



UP THE CREEK

THE MONDAY CREEK NEWSLETTER

Monday Creek Restoration Project

Volume 9 • Number 1 • Summer 2003

A publication of Rural Action

Recreation in Monday Creek



This issue of *Up The Creek* focuses on recreation. There are a variety of recreation opportunities available to residents and visitors to the Monday Creek Watershed. The cover photo is of a portion of Greendale Wetland, one of the many scenic areas in the Watershed. In this issue, Bob Placier, instructor in the School of Natural Resources at Hocking College, describes his experiences in bird sightings in the wetland habitat. By improving water quality and restoring land resources, Monday Creek Restoration Project is working to enhance recreational enjoyment.

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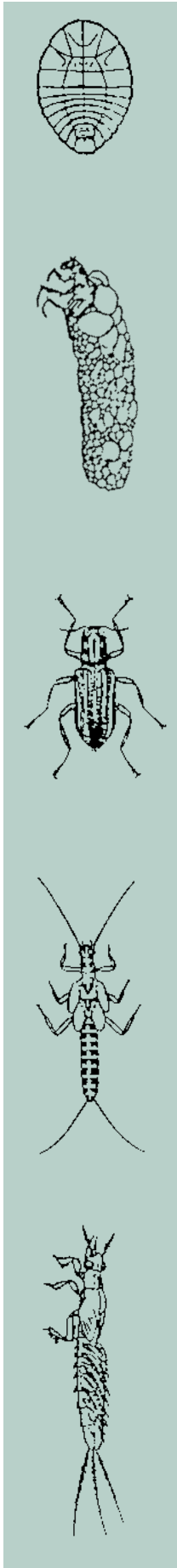
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This publication was financed through a grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, under the provisions of Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act. It is published biannually by Rural Action, our sponsoring agency (www.ruralaction.org). Printed on 100% post consumer recycled paper with soy inks.



From the Coordinator's Desk



Mike Steinmaus receives the Bill Miller Award for 2003 for contributions to the Buckeye Trail Association from Rick Pfeiffer, Buckeye Trail Supervisor.

I just came in from a three-mile canoe float on Monday Creek from Carbon Hill to the ORV trailhead along Carbon Hill-Buchtel Road. With all the rain we've had this summer, the creek was higher than it's been during some spring floats. However, the rains have brought down a few more trees along the banks and resulted in more logjams than I've seen in the past.

Paddling Monday Creek is a rejuvenating experience. Deep, smooth, pond-like waters give way to small rapids and long shallow riffles where the canoe scrapes on the pebbles. Great blue heron rise with slow wing beats as you round a bend. Ducks fly ahead and land in an endless game of tag with the canoe.

Monday Creek has a lot to offer throughout the year. In the Spring, with high water, it's easy paddling for long reaches. You're likely to see a duck with a brood of ducklings hiding behind a root mass. In Summer the creek is usually low, but the canopy of silver maples and sycamores cools the paddlers as they work around gravel bars and logjams. In the Fall, the creek reflects the shades of gold and red of surrounding trees and hillsides. In Winter, you can walk along the frozen stream observing the tracks of deer, fox and squirrels.

As you read this issue, consider the priceless quality of the Monday Creek Watershed – the rolling hills; vast woodlands; ponds, wetlands and streams; and wildlife. Make a commitment to maintain and preserve these wonderful resources, so that we can enjoy them for many years to come.

Mike Steinmaus, Monday Creek Watershed Coordinator

Greendale Wetlands



By Bob Placier, Hocking College

The Monday Creek Watershed is blessed with a number of interesting locales, both historic and natural. One of my favorite bird-watching spots, Greendale Wetland, combines the two. The wetland is located along State Route 595 in Hocking County, just past the old company town of Greendale if you're traveling towards New Straitsville. It has been designated as one of Ohio's Watchable Wildlife Areas.

When Greendale's clay products plant was operating, it (and many other factories and mines) in the thriving Monday Creek valley were served by a now-abandoned railroad line largely responsible for the formation of the wetland. The largest part of the wetland lies between the highway and the railroad grade. Some years back, Wayne National Forest acquired the property and planted white pines in what was apparently a farm field. Years later, beaver moved into the drainage and built their dam where the railbed passed over a culvert, thus flooding the area and killing the pines. Wetland areas also lie between the railroad grade and nearby Monday Creek. When one now walks the railroad grade, wetlands are present on both sides.

I started visiting the area in 1996. Birding is not only a hobby for me, but

*Photos from U.S. FWS
Above:
Wood Ducks, Tim McCabe
Right: Great Blue Heron,
Herb Stein*

also part of my profession. I like to combine bird-watching with record-keeping in hopes to add to our knowledge of local birdlife. Over the years, I've found myself visiting the wetland more frequently. From 1996 through 2001, I birded there 167 mornings, walking the length of the railbed.

