



Lake Erie Nature &
Science Center

ISSUE 2, 2011

Naturally CONNECTED



Nature in Miniature

It's easy to be awed by the majesty and beauty of nature when you pass a sun-dappled expanse of Lake Erie, a vibrant stand of autumn trees or a grand buck paused in a meadow.

It takes a keener eye to observe and appreciate nature on a tiny, intricate scale. Mini, but mighty, sources of natural inspiration are one reason magnifying glasses and simple microscopes are standard gear in our well-equipped, nature-based classrooms.

Kids are naturally drawn to the downsized critters they find at eye level, but adults often need reminding to focus on nature in miniature. So, take a magnifying glass on your next walk and don't forget to look down!



Rehab Odyssey: Wayward White Pelican

Our experienced wildlife rehab staff thought they'd seen it all. That is, until January, when a wayward American White Pelican arrived in rehab intake, the first ever for our decades-old Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Program. The species is rarely seen in Ohio because its normal breeding range is far west of Ohio and it winters mainly along the southern coasts.

Workers from ArcelorMittal rescued this injured pelican along the Cuyahoga River and turned to us for wildlife expertise. The off-track big bird – one of the largest in North America – quickly became a rehab star. Once we stabilized the injured wing and treated for intestinal parasites, our big-billed patient began consuming 4 pounds of

fish a day, gaining weight and strutting for curious TV and newspaper photographers.

After a month in our care, Wildlife Rehabilitation Coordinator Amy LeMonds transferred the pelican to the World Bird Sanctuary in St. Louis. The specialized facility was equipped to handle the next phase of rehab for such a large bird and St. Louis is home to a year-round population of American White Pelicans, giving our patient a flock to join if he's able to return to the wild.

We're grateful to the wildlife-loving donors who stepped up to fund the care and transportation costs for this beautiful wild animal. As of this writing, our first-ever pelican patient is still doing well.



American White Pelican sports green wing wrap to stabilize injury.



Amy LeMonds and Dave Wolf



Lauren Lenhard held her birthday party at the Center and asked her guests to bring supplies for our animal care. We often see young people using their special occasions to give back in this way.



Volunteers Vince DiGennaro and Sean Waitkus (pictured with Executive Director Catherine Timko) secured almost \$1,000 for the Center through the Farmers Insurance Future Leaders Development Program. The North Olmsted High School Seniors impressed company executives with a multimedia presentation demonstrating the value of their favorite nonprofit.



During the holiday season, "Frogs & Polliwogs" delivered "gifts for the animals" from our Wish List, an annual tradition for these parent and tot class participants.



The Lifelong Hunt for "Treasure"



At this writing, I'm reflecting on a wonderful morning spent birding here in Huntington Reservation. The Center and Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society hosted 40 enthusiastic nature seekers on this April morning, all of us ready to be energized by discovery, perhaps spotting a migrating bird that can only be seen during a brief time period each year.

Members of the group had different skills levels and each person shared knowledge that helped us to learn or enjoy a different aspect of the tour. Some knew where to look for a wood duck nest, others recognized bird calls. The experience reminded me how much I've learned from fellow birders since I started out as a beginner a few short years ago.

Although appreciation of the wilderness has always been part of my life, birding is a new way of engaging with nature. The hundreds of magnificent species that can be seen and heard throughout our parks have been there all along; I just learned how to find them. A birding friend refers to this as a treasure hunt!

While the Center's primary founding mission was to serve young people, learning is truly a lifelong pursuit. A

good friend of mine is a successful and widely-known nature photographer. He's practiced photography his entire adult life, but recently shared that "my skills truly began reaching their peak after age 70, perhaps because I'm more keenly aware of my surroundings and have the time to dedicate myself to learning."

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Regardless of our age, there is always something new to experience in the universe around us and the Center helps all of us make those connections. In January, nearly 200 people came to hear Astronaut Mike Foreman describe the view from space: In February, adult anglers – men and women – heard from local experts about steelhead fishing (right here in Porter Creek!) and today's bird watching group enjoyed many spring migrants.

While these experiences enrich adults, the lessons spill over to children, too. How important it is for young people to see us learning something new and, more importantly, for us to be learning alongside them. We set the example that our lifelong exploration of the natural world is a "treasure hunt" that truly has no end.

