

The Rock

This is Year Two for the Putnam County Master Gardener Volunteers' pollinator garden, which sits next to Red Fox Cabin at The Quarry Farm. A 2017 newsletter described how three committees selected native plants, designed a layout, planned hardscape features and then installed the garden. By late May 2018, most plants are spreading nicely along the curving stone-lined path, except for a few gaps where unhappy species need to be replaced. Decaying logs and a bee block sit in one corner and a plum-colored tricycle in another—just for fun, although butterflies and birds are welcome to perch on it. Until several days ago only one planned hardscape feature was missing from the pollinator garden: a big rock.



Bearded Iris at Red Fox Cabin

During the 1990s, some very large rocks were pushed and dragged to Red Fox Garden from resting places around The Quarry Farm where they had been deposited by a retreating glacier or 19th century quarrying. Master Gardeners studied the available candidates for the pollinator garden and decided on a small rounded boulder, just a short haul away from the spot appointed for a rock in a circle of Joe Pye Weed. The boulder was nesting cozily against a clump of evergreens like a big fat broody hen, having burrowed deeper into its spot year by year.

Once the rock was chosen, head-scratching and chin-stroking ensued: How to wrestle that boulder out of its surroundings in the evergreens and moved it the distance to the pollinator garden? Months passed. Several Master Gardener meetings came and

went. When asked to report on the progress of the garden, I would describe how well the plants were holding up against dry spells, hungry critters, weedy invaders, etc., and end with, "But we still need to move the rock." Members would murmur, "Ah, yes—The Rock," and a discussion of ways and means would follow.

Finally this spring, one attempt proved that a strong man with a five-foot crowbar couldn't pry The Rock from its nest. It was clearly a job for a mule team or a Bobcat—the mechanical kind with a skilled operator like Sheldon "Red" Doud, a supportive Master Gardener spouse. Red had already demonstrated his skill by deftly maneuvering his Bobcat around the garden confines (without leaving a trace) during construction of the pollinator garden. Red generously agreed to tackle the "Rocky" challenge, and several days ago trucked his Bobcat across Putnam County, where he would not only attempt to move The Rock, but also help Master Gardener President Joe Hovest put in a new fence around the pollinator garden.

As Joe and Red were installing the first section of fencing, I left on an errand to fetch more cable ties—and donuts for a coffee break. Later, break over, I stepped off the porch, heading out on another errand to exchange the cable ties for the right size—and did a double take. There at the base of the evergreens was a hole where The Rock had been. I exclaimed with awe and delight over the feat that Red and the Bobcat had accomplished in my absence. Said Red with a wry smile, "It only took about five minutes."

—The Gardener at The Quarry Farm



Thanks to Putnam County Master Gardener Joe Hovest (above), Sheldon "Red" Doud and a Bobcat, the pollinator Garden is protected from nibblers and has The (perfect) Rock (below.)



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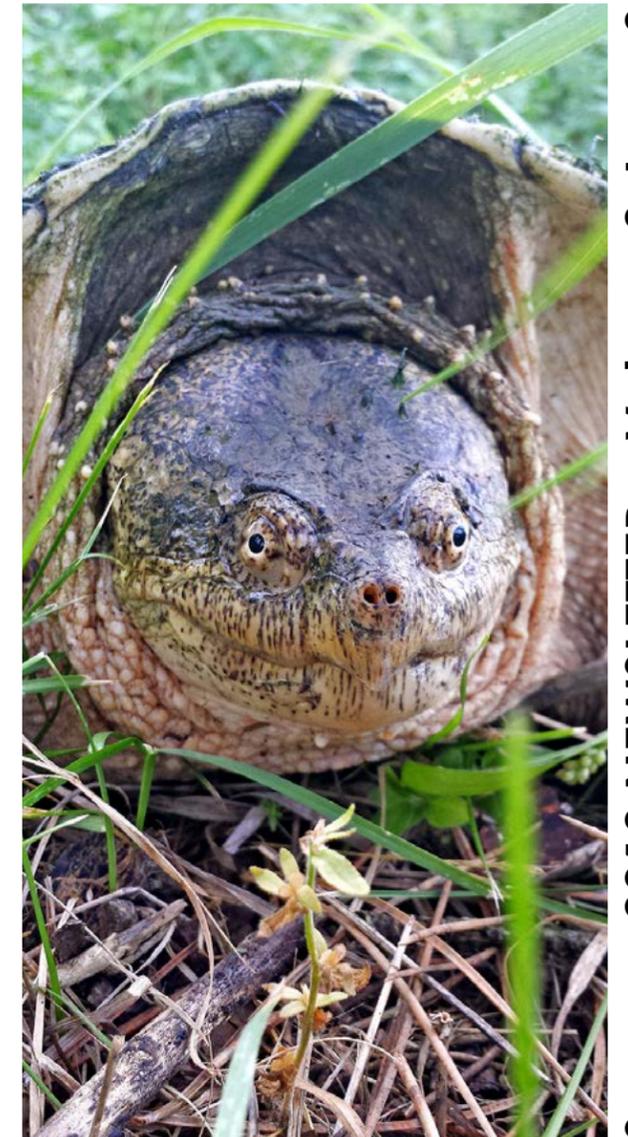
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Donations to The Quarry Farm Nature Preserve & Conservation Farm, a 501(c)3 public charity, are tax-deductible.

**THE Quarry FARM**
NATURE PRESERVE & CONSERVATION FARM
14321 Road 7L
Pandora, OH 45877



NATURE PRESERVE & CONSERVATION FARM



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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.



Jewelweed, very useful in treating poison ivy, blooms in the floodplain.

