 20 tons of stone. The previous trail condition with ankle-deep mud made the trail almost impassable most of the year. But now the trail surface is elevated above the mud and new drainage should allow water to flow through.

The old garden fence has been replaced to help protect our Children's Garden crops from pesky invaders gathering vegetables.

But just because it's the end of summer doesn't mean the projects stop. The staff has been working hard with an outside



consultant to improve trail wayfinding throughout the grounds. Improvements will include new trail marking posts, wayfinding signs, maps, trails, and reorganizing of trail names. Watch for these improvements across the property and follow our progress on Facebook and Instagram. Enjoy the improvements!



Save the Date

17th Annual Photography Contest

Photo submissions for the Nature Center's 17th Annual Nature Photography Contest and Exhibit will be accepted beginning in February. There is still plenty of time to capture the perfect shot of your favorite subject, season, or landscape. Participation is free, but submissions are limited to nature photos captured in eastern Ohio, including Lake Erie and the Ohio River basin. Photographers must be amateurs.

Contest categories are Wildlife – Vertebrates, Wildlife – Invertebrates, Wild Plants, Landscapes, Seasons, Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center, Mount Union campus, Black and White, and Youth (photos by children 8 to 12 years old).

All category winners will be eligible for Best in Show, and all accepted photos will be eligible for People's Choice votes. An artists' reception and exhibit opening is scheduled for February 22 from 6 to 8 p.m. Contest details and entry forms will be available by February 1.



The John T. Huston-Dr. John D.
Brumbaugh Nature Center
1972 Clark Ave.
Alliance, OH 44601

Non-Profit
Organization
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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