

Raccoon Creek News

Fall 2019

Turning Over a New Leaf

Welcome 2019-2020 Raccoon Creek AmeriCorps Members!

Welcome Kelly!

My name is Kelly Love, and I'm very eager to serve with Raccoon Creek Partnership this year as an AmeriCorps member. I recently graduated from Ohio University in 2018 with a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Conservation. I enjoyed studying ornithology and entomology the most while I was at Ohio University. Last summer I lived in Arizona studying eco-physiology of ornate tree lizards. I just moved to Athens from Cleveland, Ohio. In my free time I enjoy bird watching, hiking with my dog, and scuba diving. I am so excited to learn and grow as much as I can, while improving our watershed from the impact of acid mine drainage in the area.



Welcome Ashley!

Hi all! I'm Ashley Smith, one of the two new AmeriCorps members at Raccoon Creek Partnership. This year is going to definitely be an exciting one. Last year I studied at Ohio University and I've graduated with an undergrad in Environmental Biology. Before I lived in Athens I lived in Zanesville and I even studied at the Zanesville branch of Ohio University. As of right now I'm also currently working as a tour guide at the Wilds on weekends, and serving at Raccoon Creek on weekdays. This summer I also worked as an intern at the Groveport office of the OEPA doing macroinvertebrate sampling in the Auglaize watershed. In my free time I love to spend time with my two cats, go on adventure walks/hikes, and read comics.

2019 Raccoon Creek Partnership Annual Meeting

By Amy Mackey – Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator, Ohio University Voinovich School

The Raccoon Creek Partnership 2019 Annual Dinner is a great opportunity to find out what's new in Raccoon Creek and how you can get involved in the restoration, conservation, and stewardship of the creek.



When: Sunday, November 3rd, 4:00 pm.

Where: Zaleski ODNr Complex 29371 Wheelabout Rd, McArthur, OH

What: Family style potluck, please bring a dish to share

More Fun: Guest speaker, Raccoon Creek updates, silent auction, and 50/50 raffle!

Be sure to bring cash or your checkbook to renew your membership and to bid on some of the amazing local goods in our silent auction! Watch our Facebook page for a preview of items in the auction. If you have items to donate for the auction, please contact Amy Mackey at mackey@ohio.edu. Would you or someone you know like to be an RCP board member? Several board positions need filled. Nominees must be current RCP members in good standing by the time of the election. If you are not yet a member, there is a membership form on the back of this newsletter! Send nominations to Emily Keil-Loudner at ekeil.loudner@gmail.com by October 3rd, 2019. Hope to see you there!

ATHENS

GALLIA

HOCKING

JACKSON

MEIGS

VINTON

Farewell 2018-2019 RCP AmeriCorps, Annika and Nikki!

What can I say about my term with Raccoon Creek Partnership to emphasize that it was one of the most memorable years of my life? My year at RCP was filled with fun events, engaging field work, and ice cream. A lot of ice cream. I met so many amazing people through RCP and it's been amazing to serve with a group whose values align with my own. This is something that is hard to come by when you are a recent graduate! Serving with RCP gave me the opportunity to expand my skills in so many different ways. Whether I needed to organize an event, teach kids about water quality monitoring, or shock fish in 100-degree heat, I was always supported by the RCP crew. My confidence has grown as a person and scientist and I will always be able to attribute some of that to my year with RCP. I will really miss working with the people here, putting on community events, and being with a group that does so much for the community, but luckily, I will be returning to The Ridges as a student in the fall. I am excited to see what Kelly and Ashley do with their term; I'm sure that it will be equally enriching. Thank you for coming to our events, sending suggestions, and supporting RCP. I hope to see you around next year!

-Annika Gurrola



This year with Raccoon Creek Partnership and AmeriCorps was a great learning and growing experience. I've learned so much about the history of Ohio's Appalachian Region and about Raccoon Creek Watershed! It was great fun going water sampling with the crew in our faithful work truck, and even though the drives were sometimes long, the scenery of the woods and the conversations with our water quality crew always made the drives and long, hot or cold days bearable. And there was always Sour Patch Kids, pistachios, or ice cream to get us through the day! Some weeks we had so many things to do that I thought my head would explode but with such a great team, I knew that anything was possible and everything always got done when it needed to be done. Planning events was always a lot of work, but it always paid off. Whether it was the annual dinner, Family Outdoor Day, or RCP's Summer Camp, adults and children alike always left with smiling faces and that makes the planning all worth it! I have gained great experience in all the things I wanted to, and also in things that I didn't expect to. There was event planning, water quality monitoring, fundraising, and environmental education, among many other things. I'm very grateful for this year with Raccoon Creek Partnership. A big shout out to Amy for being such a great supervisor and to Annika for being my office mate and a good AmeriCorps Partner!