What did I see? And hear? An even 140 species of birds. In every season there were interesting birds. Spring brought migrants: shorebirds, waterfowl, and songbirds— some of which were passing through, and some who stayed to nest. It's a wonderful place to see wood ducks, mallards, hooded mergansers, and both great blue and green herons. These birds often could be found through the summer, but had to compete for attention with gaudy Baltimore orioles and scarlet tanagers, and the ethereal song of the wood thrush. Fall brought back migrants, including the stately great egret. Interesting birds also arrived throughout the winter, some making the wetland their winter home. The hermit thrush, winter wren, and feisty little red-



breasted nuthatch all could be found wintering in Greendale. Raptors are present year-round, especially red-shouldered hawks and barred owls, for which bottomland forests provide the best habitat.

Birds were not the only attraction. It was fun to watch the beaver go about their chores, to see muskrats and the occasional glimpse of a mink. A variety of frogs added their songs to the spring and summer choruses, and painted turtles sunned themselves on every log. Add in some stunning butterflies, numerous dragon and damselflies and the flowers that bloomed there spring through fall, and you begin to understand the full picture of Greendale Wetland.

Caught up in researching some other areas, I don't get back to Greendale much these days. But whenever people ask me about good places to go birding, the wetland is always near the top of my list. I'm sure there are still more birds to be seen, so if you get out there let me know what you see. I know you'll have a good time!

Trash Day

By Matt Woods,
Monday Creek VISTA

This spring, all the rainy days just kind of ran together. One day that stood out for me was Saturday, May 31. It started out like any other rainy Saturday morning, full of disappointment because I wouldn't be fishing, again. But by 9 a.m. I was in Murray City, meeting up with Boy Scout Troop 60 for their annual trash pick up on State Route 78.

When we picked up signs, vests and gloves from the Department of Transportation garage earlier in the week the workers laughed when I said we were picking up trash between Murray City and Buchtel. They actually brought an additional box of trash bags for us, stating "That is one of the trashiest stretches of road around." I hate to say it but they were right.

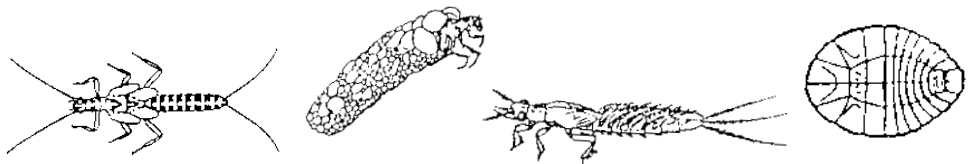
A group of fourteen scouts and scout leaders worked from 9 o'clock until noon, in the rain, picking up trash that didn't belong to any of us.



Wet volunteers celebrating a job well done and lunchtime.

Now, less than a week later on my daily drive to work, I see that people have already begun to throw their trash along this roadway again. I don't understand why these people apparently have a lack of pride for this beautiful area. I don't understand why that bag of fast food

trash cannot ride home with them, to their own trashcan and why their beer bottles cannot be recycled. I don't know if it's ignorance or apathy or a combination of both. Whatever it is, it needs correcting. Take some pride in where you're from and where you live!



Education: Identifying Water Bugs

By Matt Woods, Monday Creek VISTA

"Macroinvertebrate" is a pretty big word for a 6th grader. However, when you introduce them as "water bugs" everyone knows what you are talking about, even if they don't realize they are the same thing. I spent May 14th and 15th as an instructor for an outdoor education program at Camp Akita. I informed the students about macroinvertebrate habitat, sampling, and identification, as well as water pollution and acid mine drainage. I was pleasantly surprised at how much the students knew about acid mine drainage, and how quickly they began to identify macroinvertebrates that we caught in a nearby creek. We found an abundant supply of "water bugs" in the clean little stream that ran out of the lake and everyone enjoyed getting their feet wet.

On Monday Creek

Tree Planting

By Matt Woods, Monday Creek VISTA

The field grass was thick and the weather was cold, but the Friends of Monday Creek still managed to plant about 1,000 trees on April 5. Area youth and residents met at the corner of State Route 155 and New England Road in Shawnee, Ohio, on that cold spring morning.

The day started with a brief demonstration on how to plant black locust and Virginia pine seedlings. Volunteers then split into groups of two, one with the planting bar and the other with the bag of seedlings.

Ten volunteers, including local youth from the Southern Perry County Youth Arts and Media (SPiCYAM) Center, worked until after lunch before calling it a day. Monday Creek Restoration Project would like to thank the U.S. Forest Service for supplying tools and trees, and SPiCYAM and area residents for coming out in support.



Fishing, Remembering

By Mitch Farley, ODNR-MRM

I love Southeastern Ohio. My family is originally from West Virginia and I always enjoyed visiting my Grandparents' high mountain farm. My parents now live between Columbus and Dayton, in the flat, row crop country of Clinton County. The hills, streams and valleys of our area are as close to heaven as I can find and not be too far from the rest of my family.

