

A Walk on the Wild[flower] Side *(continued from inside)*

In the decades since the Quarry Farm ceased to be a pasture, the vegetation has transitioned from grassland to woodland. The tree cover has shaded out much of the tall grass where violets grew in profusion, but they have hung on in smaller, shorter numbers. They are accompanied here and there by yellow and white violets. Along the upland trail, and in several other locations, are patches of May-apple, whose umbrella-like leaves hide the flowers underneath. Jack-in-the-Pulpits grow in this area, as well as one determined clump of Toad Shade, a reddish-flowered Trillium.



Toadshade, just before these Trilliums opened their burgundy blooms

Tammy Spillis, led a group around the Quarry Farm, identifying wild plants and sharing fascinating details about them. Among others, we met Wild Ginger, with its two heart-shaped leaves shading a single flower near the ground; Solomon's Seal (paired flowers dangling between the leaves) and False Solomon's Seal (a spray of flowers at the end of a stalk). Heavy rains and flooding later dislodged the footbridge across Cranberry Run, putting an end to discovery walks that season.

A dog-eared copy of Peterson and McKenny's *A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and North-central North America* labels some of our wildflowers alien (having come from somewhere else by various means and taken up residence). Several examples: Dame's Rocket, Trout Lilies (native to southern Europe) and Moneywort (yellow-flowered, round-leafed ground cover), which settlers may have brought with them.

With help from experts, field guides and the internet, we aim to learn and share more about the wildflowers and plants of The Quarry Farm in spring, summer and fall, including natives that we introduce to support pollinators and other wildlife. Watch for lists of plants growing here and opportunities to visit them on our website and in future newsletters.

—The Gardener at The Quarry Farm

Blood Root, with its pretty lobed leaves and white flowers, blooms in the rich soil of the upland surrounding an old stone-lined well. At the wood's edge tall, fragrant Dame's Rocket appears in late spring. Often mistaken for Wild Phlox, its pink, lavender and white flowers have four petals to Phlox's five. In the old stone quarry, which has silted in to become a wetland, Lizard's Tail and more Blue Flags now grow.

One particularly wet season several years ago, Henry County naturalist,



Wild Ginger



Bloodroot



Give (or get) a perfect gift

Exclusive Quarry Farm mugs, designed by Continental artist Brandon Knott, are fresh from the kiln and ready for purchase. The mugs are **\$20 each** and are glazed in a variety of colors. Complete the order form below and send, with cash or check, to:

The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve & Conservation Farm
14321 Road 7L
Pandora, OH 45877

Proceeds from the sale of the mugs benefit educational programs and animal care.

Name _____

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How many mugs? _____

What colors do you prefer? (list 3): _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Please include \$2.00 for shipping per mug. Local delivery is available.

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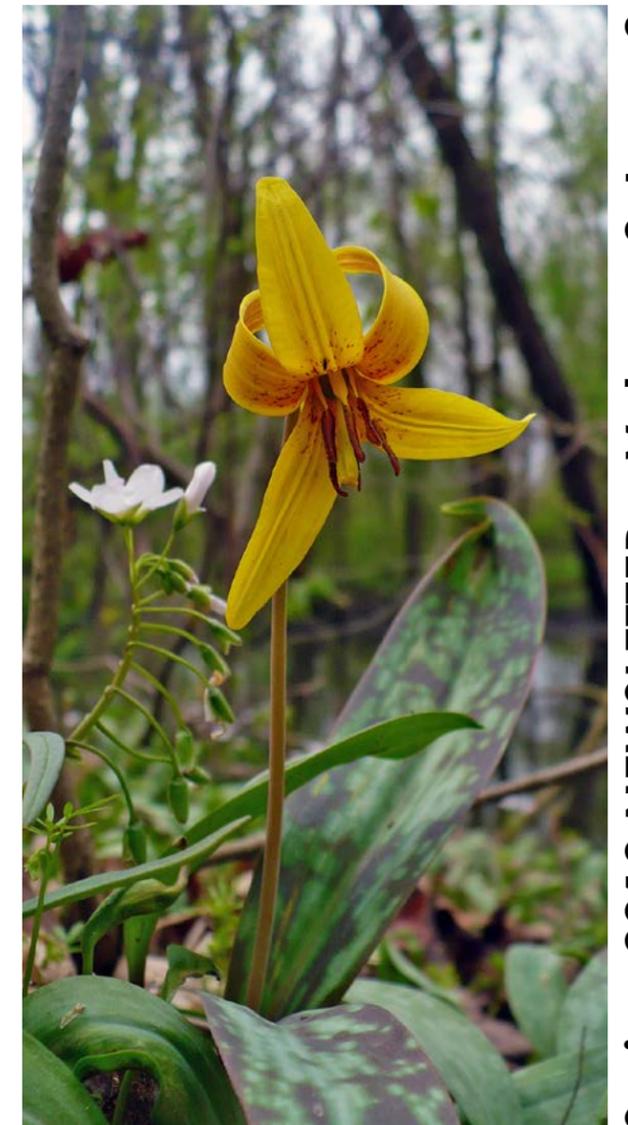
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Questions? Call 419-384-7195, email thequarryfarm@gmail.com or visit us online at www.thequarryfarm.org.