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: A female snapping turtle lays eggs on the banks of Cranberry Run

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

www.thequarryfarm.org

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Ottawa Elementary Third Grade students packed the shelter house and picnic tables for lunch.

the air. Preschool students from Patrick Henry joined us for two days. They met Tyree the Cornsnake, made lasting leaf t-shirts like no other, took a smelling hike through the gardens and watched fish swim in the stream. Later in the month, the entire third grade class from Ottawa Elementary joined us, adding to their agenda a meet-and-greet with a Honey Locust Tree and a big picnic lunch in the Seitz Family Pavilion.

And true to form, Buttercup the Bronze Turkey attempted to pick the pocket of every visitor to The Quarry Farm.

Under one big sky

Spring certainly came in like a lamb this year, on the ice cold breath of a winter lion. If you joined us for our first Golden Snitch Walks, you'll know that more than one of nature's own Golden Snitch—the American Woodcock—were hurtling around the back grassland on March 9 despite the cold. We heard them neeet! and whistle until a Great-Horned Owl began to call, silencing all potential prey. By the second walk on April 7, all but a couple of these long-billed, baseball-bodied birds had hurled themselves to northern climes.

The air warmed and May was hopping. Woodducks nested in the trees above the quarry, as did a variety of herons. Tree and cricket frogs began to sing and dragonflies took to



Patrick Henry Preschool students made leafy shirts, in colors of spring.

The bridges that Paul built

Paul Nusbaum grew up near The Quarry Farm. He is an avid outdoorsman, farmer and educator. Over a decade ago, he shared his passion for Ohio History by dressing in Ohio Pioneer costume and demonstrating fire-starting for one of our visiting school groups. For years now, The Quarry Farm has been lucky to include Paul as a member of our Board of Directors. We can only assume that Paul isn't planning another cross-country bike trek this year as he has devoted a great deal of time and expertise to building bridges on the nature preserve.



Thanks to Paul Nusbaum, a platform bridge solidly spans the historic stone quarry overflow.

The first bridge is actually the spit of land, approximately 20 to 25 feet wide, between the quarry wetland and Cranberry Run. In April, Paul cleared invasive bush honeysuckle and two downed trees from the strip, opening a path that will serve as an open-air land lab between two distinct aquatic habitats.

The second bridge is the existing Cranberry Run footbridge. Rushing fall flood waters had removed several boards, the angled approach and left one of the main supports in a state of decay. Thanks to Paul, the bridge is solid, yet still allows for the rise and fall of water after heavy rains.

The third bridge spans a deep overflow channel developed over a century ago by a stone quarry operation. The new platform offers smooth passage and is a perfect observation area for watching migrating birds, spring babies and listening to amphibian calls.

Resident Spotlight Greggie & Co.

Many of the animals who are at home on the farm animal sanctuary are survivors of neglect, abuse or both. In some cases, as with Sophie the pot-bellied pig, the abuse was criminally severe. Although you realize this when you look at her blind, under-developed eyes, ragged ears and bald patches, her friendly, curious disposition at libraries and schools negates the fact. Such is the capacity of animals to trust, if given the opportunity to heal in peace.

On the other hand, there are several friends living here that came here from the best of care. Greggie the Royal Palm Turkey is a good example. Greggie arrived at The Quarry Farm this spring. Her person is a professional musician with a blossoming career that keeps her and her family on the road. Although they were able to find excellent homes for the other farm animals on their northern Kentucky mountaintop, Greggie, a bantee rooster and hen, and a guinea fowl made the trek north to Putnam County.

The two bantees roost on Lucy the donkey of an evening, and with the chickens in the henhouse at night. Mister Pearl the Guinea opts for the kitchen pergola or the Kentucky Coffee Tree. He announces the setting of the sun each and every day. Greggie, like her fellow turkey hens Buttercup, Waddles and Tiny, cluster around Max the Tom on the barnyard gate. Max positively glows these days, and it's not due to the 90-degree heat.



Summer 2018 Programs & Events

Putnam County District Library: Libraries Rock!

June 18, 19, 20, & 21 (11 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. each day)

Learn about Northwest Ohio creatures that hide under rocks and those who turn over rocks to find food. Visitors may meet Quinn the Red Fox who stashes treasures 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.

Family Day

Saturday, August 4, 1 to 4 p.m.

Seitz Family Pavilion, 1/8 mile north of 14321 Road 7L, Pandora
Bring yourself, friends and family for an afternoon of fun in the gardens, woods and wetlands. See how to make a wren house from a gourd. Make a walking staff and take it with you along the trails to count butterflies and Blanchard's cricket frogs and visit residents of the farm animal sanctuary. Refreshments will be available. Admission to the event is free; tax-deductible donations are welcome.

5th Annual Quarry Farm Jam

Saturday, September 8, 6 to 9 p.m.

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

Whether you play an instrument like a virtuoso or just like to pretend, sing along or listen, spend a sweet late summer evening with music under the big red roof alongside the calls from the nature preserve. There will be cookies, too.

For more information about these programs, or to view a complete list of our available presentation topics, visit www.thequarryfarm.org.

Thank you...

...to Red Doud and Joe Hovest for setting pollinator garden fence and moving The Rock

...to Putnam County Master Gardeners for garden help

...to Paul Nusbaum for building the quarry trail bridge, repairing the Cranberry Run bridge and trail maintenance

...to David Seitz, for bridge maintenance and trimming

Monetary Donations:

Tom Dobmyer
Doug and Sandy Downing
Drisana Etayo
Laura Gretzinger
Ottawa Elementary students

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)
- zucchini and squash



Putnam County Master Gardener Carol Schortgen weeds in the pollinator garden at Red Fox Cabin.