One time-honored tradition in my family (and often a point of sustenance in the not-so-distant past) is fishing. I fished with my Grandfather, Uncle and Father on the New River, the Greenbrier River and other bright waterways. They are clean, cool and hopping with aquatic life. As an adult, most of my travel and vacations include some time fishing in, or at least visiting, streams and rivers. I suppose this is because I live at ground zero of Ohio's acid mine drainage-polluted waterways. North of my home is Moxahala Creek, east is Sunday Creek and west is Monday Creek, all streams that are profoundly impacted by acid mine drainage. Only the Hocking River provides a taste of the wading and casting fix I need in the summer. I search for the fish at the top of the food chain,



Micropterus dolomieu (that's Mr. Smallmouth Bass to you!).

My friend Joe Mills of the Maryland Department of the Environment has been working on mine drainage remediation projects for years along the North Branch of the Potomac River. The river has been returned to a prime trout fishery due to his agency's efforts. Each April, Joe and I make a pilgrimage to the North Branch to remind us of what the goal of our work is and what great things are possible.

Trout fisheries are hugely important to the economy and quality of life in many parts of the country. We don't have trout in Southeast Ohio, so capturing the public's attention with stream restoration activities is a bit more difficult. We have not had a normal, healthy stream resource in so long, perhaps we have forgotten why it was so valuable to our predecessors.

So here's a remedy: get out on a creek soon. Do some wading, turn over a few rocks; you may begin to remember...

Have You Seen these Fish in Monday Creek?

These three species of fish all have one thing in common. That's right, they are all found in the Monday Creek Watershed. The Creek Chub is the most abundant. It comprises 40% of the total fish population. The Southern Redbelly Dace constitutes 15% and the Central Stoneroller makes up another 8%. That means over half of all fish in Monday Creek are one of these three species. All three are pollution-tolerant, which means they can live in less-than-ideal conditions such as the acid mine drainage-impacted streams of Monday Creek. The Creek Chub can be caught with a net and used as bait for other species such as Bass, Catfish and Crappie. Keep your eyes peeled for these little guys swimming around. You might just find a hungry Largemouth Bass or a Green Sunfish nearby looking for lunch.



This page, top to bottom: Creek Chub, Southern Redbelly Dace, and Central Stoneroller

PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

OUR MISSION:

The Monday Creek Restoration Project is a Partnership committed to improving the watershed health for the benefit of the community.



BENEFITS:

Newsletter, Watershed Tours, Float Trips, Volunteer Opportunities and, best of all, helping make the watershed beautiful again.

MEMBERSHIP

MCRP'S coordinator provides support to the Monday Creek project as well as many other community endeavors, through community organizing, networking, and development efforts.

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PO Box 129
New Straitsville, OH 43766**

Questions? call 740-394-2047

Looking Back

When we were young in New Straitsville



*By Wanda Wallace Martin
New Straitsville History Group Member*

When we were young in New Straitsville (in the 1930s), it seemed we always had a group that played together. I remember on warm summer nights, while our mothers were inside quilting, we would play outdoors, even as the streetlights came on. We played games with names like “Go-Sheepy-Go,” “May I” and “Hide-and-Seek.”

A little after dark, my mother would yell, “Time to come in and wash your feet and go to bed.” I guess we were

pretty dirty in our bare feet.

Sometimes my mother would take us to the sand bank and baseball diamond across from the schoolhouse and back on the hill. We would go the back way and by the time we got to the hill-top we would be joined by ten or more kids and three or four mothers. The young ones played in the sand and the older ones played ball while the mothers enjoyed sitting and chatting (and I think a wee bit of gossiping!)

One of my memories that stands out is the man who cleaned out the outside toilets, which we all had. Carrying the chamber out to the toilet was one of my jobs and I hated it. Even to this day I thank God often for my bathroom and am glad the other is only a memory.

Joe Reed, who was also called “The Honey Dipper,” was a big man with dark hair and a dark handlebar mustache. He wore old baggy overalls and long underwear that always looked dirty at the neckline. He wore a red bandana around his neck and I always thought it was to cover his nose from the smell. He drove a big flatbed truck loaded with barrels, brooms, rags and other items. His helper was a hometown boy called “Bubbles.”

When we kids saw Joe Reed on the move, we would follow him and watch from a distance as he filled the barrels. The smell would eventually get to us and we would leave one by one. The people depended on Mr. Reed to keep their out-houses useable. Mr. Reed is one of my childhood memories.

Watershed Events

Ohio Mineland Partnership Fall Conference, featuring a tour of Sunday Creek and Monday Creek: **October 7-8**

Fall Watershed Tour: **October 11**

Buckeye Trail Hikes **To Be Announced**

Friends of Monday Creek Meeting **November 5**

Visit www.mondaycreek.org or call 740-394-2047 for more details.

Monday Creek Restoration Project

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