Donations to The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve & Conservation Farm, a 501(c)3 public charity, are tax-deductible.





Mission Statement

It is our goal and mission to provide the opportunity for people of all ages to increase their understanding of the natural environment of Northwest Ohio and to interact with their fellow inhabitants in a sustainable manner.



Red Fox Cabin in spring

The Quarry Farm Newsletter is a quarterly publication for supporters of The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve & Conservation Farm, a nonprofit organization in Pandora, Ohio.

On the cover: Trout lilies bloom above the oxbow in spring

All photographs printed in this newsletter were taken on The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve & Conservation Farm.

www.thequarryfarm.org

Printed on recycled, recyclable paper

Under one big sky

It was cold but warmer in the shelter of the trees for the first Hat Day Hike. Headgear featured a dinosaur, a sunflower, snugly ear flaps and a fluffy snowball. Hometown Stations' Katie Honigford joined us for the first leg from the Seitz Family Pavilion, down the hill to the footbridge. Naturalist Natalie shared her track ID skills with the group, which led us to White-Tailed Deer, Squirrels, and on the trail of Wild Turkeys.

Bird populations are always shifting and changing. Each February, the National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology team up to coordinate the Great Backyard Bird Count. On February 17, Day two of the four-day count, we walked the trails with a group of Putnam County Boy Scouts to document the many species of birds that shelter in the preserve, as well as those that stop by on their annual migration. We saw and heard Woodpeckers: Downy, Hairy and Red-Belly. Nuthatches ran up and down branches. We recorded audio and are identifying sparrow and other birds by their calls. All identified species will be submitted to the international count as part of the largest snapshot of global bird populations.

Just a day after the count, the first "meezzzzp" call of an American Woodcock sounded in the grassland as the bird hurtled across the evening sky. Turkey Vultures are soaring along Riley Creek at the northeast corner of the preserve. Moles are lifting earth here and there, improving soil by loosening, aerating and fertilizing. Check out the EVENTS on the next page and plan to visit.

A Walk on the Wild[flower] Side

When I was a child, a broad, open path angled from the road downhill to Cranberry Run on what is now The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve. In the spring in the tall grass along the path, which jumped the stream to the pasture beyond and traveled around the old stone quarry, thousands of wood violets stretched their heads toward the sky, mirroring its intense blue. Whenever I walked the path, that vision thrilled me and gave rise to a lifelong love of violets and other spring wildflowers we are continuing to learn about on The Quarry Farm.



Spring Beauties are among the first wildflowers in Northwest Ohio.

For countless years, Cranberry Run twisted its way from the southern edge of the farm, carving an oxbow on the way. On the wooded slope to the east above it grew patches of Dutchman's Breeches, delicate Spring Beauties and yellow Trout Lilies (pictured on the cover; also called Dog Tooth Violets because of the dog tooth-shaped bulb). An ill-considered outside attempt to turn Cranberry Run into a ditch cut off the oxbow, creating a vernal pool where Arrowhead and Blue Flags soon took root.

(continued on back page)



Wendy Chappell-Dick poses with her prize for hinting at summer with her sunflower hat on January 14.



Cold weather hikes always end with hot chocolate and cookies.