-Nikki Salas

MEET A MACRO

Benthic Macroinvertebrates

Benthic = bottom dwelling

Macro = large

Invertebrate = no backbone

are good indicators of water quality.

By identifying and counting bugs, snails, and crayfish in our streams we can determine the general water quality.

Large numbers of sensitive species means healthier water!

Let's meet one...



Above: Case-building; Below: Net-spinning



CADDISFLY LARVAE

When you flip over a rock and see a small cluster of sticks or rocks...
BE GENTLE! There could be a creature in there!

While many create and carry their homes with them (case-building), other caddisfly larvae spin nets to trap their food as it floats downstream.

Caddisfly larvae eat algae and other aquatic vegetation.

Closely related to moths, adult caddisflies are nocturnal and are an important food source for bats!

Raccoon Creek Project Updates!

By Amy Mackey – Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator, Ohio University Voinovich School

Ilesboro Reclamation Project

The Ilesboro Road Reclamation Project is nearing completion! This project (funding by ODNR DMRM, OEPA, and OSM) will minimize the formation of acid mine drainage from this pre-law ridgetop surface mine site; reducing the acidity and metal load entering the West Branch of Raccoon Creek. Thanks to Kaabe Shaw (ODNR Division of Mineral Resources Management) for the photos showing the same slope throughout the reclamation process. Stay tuned for a spring 2020 post-construction tour!



Big Sandy Run Low-head Dam Removal Project

The Big Sandy Run Low-head Dam Project in Vinton County is complete! This project, funded by an EPA 319 grant, will help to restore natural habitat features and fish passage in Big Sandy Run, upstream of Lake Hope. A huge thanks to ODNR Division of Forestry who completed the project. A poster about the project will soon be on display at the Lake Hope Nature Center, and a sign will be installed along the Zaleski backpacking trail near King Hollow Road. Thanks to Courtney Cawood (ODNR Division of Forestry) for the construction photos! Be sure to join us for the post-construction tour on October 19th, directly following the annual Lake Hope Fall Hike!



The Railroad Less Travelled

By Kaylin Callander, Lake Hope State Park Naturalist, Division of Parks and Watercraft

There once existed a set of railroad tracks that stretched across southern Ohio from Portsmouth to Newark, branching over to Marietta. The Scioto & Hocking Railroad was chartered by legislation to build the rail line in 1849. It worked to move raw materials, such as coal and timber, further east to be refined. In 1863 the railroad was sold, and the name changed to the Portsmouth & Newark Company. One year later it changed again to the Marietta & Cincinnati Company as the line stretched further still. By 1887, The Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad was keeper of the line and operated it for several decades. Between 1980 and 1987, the railroad company merged with the Chesapeake & Ohio, Chessie System, and eventually ended up as CSX Transportation, still operating on live rails through the United States. Many people that worked on the railroad in this area still have memories and gladly share them with anyone patient enough to listen.

Parts of this old railroad can be seen to the observant eye as raised beds running through a town or abandoned parcel of forest. If you concentrate hard enough you can still hear the train clambering on the tracks with cars heavy of coal, raw iron, and the occasional hobo or vagabond. Some stops were fevered with activity: people moving about loading and unloading. Other stops were secluded and barely a person could be found for miles, the trains slipping in and out of foggy forests and darkened tunnels. One such stretch of railroad was near the town of Zaleski. Its name synonymous with ghost stories and turn-of-the-century architecture: Moonville Tunnel.

Although the tunnel hasn't seen a train since 1984, it has many visitors! The Moonville Rail Trail Association is a local organization aimed at preserving the local history by building and maintaining the public rail trail. 'Midnight at Moonville' is their annual event that takes place on Saturday, October 12 from 3-11pm.

If you want something a bit quieter and off the beaten path come visit King Hollow Tunnel with the Lake Hope State Park naturalist on Sunday, September 15 at 10am. Meet at the Lake Hope Nature Center and then caravan to the tunnel to listen to the history and a ghost story or two. This will include a less than 1-mile hike. Please bring bug spray.

Lake Hope State Park will also be hosting two annual events next month. Our 40th Annual Fall Hike on October 19th at 10am starting at our shelter house and ROAR Day with many activities throughout the park on Saturday, October 26th from 10am-4pm.



Raccoon Creek Outfitters Update

Help Raccoon Creek Outfitters meet their boat goal!

