

# Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio

Hiram Field Station, Portage County

## Wildflower Walk



24 May 2017



On Wednesday, May 24th, Jane O'Brien and Taylor Hillyer, an Environmental Studies student at Hiram College (2018) and Seed Program Scholar, hosted and guided Native Plant Society members who joined us that evening for a tour of Hiram College's James H. Barrow Field Station phenology garden. We learned about the habitat, cultural needs, and wildlife benefits of native pawpaw, *Asimina triloba*, and persimmon, *Dryopteris virginiana*, fruit trees and the seed

gathering, processing, and propagation that has increased their orchard stock as well as American hazelnut, *Corylus americana*, shrubs. They also spoke about various insect pollinators, including native mason bees, and their life cycles as we viewed and learned about their insect pollinator hotel and future plans for both the phenology garden and insect pollinator hotel. As the evening progressed, the rainfall became steadily heavier. We welcomed the unexpected opportunity to tour the field station's outdoor (taking cover under umbrellas Taylor gathered for us) and indoor wildlife rehabilitation facilities.

Jane explained phenology as “the study of recurring biological phenomena and their relationship to weather.” She and Taylor gave us an overview of the [Hiram Field Station phenology garden](#) and the [OSU Phenology Garden Network](#), a state-wide network of thirty-one gardens of which Hiram Field Station is a member. Each garden is planted with identical perennials and woody plants. First and full bloom and insect count and activity are observed and recorded. The observation data from each garden site is submitted on-line to the OSU Phenology Garden Network. To learn about the phenology relationships in your area and the growing degree days, please visit [The Ohio State Phenology Calendar](#).

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“An insect pollinator hotel is a winter home for insects consisting of different areas suited to various insects. Most insect pollinator hotels are constructed with a strong protective frame of



wood boards or pallets and are filled with a variety of materials like straw, cork, sticks, pinecones, clay pots.... Insect pollinator hotels provide safe areas for solitary insects to hibernate over winter. Building accommodations for beneficial insects like ladybugs or other flying pollinators can help benefit both the environment and your garden in the spring. Solitary bees like sun. The ideal location

for an insect pollinator hotel is in full sun and protected from the weather.”

*Handout information provided by Jane and Taylor.*

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After our outside tour, we returned to the field station's indoor facilities where we quietly observed wildlife patients and learned about their care and how they came to be here. We saw how insects are raised and plants grown in a sustainable manner at the field station to provide food for the patient and resident animals under their care.

In preparation for our visit, Jane and Taylor prepared handouts about insect pollinator hotels, native fruit trees, bees of Ohio identification cards, and generously gathered materials for each of us to construct our own mason bee house to take home. And, to get us started creating our own pawpaw patch, they provided pawpaw seeds and recycled 2-liter pop bottle pots to take home.



*Asimina triloba* bark; leaves (below); flower (cover page).



We all had an enjoyable evening learning about the environmental stewardship activities and animal care facilities and practices the field station staff are responsible for each day. The Native Plant Society wishes to express our appreciation to Jane and Taylor for setting time aside to host and share with our group their knowledge, experience, and good humor and in the planning and preparation of materials they generously

gifted us to enhance our understanding of our natural world.

Lastly, I wish to extend a hearty thank you to those who were able to join us Wednesday evening. Member and guest participation makes each walk uniquely special and is always appreciated. 😊

Sincerely,

*Lisa K. Schlag*

NPSNEO Treasurer and Webmaster

26.v.2017



**The world of life, of spontaneity,  
the world of dawn and sunset and starlight,  
the world of soil and sunshine, of meadow and woodland,  
of hickory and oak and maple and hemlock and pineland forests,  
of wildlife dwelling around us, of the river and its wellbeing--  
all of this [is] the integral community in which we live.**

Thomas Berry, C.P., PhD, geologist (Nov. 9, 1914 – June 1, 2009)