Resident Spotlight

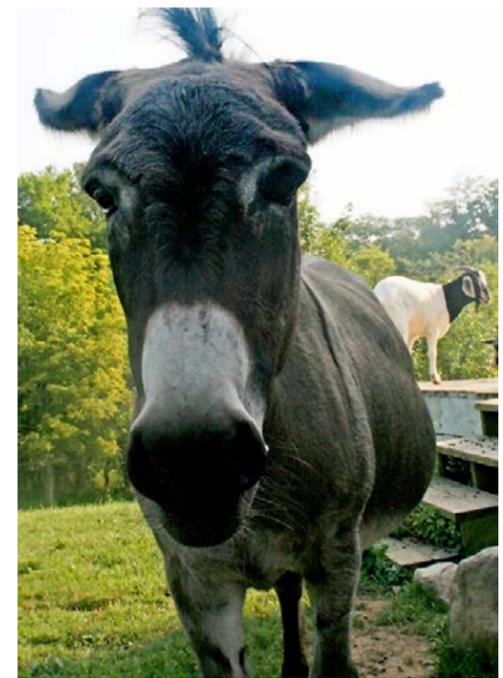
Lucy & Mister Bill

If there is one thing we have learned here on The Quarry Farm, it's that nature is full of surprises. Sometimes the natural world is a rollercoaster ride with thrilling twists and (sometimes scary) turns. Think of a thunderstorm or a rushing river, or the first time you walk through a forest at night and hear a great horned owl hoot above your head. Sometimes nature is a gentle thing: the light feet of a butterfly that graces your arm with its presence or the soft 'whuff' of a sleeping dog's breath.

We are surprised every day by the residents of the farm animal sanctuary. Most of the animals came here from former lives filled with painful abuse and loneliness, but each and every one of them follows along with visiting groups of humans. Sophie, a potbellied pig, even makes field trips to libraries and classrooms (see EVENTS below.)

But the biggest surprises, for we humans anyway, are in the way the animals interact with each other. They form friendships with one or more individuals, often of different species. Even if they aren't friends with everybody, they look out for each other.

One rainy, chilly February evening just after sunset, Lucy started hinning. She and fellow donkey Buddy normally take shelter in a barn in wet weather. That night, Lucy was out in the open, puffing and keening on the hillside. Mister Bill lay supine and helpless at her feet. The giant goat had twisted his winter coat in such a way that he fell. He'd worked the ground into slippery mud and couldn't get up. We got him walking, gave him peanuts and put him to bed. As soon as she knew Bill was OK, Lucy walked away. These two don't usually hang out together, but Lucy knew Bill needed help and she made sure we did, too.



Lucy and Mister Bill keep cool on a warm summer day. Both wear waterproof winter coats during the coldest weeks of winter.

Spring 2018 Programs & Events

Golden Snitch Walks

Friday, March 9, 6 to 7 p.m. & Saturday, April 7, 7 to 8 p.m.

Meet in Seitz Family Pavilion, 1/8 mile north of 14321 Road 7L, Pandora

If you're a fan of Harry Potter, you'll be familiar with the game of Quidditch and the round, winged Golden Snitch that players must catch to win. Join us for an evening hike where we will listen for the whistling wings of nature's own Golden Snitch—the American Woodcock. We may also spot emerging wildflowers, flocks of wild turkeys and migrating turkey vultures. This event is free, but preregister the day before by calling 419-384-7195 or by emailing thequarryfarm@gmail.com.

Puppetry Workshop

Saturday, May 12, 1 to 3 p.m.

Meet in Seitz Family Pavilion, 1/8 mile north of 14321 Road 7L, Pandora

Participants will be able to make a puppet that looks like the creatures that live on The Quarry Farm. We will set up a table-top theater so that finished puppets and their creators can perform. Preregister by calling 419-384-7195 or by emailing thequarryfarm@gmail.com. Cost: \$10 per person for materials.

Putnam County District Library: Libraries Rock!

June 18, 19, 20, & 21 (11 a.m. & 1 p.m. daily)

Learn about Northwest Ohio creatures that hide under rocks and those who turn over rocks to find food. Visitors will meet Sophie the potbellied pig who roots under rocks and soil and Tyree the cornsnake who takes shelter under rocks. We'll be at a different PCDL branch location each day. Check <http://mypcdl.org/calendar/month> for the schedule.

Pollinator Garden Open House

Saturday, July 7, time to be determined

Mark your calendar for a tour of the gardens around c. 1853 Red Fox Cabin. Putnam County Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer questions. Watch our website and Facebook page for further details.

Thank you...

...to Daryl and Peg Bridenbaugh for straw bales
 ...to Hoen's Orchard for apples (and to Denise Gehring for pointing the way)
 ...to Paul Nusbaum for trail maintenance

Monetary Donations:

Doug and Sandy Downing
 Mike Erchenbrecher
 Mary K. Mack
 William and Carole Schumacher

WISH LIST

The following items are needed for garden and visitor trail development and educational animal ambassador rehabilitation, care and handling. Please call 419-384-7195 or email thequarryfarm@gmail.com if you can supply anything on the list.

- unsalted tree nuts in the shell (acorns, almonds, hazelnuts)
- volunteers to work in the garden