***We hope to see you
at the Center soon!***

Catherine Timko

Catherine Timko
Executive Director



Caring For Our Great Lake

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is taking part in a newly launched program designed to improve recreational water quality at Huntington Beach. Through community education and outreach, this project, which runs through March 2013, aims to increase public awareness of water quality and how we all impact the Porter Creek watershed.

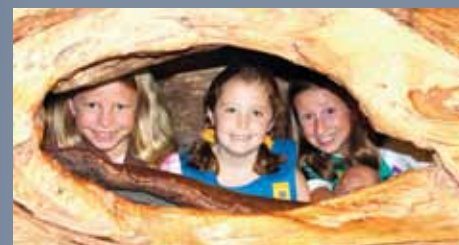
The Cuyahoga County Board of Health is collaborating with Cleveland Metroparks, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, University of Toledo and the cities of Bay Village and Westlake, with financial support from



the U.S. EPA. More information can be found on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative website at <http://greatlakesrestoration.us/>. To get involved and learn more, please join us at the project kick-off on July 27 at 6:30 p.m. here at the Center.

Summer Camps Put Kids in Touch With Nature

Every year, the Center plans a jam-packed summer camp season that includes outdoor exploration for all ages from preschool to middle school. Our 2011 camps include The Amazing Place, a collaborative camp with BAYarts, and NSI: Nature Scene Investigation. Call 440-871-2900 or check out our website at www.lensc.org for information or camp availability.



Campers discover, sing and create at our annual Back to Nature Girls Day Camp, popular with scouts of all ages.

Featured Programs for All Ages

Call 440-871-2900 or log on to www.lensc.org for program details or registration information. Watch our website and check email for late additions to the Adult Program Schedule.



Meet An Animal: The Rosy Boa

For families of all ages
June 25 at 3 p.m.
See and touch this cute little serpent - one of two boas found in the United States and the perfect get-to-know snake for young and old alike. Free!

Family Picnic Night

For families of all ages
Friday, July 22 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
We'll provide a picnic dinner; you bring a big blanket for your family. After supper, we'll meet some animals, take a guided hike and enjoy a campfire. Fee and pre-registration required.

Perseid Meteor Night

For all ages
Thursday, August 11
Planetarium program at 8 p.m., free field viewing at 9 p.m.
Bring the family to the Walter R. Schuele Planetarium for a presentation on meteors, and hold a real meteorite. Then, spread out your blanket in the field and enjoy the show in the sky! (Planetarium seating limited - advance reservations available at Guest Services.)



Exploring the woods is a favorite summer camp activity in all of our camps.



Middle Schoolers choose from an Eco-Explorers day camp or a Wanderers overnight camp that travels across Northeast Ohio.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT **Rob Catalano**



Fortunately for Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, Rob Catalano admits, “I get bored easily.”

Always looking for new challenges and opportunities to give back, Rob began volunteering as a Center Wildlife Program Volunteer in 2008. “I think volunteering should be tied to your passions and I love nature because we’re all connected,” he says. “Even in my tiny Old Brooklyn backyard there are deer, skunks, opossums, owls, bats and woodpeckers.”

Rob’s deep professional and volunteer resume includes his current job as Director of Training & Development at Radcom, along with past experience in public relations, volunteer coordination, education, and

programming at the Steamship William G. Mather Maritime Museum and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. “My goal is to empower people with knowledge and a love of learning, which I see as a lifelong journey and not a destination,” he says.

Rob’s involvement in community theatre (look for him in The Music Man this summer in Brecksville) and in historic programs at such venues as the Cuyahoga Valley National Park also make him a captivating live animal presenter for our Center. Rob’s favorite animal to show off is our Red-tailed Hawk. “I never tire of seeing the public’s reaction to this majestic bird. They’ve only witnessed it soaring in the sky from a long distance, and then they encounter this huge bird perched on my glove. I hope the experience causes them to step back and appreciate nature and our place in the universe.”

MEET A STAFFER **Teece Lester**



Watching Teece Lester lead a creekside hike helps to explain why “Miss Teece” is legendary among the

preschool set. Teece has been heading up our Nature Nuts program since 1998. During 13 years as Preschool Coordinator, she has been a creative and nurturing presence, building a nature-based preschool that’s highly respected and valued by parents and kids.

Whether the children are digging

earthworms or combing the Lake Erie shore, Teece and Preschool Specialist Amy Leamon are there to guide them. “One of our 3-year-old students turned to me on a hike one day and said, “This isn’t school, it’s just plain fun!” Teece recalls. “That’s exactly our goal: to create an interactive learning environment where kids discover science and nature themselves. They often have too much fun to realize they’re learning!”