Bobbi and Dustin Hoy (a former Raccoon Creek Partnership Board member!) opened Raccoon Creek Outfitters (RCO) in 2017, at the corner of ST RT 356 and US 50, on the shores Raccoon Creek. They offer 5- and 7-mile canoe and kayak trips, shuttle service, camping, and a retail store for all your kayaking and fishing needs. In addition, the livery can be rented out for weddings, birthday parties, reunions and other events. Raccoon Creek Partnership held it's summer day camp at the livery this year and camp included a paddle on the creek.

This past June, the Vinton County Music Festival was held at the livery, which featured local acts including Brice Mash, Dan Daily And The Sodbusters, Andrea Courts, and Red Planet.

This season, Raccoon Creek Outfitters set a goal of putting 1500 boats on Raccoon Creek, and as of this writing, they less than 300 boats shy of that goal! There is still more than a month to go and YOU can help them reach that goal, Thursdays through Sundays, 9am to 5 pm! Fall is a beautiful time on the creek, with changing leaves, and ripening paw paws, and RCO takes care of all the details so you can relax while you paddle!

Call and make your reservations now! (740) 698-0000



Raccoon Creek Asian Carp Update

By Nikki Salas, 2018-2019 AmeriCorps Member & Amy Mackey, Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator

There are several species of Asian Carp that pose a risk to our native aquatic ecosystems. The two species of concern in the Ohio River basin are bighead carp and silver carp. These non-native filter feeders out-compete native fish. Asian carp were originally imported from Southeast Asia to the southern United States to help aquaculture and wastewater treatment facilities keep retention ponds clean. Flooding and accidental releases allowed these fish to escape into the Mississippi River system and migrate into the Ohio River. A very prolific species, one female can release 50,000-5,000,000 eggs per spawn, allowing populations to increase rapidly.

In 2016, USFWS conducted 7 nights of sampling in Raccoon Creek and caught 7 bighead carp. In August 2019, USFWS along with several partner agencies, conducted 3 days of sampling in the R.C. Byrd Pool (including Raccoon Creek) and captured 8 bighead carp. This data suggests an increase in density of bighead carp in the R.C. Byrd Pool and Raccoon Creek. USFWS is using an array of receivers to track the movement of tagged carp in the Ohio River and its tributaries. This data will be used to develop more effective management strategies for this highly invasive species.

Help slow the spread of invasive species by reporting sightings and never releasing bait fish! For more information, check out the links below.

ODNR - Asian Carp Resources: <http://ohiodnr.gov/asiancarp>

Ohio Sea Grant's Ohio Field Guide to Aquatic Invasive Species:
<https://ohioseagrant.osu.edu/.../4j7wz/ohio-field-guide-to-ais>



52 pound bighead carp removed from Raccoon Creek, August 2019. Wyatt Snodgrass (USFWS) and Amy Mackey (Ohio University/RCP) Photo taken by Hannah Hagarty

RCP UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Monthly RCP Meetings are held the Last Thursday of every month at 6:30 PM

*For details about upcoming events and activities, as well as event and meeting locations, visit our [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/raccooncreekpartnership/) page, www.raccooncreek.org, or contact mackey@ohio.edu. **Event dates and times subject to change.***

Pawpaw Festival (Drawing for Kayak Sept 15th)	September 13-15th
Lake Snowden, Albany, OH	
King Hollow Tunnel with Lake Hope Naturalist	September 15th 10am
Midnight in Moonville	October 12th. 3-11pm
71945 Shea Road, McArthur, Ohio 45651	
40th Annual Lake Hope Fall Hike	October 19th 10am
Lake Hope Shelter House, McArthur, OH	
Sandy Run Project Tour	October 19th
More information TBA	
ROAR Day (Rural Ohio Appalachia Revisited)	October 26th
Lake Hope- 27331 OH-278, McArthur, OH 45651	
RCP Annual Dinner	November 3rd. 4pm
Zaleski ODNR complex	

Raccoon Creek Partnership Board meetings are the last Thursday of each month and are open to the public.

****All events subject to change. ****

For info or directions visit our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/raccooncreekpartnership/>

Or e-mail raccooncreekpartnership@gmail.com or mackey@ohio.edu



Raccoon Creek Partnership

c/o Amy Mackey

Voinovich School

The Ridges, Bldg 22

Athens, OH 45701

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Name	
Address	
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Yes, I (we) would like to help protect Raccoon Creek

Membership	
Creek Chub	\$15
Johnny Darter	\$30*
Channel Catfish	\$50*
Grass Pickerel	\$100*
Spotted Bass	\$500*
Paddlefish	\$1000*
*Any membership over \$30 receives a free Raccoon Creek Water Trail Map	

A local partnership working towards conservation, stewardship, and restoration of the watershed for a healthier stream and community