Prior to joining the Center, Teece was Director of Westlake Montessori School. Away from work, she enjoys family time, reading and cooking.

Volunteer Opportunities

Join the volunteer team that gave 10,000 hours to our nonprofit last year! Call 440-871-2900. Stop in or fill out our online volunteer application at www.lensc.org.

FAMILY FUN FEST

For teens and adults ages 13 & up
June 5

11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Various shifts between
Help us create lasting family memories. Staff a game, sell tickets, show animals, help with crafts, clean-up. Contact Barb at barbc@lensc.org or ext. 207.

PLANETARIUM VOLUNTEER

Help with telescope nights on the first and third Saturday nights. Contact Wayne at waynek@lensc.org or Jessica at jessicam@lensc.org or ext. 213.

WILD SUMMER READING CAMP

For teens and adults ages 13 & up
Monday – Friday, July 18 – August 12
8:30 – 11:30 a.m. and/or 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Read with summer campers and guide fun activities. Training provided. Contact Carole Lynn at carolelynns@lensc.org or ext. 211.

FALL REGISTRATION

For adults
Saturday, July 23 and Saturday, July 30
From 8:15 – 11:30 a.m.
Help with Fall School-year and Session Registrations. Volunteers qualify for early registration. Contact Frank at frankc@lensc.org or ext. 218.



PNC Bank “Grow Up Great” volunteers



Helping Wildlife By Educating People



Like everything at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, education is at the heart of the Wildlife Department. That's obvious in the hands-on appearances we make with our live educational animals every year (70 onsite and 100 offsite). However, our other wildlife activities have a direct education connection, too. By caring for 150 exhibit animals, we allow people to view compelling examples of wildlife, sparking curiosity, knowledge and appreciation. Can YOU gaze directly into the eyes of our Bald Eagle and not feel awe!?

Education is also the way wildlife rehabilitation helps nature far beyond the assistance offered each ill or injured animal. We explain that the baby bunnies someone scooped up from her yard are not "abandoned" because mom only visits the nest at

dusk and at dawn. This conversation not only saves these bunnies when they're placed back in the nest, but every future baby wild animal this "rescuer" finds. The impact is multiplied when that new wisdom is shared with family and friends.

In addition to our 1,000 annual rehab intake encounters, we field 4,000 phone calls, each offering an opportunity to educate someone with a question or "problem" with backyard wildlife. Take, for example, that nuisance skunk living under the deck. It's simply taking advantage of what we humans inadvertently provide: shelter (the deck), food (unsecured garbage, outdoor pet food, turf lawns with grubs or wood piles teeming with insects) and water (landscape ponds or runoff puddles from pavement).

Once we help people understand why the skunk is there, they have the knowledge to make their environment less skunk-friendly and realize why suburbia has become a preferred skunk habitat. In fact, our neighborhoods make great habitats for many animals including raccoons, deer and hawks. Education is the way we increase understanding about Nature and ultimately help wildlife, too.



Venomous Snakes in NE Ohio

There are three venomous snakes in Ohio: Eastern Massasauga (a rattlesnake), Timber Rattlesnake and the Northern Copperhead. Only the Eastern Massasauga lives in Northern Ohio and it is rarely seen. In fact, both rattlesnake species are endangered in Ohio. Learn more and see live examples of all three of Ohio's venomous snakes in our Exhibit Hall.





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SPECIAL EVENTS

Shredding Day



Our fourth Shredding Day in early May helped folks avoid identity theft, kept nearly 10 cubic yards of waste out of our landfills, saved 55 trees and raised nearly \$900 in donations for our nonprofit. Shredding Network's truck is scheduled to return in November. Keep recycling!

Grandparents Day



This special day for members and donors (held in April this year) brings generations together around the enduring themes of nature and wildlife.

Save the Dates!



FAMILY FUN FEST
Enjoy up-close wildlife encounters, The Great Duck Race, planetarium shows, plus great games, crafts, bounce houses, food and more at this summer extravaganza. Mark your calendar for Sunday, June 5 from Noon - 4 p.m.



ANNUAL BENEFIT
Our 21st Annual Benefit & Auction takes place on Saturday, September 10 at 6:30 p.m. Save the date and prepare to Discover Our Great Lake!